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Agenda item: 08

Calendar of Meetings 2025/26

Full Authority

Date: 27 February 2025

Submitted by: Director of Corporate Services

Purpose: To agree the programme of authority and Committee meetings for the 2025/26 municipal year

Recommendations: That the programme of meetings for 2025/26 be approved as detailed in the appendix to this report.

Summary: The programme of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year has to be agreed by the Full Authority prior to it becoming effective following the Annual General Meeting in June and any amendments require the approval of the Full Authority.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Jik Townson, Committee Services and Governance Officer
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Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Draft Calendar of Meetings 2025/26

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is necessary to give consideration to the programme of meetings for the next municipal year based on a quarterly cycle. In advance of the commencement of the programme the Authority will hold its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 19 June 2025.
- 1.2 In accordance with the agreed Terms of Reference the Loal Pension Board will meet on a 6 monthly basis, in July and January.

2. Information

- 2.1 The AGM marks the start of the programme of meetings. The programme for 2025/26 as attached at annex A is recommended for approval by the Full Authority.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Members are entitled to claim mileage / out of pocket expenses for meetings they attend in accordance with the Authority's approved Constitution

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct Human Resource and Diversity Implications arising from this report

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications arising from this report

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Environmental Implications arising from this report

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Continuously improve using digital and data platforms to innovate and work smarter.

West Yorkshire Fire And Rescue Authority

Programme of Meetings 2025 / 2026

Friday 10.30AM Audit Committee	Friday 10.30AM Community Safety Committee	Friday 10.30AM Finance and Resources Committee	Friday 10.30AM People and Culture Committee	Friday 12:00 Local Pension Board (Upon Rising Of P&C)	Friday 10.30AM Authority
25 July 2025	11 July 2025	18 July 2025	4 July 2025	4 July 2025	Friday 26 September 2025
24 October 2025	10 October 2025	17 October 2025	3 October 2025		Friday 12 December 2025
13 February 2026	6 February 2026	30 January 2026	23 January 2026	23 January 2026	Thursday 26 February 2026
24 April 2026	10 April 2026	17 April 2026	27 March 2026		Thursday 18 June 2026 (AGM)

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Agenda item: 09

Constitution Review

Full Authority

Date:	27 February 2025
Submitted by:	Director of Corporate Services
Purpose:	To report on the amendments required to the Authority Constitution
Recommendations:	That Members approve the amendments detailed at paragraph 2.
Summary:	This report contains proposals for amendments to the Authority Constitution which require Member approval

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Jik Townson, Committee Services and Governance Officer Jik.Townson@Westyorkshire.gov.uk 01274 682311
Background papers open to inspection:	None
Annexes:	List of amendments

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Authority has a formal Constitution. Article 14 of the Constitution requires the Monitoring Officer to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution and make recommendations for changes as necessary to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

2. Information

- 2.1 The External Auditors have changed
- 2.2 The Member allowances schedule has been updated
- 2.3 There have been changes made in accordance with the new Procurement Act and Regulations

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no Human Resource or Diversity implications arising from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

[\(EIA template and guidance\)](#)

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 There are no Health Safety or Wellbeing implications arising from this report.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Continuously improve using digital and data platforms to innovate and work smarter.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Members are requested to approve the amendments to the Constitution.

Constitution amends (Feb 2025)

Page/Para	Original	Updated to	Reason
97/	Deloitte LLP	Grant Thornton	Change of External Auditors
151/	Member allowances Schedule 23/24	Member allowances Schedule 24/25	Updated following pay settlement
66-84/	Contract Procedure Rules	Contract Procedure Rules	Changes made in accordance with the new Procurement Act and Regulations

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Agenda item: 10

Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

Full Authority

Date: 27th February 2025

Submitted by: Director of Finance and Procurement

Purpose: To present the Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

Recommendations: That members approve:

- a) Treasury Management Practices
- b) The Capital Strategy outlined from 2.1
- c) The Borrowing Strategy outlined from 2.19
- d) The Investment Strategy outlined from 2.30 and Appendix B
- e) The policy for the provision of the repayment of debt outlined in Appendix D
- f) The Treasury Management Prudential Indicators in Appendix E
- g) The Capital Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 in Appendix F

Summary: The Treasury Management Strategy Statement is an annual statement that sets out the expected treasury activities for the forthcoming year 2025/26. These activities include the Authority's expected borrowing and investments, cashflows and banking.

The Authority has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and is thereby required to consider a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of the next financial year. In addition, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued guidance on Local Authority investments in March 2010 which requires the Authority to approve and investment strategy before the start of each financial year.

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Alison Wood, Director of Finance and Procurement,
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Background papers open to inspection: The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

Annexes: Appendix A - Treasury Management Practices
Appendix B – Investment Strategy
Appendix C – Credit Rating Scores
Appendix D – Provision for the Repayment of Debt
Appendix E – Treasury Management Indicators
Appendix F – Capital Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30

1. Introduction

1.1 Treasury management is defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice as:

“The management of the Authority’s borrowings, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.

1.2. There are two parts to the treasury management operations, the first is to ensure that the Authority’s cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are placed in low-risk counterparties or instruments in line with the Authority’s low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return. The second main function of treasury management is the funding of the Authority’s capital plans. The Capital Strategy provides a guide to the borrowing need of the Authority, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning to ensure that the Authority can meet its capital spending obligations.

1.3. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (TM) and the CIPFA Prudential Code require local authorities to determine and set the Authority’s Treasury Management Strategy, its Strategy relating to investment activity, and Prudential Indicators on an annual basis. The Authority currently has cash backed reserves and balances of circa £43m, so it is important that robust and appropriate processes are in place to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund. Set out below are the key elements of the Strategy covering the borrowing requirements and investment arrangements.

1.4 The Authority’s Investment Strategy has regard to the TM Code and the Guidance. It has two objectives: the first is security, in order to ensure that the capital sum is protected from loss, ensuring that the Authority’s money is returned; and the second is portfolio liquidity, in order to ensure that cash is available when needed. Only when the proper levels of security and liquidity have been determined can the Authority then consider the yield that can be obtained within these parameters.

1.5 This Strategy has been created based on CIPFA Prudential and Treasury Management Codes, which requires the Authority to prepare a Capital Strategy. This Authority does not envisage any commercial investments and has no non-treasury investments.

1.6 Treasury Management activity is governed and managed by using a set of standards which are called Treasury Management Practices. These set out the manner in which the Authority aims to achieve its treasury management policies and objectives and how it will manage and control those activities. It is good practice that these are presented to members for information. These are attached in Appendix A

National Guidance and Governance

1.7 CIPFA published the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code on the 20th of December 2021 and has stated that revisions need to be included in the reporting framework from the 2023/24 financial year. This Authority, therefore, has to have regard to these Codes of Practice when it prepares the Treasury Management Strategy

Statement and Annual Investment Strategy, and also related reports during the financial year, which are taken to Full Authority for approval.

The Treasury Management Code requires an authority to implement the following:

- a) Adopt a new debt liability benchmark treasury indicator.
- b) Re-class long term treasury investments as commercial investments (not applicable)
- c) Pooled funds to be included in the indicator for principal sums maturing in year beyond the initial budget year (not applicable)
- d) Amendments to the knowledge and skills register for those involved in the treasury management function (TMP6)
- e) Report to members quarterly on indicator performance
- f) Environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues to be addressed within the Authority's treasury management policies and practices (TMP1)

- 1.8 In addition, this Strategy also complies with the CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the TM Code"), and Guidance on Local Government Investments issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 ("the Guidance"). Specific decisions on the timing and amount of any borrowing will be made by the Authority's Director of Finance and Procurement in line with the agreed Strategy.
- 1.9 The Local Government Act 2003, section 15 (1)(a), gives local authorities the power to use capital receipts to fund certain categories of expenditure. Guidance around the flexible use of capital receipts was issued by The Secretary of State and was effective from the 1st of April 2022. The key criteria to use when deciding whether expenditure can be funded by the capital receipts flexibility is that it is forecast to generate ongoing savings to an authorities', or several authorities, and/or to another public sector body's net service expenditure. A list of types of projects that would qualify for the flexible use of capital receipts is included in the Guidance. These include investment in service reform feasibility work, the cost-of-service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation, improving systems to tackle fraud and corruption, setting up commercial delivery models to deliver services more efficiently. If the Authority decides to use capital receipts flexibly on projects included in the guidance, it is required to produce a Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy.
- 1.10 It is not expected that the Authority will call upon the flexible use of capital receipts and will continue to use them to fund existing capital expenditure. As such a capital receipts strategy is not required.

Governance

- 1.11 CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-sectoral Guidance Notes (2021) requires public sector organisations to nominate a responsible body for the scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies. The Finance and Resources Committee is the nominated committee to scrutinise treasury management and to support this it receives and approves a number of financial reports each year, which cover the following:

- (a) **An Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy:** This Strategy is reported annually to Full Authority in February. This Strategy includes: -
- the Capital Programme together with the appropriate prudential indicators.
 - the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy, which details how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time.
 - the Treasury Management Strategy, which defines not only how the investments and borrowings are to be organised, but also sets out the appropriate treasury indicators; and
 - an Investment Strategy which sets out the parameters on how deposits are to be managed.
- (b) **A Mid-year Treasury Management Report:** This is presented to Finance and Resources Committee in February and provides an update on current investments and borrowing, the Capital Programme, performance of prudential indicators
- (c) **A Year-end Annual Report:** This provides the final outturn position for the year in relation to investments and deposits made during the year, prudential and treasury indicators, and a summary of the actual treasury activity during the year. This is reported to Finance and Resources Committee in July.

- 1.12 CIPFA has developed a self-assessment tool to support the development of effective scrutiny. The Director of Finance and Procurement will undertake the self-assessment and report back to Finance and Resources Committee in the new financial year.

External Support

- 1.13 The Authority uses Link Group as its external Treasury Management Advisor. The Authority recognises that the responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with itself and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon the external advisor. The Authority appointed Link Group in July 2021 when the responsibility for Treasury Management was transferred to the Authority from Kirklees Council, where it was provided as a Service Level Agreement.
- 1.14 The Director of Finance and Procurement, the Head of Finance and the Senior Finance Manager who manages treasury on a daily basis receive daily, weekly, and monthly reports on treasury management activity within the UK, Europe and Worldwide.

Training

- 1.15 The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny. A training session was delivered by Link in October which was attended by both members and officers. The training needs of treasury management officers is ongoing to ensure that knowledge is kept up to date.

2. Information

Capital Strategy

- 2.1 The purpose of the Capital Strategy is to demonstrate that the Authority takes capital expenditure and investment decisions in line with corporate and service objectives and properly takes account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. It sets out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made and gives due consideration to both risk and reward and impact on the achievement of priority outcomes.
Fundamentally, the objective of the code is that the total of an Authority's capital investment remains within sustainable limits, following consideration of the impact on the bottom-line Council Tax.
- 2.2 Each financial year the Authority produces a rolling five-year capital programme, and owing to the nature of capital expenditure, a large number of schemes slip between financial years. The detailed capital plan and associated prudential indicators are included in the Budget Report.
- 2.3 The Capital Strategy comprises a number of distinct, but inter-related, elements as follows:
- **Capital Expenditure**
This section includes an overview of the governance process for approval and monitoring of capital expenditure, including the Authority's policies on capitalisation, and an overview of its capital expenditure and financing plans.
 - **Capital Financing and Borrowing**
This section provides a projection of the Authority's capital financing requirement, how this is impacted by capital expenditure decisions and how it will be funded and repaid. It therefore sets out the Authority's borrowing strategy and explains how it will discharge its duty to make prudent revenue provision for the repayment of debt.
 - **Director of Finance and Procurement statement**
This section contains the Chief Financial Officer's views on the deliverability, affordability and risk associated with the capital strategy.

Capital Expenditure

Capitalisation Policy

- 2.4 Expenditure is classified as capital expenditure when it results in the acquisition or construction of an asset (e.g. land, buildings, vehicles, plant, and equipment etc.) that:
- Will be held for use in the delivery of services, for rental to others, investment or for administrative purposes; and
 - Are of continuing benefit to the Authority for a period extending beyond one financial year.
- 2.5 Subsequent expenditure on existing assets is also classified as capital expenditure if these two criteria are met. There may be instances where expenditure does not meet this definition but would be treated as capital expenditure, including:

- Where the Authority has no direct future control or benefit from the resulting assets but would treat the expenditure as capital if it did control or benefit from the resulting assets. For example, where a grant is provided by the Authority to an external body in order that the body can purchase an asset for its own use. The provision of the grant would be treated as capital expenditure in the accounts of the Authority.
- Where statutory regulations require the Authority to capitalise expenditure that would not otherwise have expenditure implications according to accounting rules. For example, where the Government permits authorities, in special circumstances, to treat redundancy costs as capital costs therefore increasing flexibility as such costs can then be met using their existing borrowing powers or capital receipts.

2.6 The Authority operates a de-minimis limit for capital scheme expenditure of £10,000. This means that items below these limits are charged to revenue rather than capital. The capital schemes that tend to be charged to revenue are for the purchase of operational equipment, for example, gas tight suits and water rescue equipment. Based on the 2025/26 capital plan, the annual financial impact in the revenue budget is a maximum of £10,000.

Governance

- 2.7 Capital expenditure is a necessary element in the development of the Authority's services since it generates investment in new and improved assets. Capital expenditure is managed through the five-year Capital Programme which is reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process and reviewed in year as part of financial monitoring arrangements.
- 2.8 The Authority's Financial Regulations and Contract Regulations provide a framework for the preparation and appraisal of schemes proposed for inclusion in the Capital Plan, these include appropriate authorisations for individual schemes to proceed and facilitate the overall management of the Capital Programme within defined resource parameters.
- 2.9 The Director of Finance and Procurement shall determine the format of the Capital Programme and the timing of reports relating to it. The approved Capital Programme will comprise a number of individual schemes each of which will be quantified on an annualised basis. Each directorate will submit capital bids to the finance department which are then collated and presented to the Executive Leadership Team Star Chamber for scrutiny and approval for inclusion on the proposed capital plan. The bids are then collated for submission to the Full Authority meeting in February.
- 2.10 The capital plan is monitored on a monthly basis with the provision of detailed budget monitoring reports to managers and is reported quarterly to the Finance and Resources Committee.
- 2.11 The Budget Management Monitoring Group meet bi-monthly where the capital plan is scrutinised, and managers are required to report on the progress of each capital scheme for which they are responsible. This is chaired by the Director of Finance and Procurement.

Capital Financing and Borrowing

- 2.12 The Authority's capital expenditure plans as per the Capital Programme are set out in Appendix F and will be presented in the Budget Report for approval.
- 2.13 When expenditure is classified as capital expenditure for capital financing purposes, this means that the Authority is able to finance that expenditure from any of the following sources:
- **Capital grants and contributions** – amounts awarded to the Authority in return for past or future compliance with certain stipulations.
 - **Capital receipts** – amounts generated from the sale of assets and from the repayment of capital loans, grants or other financial assistance.
 - **Revenue contributions** – amounts set aside from the revenue budget and the earmarked capital financing reserve.
 - **Borrowing** – amounts that the Authority does not need to fund immediately from cash resources, but instead charges to the revenue budget over a number of years into the future.

Director of Finance and Procurement Statement

- 2.14 The Prudential Code requires the Chief Financial Officer to report explicitly on the affordability and risk associated with the Capital Strategy. The following are specific responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer:
- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing regularly, and monitoring compliance.
 - submitting quarterly treasury management reports.
 - submitting quarterly capital budget reports.
 - reviewing the performance of the treasury management function.
 - ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function.
 - ensuring the adequacy of internal audit and liaising with external audit.
 - recommending the appointment of external service providers.
 - preparation of a capital strategy to include capital expenditure, capital financing, non-financial investments, and treasury management.
 - ensuring that the capital strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money.
 - ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and non-financial investments and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the Authority.
 - ensure that the Authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing.
 - ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the Authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the Authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources.
 - ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long-term liabilities.

Statement of Policy on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 2.15 Under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, where the Authority has financed capital expenditure by borrowing it is required to make a provision each year through a revenue charge (MRP).
- 2.16 The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2008, which came into effect on 31 March 2008, replaced the former statutory rules for calculating MRP with a requirement for each local authority to determine a “prudent” provision. The regulations require authorities to draw up a statement of their policy on the calculation of MRP which requires approval by Full Authority in advance of the year to which it applies.

The recommended policy statement is detailed at Appendix D.

Capital Financing Requirement

- 2.17 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) represents the Authority’s underlying need to finance capital expenditure by borrowing or other long-term liability arrangements. An Authority can choose to borrow externally to fund its CFR. If it does this, it is likely that it would be investing externally an amount equivalent to its total reserves, balances and net creditors. Alternatively, an Authority can choose not to invest externally but instead use these balances to effectively borrow internally and minimise external borrowing. In between these two extremes, an Authority may have a mixture of external and internal investments/external and internal borrowing.

Forecasts for CFR as at the 31 March 2025 are as follows:

	Estimate 2025/26 £000's	Estimate 2026/27 £000's	Estimate 2027/28 £000's	Estimate 2028/29 £000's
CFR	64,350	70,260	78,015	84,824

The movement in the CFR can be further explained via the table below:

	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28	Estimate 2028/29
CFR b/fwd	64,515	64,350	70,260	78,015
Capital Expt	10,438	12,700	12,934	12,439
Capital Receipts	-985	-2,000	0	0
Earmarked Reserve	-5,529	-500	-500	-500
Revenue Contribution	-600	-600	-600	-600
MRP	-3,489	-3,690	-4,079	-4,530
Closing CFR	64,350	70,260	78,015	84,824

2.18 Prior to 2009/10 the Authority’s policy had been to borrow up to its CFR and investing externally the majority of its balances. With the onset of instabilities in the financial markets and the economic downturn, the policy changed to one of ensuring the security of the Authority’s balances. This coincided with dramatic falls in investment returns making the budgetary benefit of maximising external borrowing more marginal. Over the past few years, the Authority has chosen to finance its capital expenditure by ‘borrowing’ internally. This has principally been because of the relatively low rates of interest receivable on investments prior to the beginning of 2022, particularly when compared to the cost of borrowing longer term loans from the PWLB. Interest received on investments has increased following the continued high bank base rate over the past year with the average rate been at 5.24%, however, there has been an increase in PWLB borrowing rates, which is still at a higher rate than that earned on investments.

Borrowing Strategy

Borrowing Arrangements

2.19 The Authority has been using its cash balances by deferring long term borrowing, no new long-term borrowing has been taken out since December 2011. Accountants engaged in treasury management monitor interest rates and receives advice from the Authority’s Treasury Management Advisor on changes to market conditions, so that borrowing and investing activity can be undertaken at the most advantageous time. At the time of writing this report, it is not anticipated that the Authority will take out any new external borrowing until late Spring 2025, which is dependent on the delivery of the capital plan.

2.20 When taking new borrowing, due attention will be paid to the Authority’s debt maturity profile. It is good practice to have a maturity profile for long-term debt which does not expose the Authority to a substantial borrowing requirement in years when interest rates may be at a relatively high level. In accordance with the requirements of the Code, the Authority sets out limits with respect to the maturity structure of its borrowing later in this report.

2.21 It is predicted that as at the 31 March 2025, the Authority will have total external borrowing and other long-term liabilities of £40.9 million.

This is analysed as follows:

	Estimated Debt 31 March 2025	
	£m	%
PWLB Loans	38.9	95.1%
LOBO	2.0	4.9%
TOTAL	40.9	100%

2.22 Historically, the biggest source of borrowing for local authorities has been PWLB loans. These Government loans have offered value for money and also flexibilities to restructure and make possible savings. Although, the Government decided to raise rates for new PWLB loans in October 2010 by around 0.90%, it has since introduced

a discounted rate for local authorities joining the new “certainty rate” scheme. The Authority has joined the scheme and will have access to loans discounted by 0.20% in 2025/26.

- 2.23 The Authority also has a LOBO (Lender’s Option, Borrower’s Option) loan. The way this loan works is that the Authority pays interest at a fixed rate (4.63%) for an initial period and then the lender has the option in the secondary period to increase the rate. If the option is exercised, the Authority can either accept the new rate or repay the loan. The Authority’s loan is in its secondary period with intervals of 5 years between options. The next option date is May 2026. There have been moves by some lenders to amend the terms of their LOBO loans to convert them to ‘vanilla’ fixed rate loans. No approach has yet been made by Dexia Credit Local, the lender to the Authority to amend any of the conditions of the loan.
- 2.24 The Local Capital Finance Company was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative source of local authority finance. It plans to issue bonds on the capital markets and lend the proceeds to local authorities. This will be a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities may be required to provide bond investors with a joint and several guarantee over the very small risk that other local authority borrowers default on their loans; there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable.
- 2.25 In terms of meeting the Authority’s borrowing requirement over the next five years, it is proposed to take out short term temporary borrowing until the long term PWLB rate reduces to previous levels which is forecast to be March 2026.

The table below shows the forecast for PWLB bank rates to March 2027

PWLB	Dec-24	Mar-25	Sep-25	Mar-26	Sep-26	Mar-27
	%	%	%	%	%	%
5 year	5.00%	4.90%	4.60%	4.50%	4.30%	4.10%
10 year	5.20%	5.10%	4.80%	4.70%	4.50%	4.30%
25 year	5.60%	5.50%	5.30%	5.10%	4.90%	4.70%
50 year	5.40%	5.30%	5.10%	4.90%	4.70%	4.50%

- 2.26 The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some of the higher rate loans with new loans at lower interest rates where this will lead to an overall saving or reduce risk. A review is undertaken annually to assess if this is financially advantageous for the authority, all reviews have concluded that it is not viable to repay existing loans.

Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 2.27 The Authority will not borrow in advance of its needs in order to profit from any short-term interest rate advantage. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within the approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Authority can ensure the security of such funds. The risks associated with any borrowing in advance of

activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual treasury reports.

Debt Rescheduling

- 2.28 Whilst short term interest rates continue to be considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long term debt to short term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of the debt repayment (premiums incurred). The reasons for rescheduling may include the generation of cash savings in annual interest payments or to amend the maturity profile of the portfolio. The premium now charged by the PWLB generally makes restructuring debt for interest rate reasons unattractive. Consideration would be given to debt restructuring if there was a significant change in the PWLB's policy. Any debt rescheduling will be reported to the Authority at the earliest opportunity following the rescheduling.
- 2.29 Borrowing policy and performance will be continuously monitored throughout the year and will be reported to Members.

Investment Strategy

Overview

- 2.30 Investment guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), requires that an investment strategy, outlining the Authority's policies for managing investments in terms of risk, liquidity and yield, should be approved by full Authority or equivalent level, before the start of the financial year. This strategy can then only be varied during the year by the same executive body.
- 2.31 The Authority's Investment Strategy has regard to:
- MHCLG's guidance on Local Government investments ("the Guidance")
 - CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 ("the Code")
 - CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2021.
- 2.32 The Investment Strategy has two main objectives: the first is security, in order to ensure that the capital sum is protected from loss; and the second is portfolio liquidity, in order to ensure that cash is available when needed. Only when the proper levels of security and portfolio liquidity have been determined can the Authority then consider the yield that can be obtained within these parameters.

The Authority will ensure that robust due diligence procedures cover all external investments.

- 2.33 The Treasury Management Code of Practice details that the term "investments" used in the definition of treasury management activities also covers other non-financial assets which an organisation holds primarily for financial returns, such as investment property portfolios. The Authority does not hold non-financial assets primarily for financial returns, nor does it propose to do so.

2.34 The guidance from MHCLG and CIPFA places a high priority on the management of risk. This Authority has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means:

- Minimum acceptable credit criteria are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties.
- Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Authority will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “credit default swaps” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the financial sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.

2.35 As at the 31 March 2025, the Authority is expected to have an estimated £14.0 million invested externally, primarily in instant access accounts or short-term deposits, with local authorities, major British owned banks, building societies or Money Market Funds (MMFs). This will also ensure compliance with The Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II, whereby those maintaining a professional status must keep a minimum of £10 million invested at any point in time.

Guidance

2.36 The guidance splits investments into two types – specified and non-specified.

- Specified investments are those offering high security and liquidity. All such investments should be in sterling with a maturity of no more than a year. Investments made with the Government’s Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) and a local authority automatically count as specified investments, as do investment with bodies or investment schemes of “high credit quality”. It is for individual authorities to determine what they regard as “high credit quality”.
- Non-specified investments have greater potential risk, being investments with bodies that have a credit rating below “high credit quality”; bodies that are not credit rated at all; and investments over a year.

2.37 It is estimated that the Authority could have up to £42million to invest at times during the year which is a combination of cash received in advance, reserves and creditors.

Strategy

2.38 It is proposed to continue with a low-risk strategy in line with previous years and where possible to borrow internally. This will help in reducing the amount of money the Authority has invested at any one time and minimise the cost of borrowing.

2.39 Key features of the strategy are as follows:

Specified Investments

- The Authority is able to invest up to £6 million on an instant access basis with foreign based banks with a “high to upper medium grade” credit rating.
- The Authority can invest up to £6 million in individual MMFs (instant access or two-day notice). MMFs are pooled investment vehicles, having the advantage of providing wide diversification of risk, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager.
- The Authority can invest in the Governments DMADF for up to 6 months.
- The Authority can invest in local authorities for up to 364 days.

Non-Specified Investments

- The Authority is able to invest up to £1 million and up to two months with individual UK banks and building societies with a “medium grade” credit rating.
- The Authority adopts an overall limit for non-specified investments of £2 million.

2.40 A maximum limit of £6 million applies to any one counterparty and this applies to a banking group rather than each individual bank within a group. For illustrative purposes, Appendix B lists which banks and building societies the Authority could invest with based on credit ratings as at the end of December 2024.

2.41 The policy allowing the Authority to invest up to £6 million with part-nationalised UK banks with mid “medium grade” credit ratings has been removed. With the Government steadily divesting themselves of their stake in these banks and the recent bail-in legislation, it is unlikely that the Government would bail these banks out if they got into further trouble.

2.42 There may be opportunities in the future for local authorities to use collateralised products, in particular reverse repurchase agreements (REPOs). These products are secured on the borrower’s assets (such as gilts or corporate bonds) and are exempt from bail-in. The rates are currently comparable to unsecured investments, but entry levels are likely to be for investments of £10 million plus. It is proposed that reverse repurchase agreements are available to use under the strategy at the higher level indicated above.

2.43 The Authority uses credit ratings from the three main rating agencies - Fitch, Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s to assess the risk of investment defaults (Appendix C). The lowest credit rating of an organisation will be used to determine credit quality. Long term ratings are expressed on a scale from AAA (the highest quality) through to D (indicating default). Ratings of BBB- and above are described as investment grade, while ratings of BB+ and below are described as speculative grade.

2.44 Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria:

- No new investments will be made.
- Any existing investments that can be recalled at no cost will be recalled.

- Full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

2.45 Where a credit rating agency announces that a rating is on review for possible downgrade (“rating watch negative or credit watch negative”) so that it is likely to fall below the required criteria, then no further investments will be made in that organisation until the outcome is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

2.46 Full regard will be given to other available information on the credit quality of banks and building societies, including credit default swap prices, financial statements and rating agency reports. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the approved criteria.

2.47 Investments may be made using the following instruments:

- Interest paying bank accounts.
- Fixed term deposits.
- Call or notice deposits.
- Callable deposits.
- Shares in money market funds.
- Reverse re-purchase agreements.

2.48 Investment of money borrowed in advance of need.

The Authority may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long-term value for money. However, as this would involve externally investing such sums until required and thus increasing exposures to both interest rate and principal risks, it is not believed appropriate to undertake such a policy at this time.

2.49 Annual cash flow forecasts are prepared which are continuously updated. This helps determine the maximum period for which funds may be prudently committed.

2.50 Investment policy and performance will be monitored continuously and will be reported to Members during the year and as part of the annual report on Treasury Management.

Prudential Indicators

2.51 The Authority is asked to approve certain treasury management indicators, the purpose of which is to contain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby reducing the risk or likelihood of an adverse movement in interest rates or borrowing decision impacting negatively on the Authority’s overall financial position. However, if these are set to be too restrictive, they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs. The proposed indicators are set out in Appendix E.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Financial implications are included within the main body of the report

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no human resource and diversity implications associated with this report

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 There are no human resource and diversity implications associated with this report.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

- 9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 The treasury management strategy determines the framework upon which the Authority manages its borrowing and investments during the year. This is essential for sound financial governance.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The following Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) set out the manner in which the Authority aims to achieve its treasury management policies and objectives, and how it will manage and control those activities.

1. **TMP 1 Risk management**

The Director of Finance and Procurement will design, implement and monitor all arrangements for the identification, management and control of treasury management risk, will report at least annually on the adequacy/suitability thereof, and will report, as a matter of urgency, the circumstances of any actual or likely difficulty in achieving the organisation's objectives in this respect, all in accordance with the procedures set out in TMP6 Reporting requirements and management information arrangements. In respect of each of the following risks, the arrangements which seek to ensure compliance with these objectives are set out in the schedule to this document.

Credit and counterparty risk management

The Authority regards a prime objective of its treasury management activities to be the security of the principal sums it invests. Accordingly, it will ensure that its counterparty lists and limits reflect a prudent attitude towards organisations with which funds may be deposited, and will limit its investment activities to the instruments, methods and techniques referred to in TMP4 Approved Instruments, methods and techniques and listed in the schedule to this document. It also recognises the need to have, and will therefore maintain, a formal counterparty policy in respect of those organisations from which it may borrow, or with whom it may enter into other financing arrangements.

Liquidity risk management

The Authority will ensure it has adequate though not excessive cash resources, borrowing arrangements, overdraft or standby facilities to enable it at all times to have the level of funds available to which are necessary for the achievement of its business/service objectives. The Authority will not borrow in advance of need.

Interest rate risk management

The Authority will manage its exposure to fluctuations in interest rates with a view to containing its net interest costs, or securing its interest revenues, in accordance with the amounts provided in its budgetary arrangements.

It will achieve these objectives by the prudent use of its approved financing and investment instruments, methods and techniques, primarily to create stability and certainty of costs and revenues, but at the same time retaining a sufficient degree of

flexibility to take advantage of unexpected, potentially advantageous changes in the level or structure of interest rates. The above is subject at all times to the consideration and, if required, approval of any policy or budgetary implications.

Exchange rate risk management

The Authority will manage its exposure to fluctuations in exchange rates so as to minimise any detrimental impact on its budgeted income/expenditure levels.

Refinancing risk management

The Authority will ensure that its borrowing is negotiated, structured and documented, and the maturity profile of the monies raised are managed, with a view to obtaining offer terms for renewal or refinancing, if required, which are competitive and as favourable to the Authority as can reasonably be achieved in the light of market conditions prevailing at the time.

It will actively manage its relationships with its counterparties in these transactions in such a manner as to secure this objective and will avoid over-reliance on any one source of funding if this might jeopardise achievement of the above.

Legal and regulatory risk management

The Authority will ensure that all of its treasury management activities comply with its statutory powers and regulatory requirements. It will demonstrate such compliance, if required to do so, to all parties with whom it deals in such activities. In framing its credit and counterparty policy under TMP1(i), it will ensure that there is evidence of counterparties' powers, authority, and compliance in respect of the transactions they may affect with the Authority.

The Authority recognises that future legislative or regulatory changes may impact on its treasury management activities and, so far as it is reasonably able to do so, will seek to minimise the risk of these impacting adversely on the organisation.

Fraud, error and corruption, and contingency management

The Authority will ensure that it has identified the circumstances which may expose it to the risk of loss through fraud, error, corruption or other eventualities in its treasury management dealings. Accordingly, it will employ suitable systems and procedures, and will maintain effective contingency management arrangements, to these ends.

Market risk management

The Authority will seek to ensure that its stated treasury management policies and objectives will not be compromised by adverse market fluctuations in the value of the principal sums it invests and will accordingly seek to protect itself from the effects of such fluctuations.

Environmental, Social & Governance Considerations

The Authority's credit and counterparty policies set out the policies and practices relating to environmental, social and governance investment considerations. The credit rating agencies that the Authority uses, incorporate ESG risks alongside more traditional financial risk metrics when assessing counterparty ratings.

2. TMP2 Performance measurement

The Authority is committed to the pursuit of value for money in its treasury management activities, and to the use of performance methodology in support of that aim, within the framework set out in its Treasury Management Policy Strategy Statement.

Accordingly, the treasury management function will be the subject of ongoing analysis of the value it adds in support of the Authority's stated business or service objectives. It will be the subject of regular examination of alternative methods of service delivery and of other potential improvements. The performance of the treasury management function will be measured using the criteria set out in the prudential indicators included within the treasury management strategy.

3 TMP3 Decision-making and analysis

The Authority will maintain full records of its treasury management decisions, and of the processes and practices applied in reaching those decisions, both for the purposes of learning from the past, and for demonstrating that reasonable steps were taken to ensure that all issues relevant to those decisions were taken into account at the time.

4 TMP4 Approved instruments, methods and techniques.

The Authority will undertake its treasury management activities by employing only those instruments, methods and techniques detailed in the schedule to this document, and within the limits and parameters defined in TMP1 Risk management.

Where the Authority intends to use derivative instruments for the management of risks, these will be limited to those set out in its annual treasury strategy. The Authority will seek proper advice when entering into arrangements to use such products.

5. TMP5 Organisation, clarity and segregation of responsibilities, and dealing arrangements

The Authority considers it essential, for the purposes of the effective control and monitoring of its treasury management activities, and for the reduction of the risk of fraud or error, and for the pursuit of optimum performance, that these activities are structured and managed in a fully integrated manner, and that there is at all times a clarity of treasury management responsibilities.

The principles on which this will be based is a clear distinction between those charged with setting treasury management policies and those charged with implementing and controlling these policies, particularly with regard to the execution and transmission of funds, the recording and administering of treasury management decisions, and the audit and review of the treasury management function.

If and when the Authority intends, as a result of lack of resources or other circumstances, to depart from these principles, the Director of Finance and Procurement will ensure that the reasons are properly reported in accordance with TMP6 Reporting requirements and management information arrangements, and the implications properly considered and evaluated.

The Director of Finance and Procurement will ensure that there are clear written statements of the responsibilities for each post engaged in treasury management, and the arrangement for absence cover. The present arrangements are detailed in the schedule to this document.

The Director of Finance and Procurement will ensure there is proper documentation for all deals and transactions, and that procedures exist for the effective transmission of funds. The present arrangements are detailed in the schedule to this document.

The delegation to the Director of Finance and Procurement in respect of treasury management is set out in the schedule to this document. The Director of Finance and Procurement will fulfil all such responsibilities in accordance with the Authority's policy statement and TMPs and, as a CIPFA member, the Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

6. TMP6 Reporting requirements and management information arrangements

The Authority will ensure that regular reports are prepared and considered on the implementation of its treasury management policies; on the effects of decisions taken and the transactions executed in pursuit of those policies; on the implications of changes, particularly budgetary, resulting from regulatory, economic, market or other factors affecting its treasury management activities; and on the performance of the treasury management function.

As a minimum, the Authority and Finance & Resources Committee will receive:

- an annual report on the strategy and plan to be pursued in the coming year.
- a mid-year review.
- an annual report on the performance of the treasury management function, on the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the organisation's Treasury Management Policy Statement and TMPs.

The present arrangements and the form of these reports are detailed in the treasury management strategy.

7. TMP7 Budgeting, accounting and audit arrangements

The Director of Finance and Procurement will prepare, and the Authority will approve and, if necessary, from time to time amend, an annual budget for treasury management, which will bring together all of the costs involved in running the treasury management function, together with associated income. The matters to be included in the budget will at a minimum be those required by statute or regulation, together with such information as will demonstrate compliance with the TMPs. Budgeting procedures are set out in the capital strategy included in section 2.1 of this report. The Director of Finance and Procurement will exercise effective controls over this budget and will report any major variations.

The Authority will account for its treasury management activities, for decisions made and transactions executed, in accordance with appropriate accounting practices and standards, and with statutory and regulatory requirements in force for the time being. The present form of this function's accounts is set out in section 2.1 of this document.

The Authority will ensure that its auditors, and those charged with regulatory review, have access to all information and papers supporting the activities of the treasury management function as are necessary for the proper fulfilment of their roles, and that such information and papers demonstrate compliance with external and internal policies and approved practices.

8. TMP8 Cash and cash flow management

Unless statutory or regulatory requirements demand otherwise, all monies in the hands of the Authority will be under the control of the Director of Finance and Procurement and will be aggregated for cash flow purposes. Cash flow projections will be prepared on a regular and timely basis, and the Director of Finance and Procurement will ensure that these are adequate for the purposes of monitoring compliance with TMP1(i) Liquidity risk management.

9. TMP9 Money laundering

The Authority is alert to the possibility that it may become the subject of an attempt to involve it in a transaction involving the laundering of money. Accordingly, it will ensure that staff involved in treasury management activities are fully aware of their responsibilities with regards this. The present safeguards, including the name of the officer to whom any suspicions should be reported, are detailed in the Authority's constitution.

10. **TMP10 Training and qualifications**

The Authority recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff involved in the treasury management function are fully equipped to undertake the duties and responsibilities allocated to them. It will therefore seek to appoint individuals who are both capable and experienced and will provide training for staff to enable them to acquire and maintain an appropriate level of expertise, knowledge and skills.

The Director of Finance and Procurement will ensure that Members of the committee providing a scrutiny function have access to regular training relevant to their responsibilities.

11 **TMP11 Use of external service providers**

The Authority recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions always remains with the organisation. However, it also recognises the potential value of employing external providers of treasury management services, in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. When it employs such service providers, it will ensure it does so for reasons which will have been submitted to full evaluation of the costs and benefits. It will also ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review. It will also ensure, where feasible and necessary, that a spread of service providers is used, to avoid over-reliance on one or a small number of companies. Where services are subject to formal tender or re-tender arrangements, legislative requirements and the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules will always be observed.

12. **TMP12 Corporate governance**

The Authority is committed to the pursuit of proper corporate governance throughout its businesses and services, and to establishing the principles and practices by which this can be achieved. Accordingly, the treasury management function and its activities will be undertaken with openness and transparency, honesty, integrity and accountability.

The Authority has adopted and has implemented the key principles of the Code. This, together with the other arrangements detailed in the schedule to this document, are considered vital to the achievement of proper corporate governance in treasury management, and the Director of Finance and Procurement will monitor and, if necessary, report upon the effectiveness of these arrangements.

Appendix B

Investment Strategy

Specified

	Short-term Credit Ratings / Long-Term Credit Ratings			Investment Limits per Counterparty		Counterparties falling into category as at December 2024
	Fitch	Moody's	S & P	£m	Period (1)	
Banks / Building Societies (Reverse Repurchase Agreements)	F1 AAA,AA+, AA, AA- ,A+,A,A,-	P-1 Aaa,Aa1,A a2, Aa3,A1,A2 ,A3	A-1 AAA,AA+, AA, AA- ,A+,A,A,-	10	Up to 364 days	
Banks / Building Societies (Deposit Accounts, fixed term deposits)	F1 AAA,AA+, AA, AA- ,A+,A,A,-	P-1 Aaa,Aa1,A a2, Aa3,A1,A2 ,A3	A-1 AAA,AA+, AA, AA- ,A+,A,A,-	6	<100 days	
MMF (3)	-	-	-	6	Instant access/ up to 2 day notice	Aberdeen Standard, Aviva, Goldman Sachs, Royal London
UK Government (Fixed Term Deposits)	-	-	-	Unlimited	<6mth	
UK local authorities (Fixed Term Deposits)	-	-	-	Unlimited	Up to 364 days	London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, Kingston Upon Hull City Council, Surry County Council

Non-Specified (4)

	Short-term Credit Ratings / Long-Term Credit Ratings			Investment Limits per Counterparty		Counterparties falling into category as at December 2024
	Fitch	Moody's	S & P	£m	Period (1)	
UK Banks / Building Societies	F1,F2 Higher than BBB	P-1,P-2 Higher than Baa2	A-1,A-2 Higher than BBB	6	<2mth	

- (1) The investment period begins from the date on which funds are paid over.
- (2) These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.
- (3) Overall limit for investments in MMFs of £24 million.
- (4) Overall limit of £24 million.

Credit ratings

Moody's		S&P		Fitch					
Long-term	Short-term	Long-term	Short-term	Long-term	Short-term				
Aaa	P-1	AAA	A-1+	AAA	F1+	Prime			
Aa1		AA+		AA+		High grade			
Aa2		AA		AA					
Aa3		AA-		AA-					
A1	P-2	A+	A-1	A+	F1	Upper mediumgrade			
A2		A		A					
A3		A-		A-					
Baa1	P-3	BBB+	A-2	BBB+	F2	Lower mediumgrade			
Baa2		BBB		BBB					
Baa3	Not prime	BBB-	A-3	BBB-	F3				
Ba1		BB+		B			BB+	B	Non-investment grade speculative
Ba2		BB					BB		
Ba3		BB-	BB-						
B1		B+	B+		Highly speculative				
B2		B	B						
B3		B-	B-						
Caa1	C	CCC+	C		CCC	C	Substantial risks		
Caa2		CCC		Extremely speculative					
Caa3		CCC-							

Ca		CC				In default with little prospect for recovery
		C				
C		D	/	DDD	/	In default
/				DD		
/						

Appendix D

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON THE MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (REPAYMENT OF DEBT)

1. Background

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2008 which came into force on 31 March 2008, replaced the detailed statutory rules for calculating Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) with a requirement to make an amount of MRP which the authority considers “prudent”.

2. Prudent Provision

The regulation does not itself define “prudent provision”. However, guidance issued alongside the regulations makes recommendations on the interpretation of that term.

The guidance provides two basic criteria for prudent provision: -

- Borrowing not supported by government grant (prudential borrowing) – the provision for repayment of debt should be linked to the life of the asset.
- Borrowing previously supported by revenue support grant (supported borrowing) – the provision should be in line with the period implicit within the grant determination (4% reducing balance).

3. MRP Overpayments

As defined in the Code the Authority has always set aside additional funding, on top of the regulated MRP, to repay the borrowing of money to fund capital. This additional funding that is set aside is called a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP). A change introduced by the revised DLUHC, now MHCLG, MRP Guidance, allows for any charges made over the statutory minimum revenue provision (MRP), to be reclaimed, if required, for use in the budget. These revised guidelines came into effect from the 1st of April 2019. Up until the 31 March 2024 the total VRP overpayments were £6.8m. These overpayments have allowed for prudent voluntary repayments to reduce the indebtedness of the Authority within a shorter timescale providing greater financial stability in the long term.

4. Proposed policy for 2025/26

The Authority has always been prudent when making provision for the repayment of debt. In addition to the minimum revenue provision of 4% of debt outstanding previously required, the Authority had regularly made additional voluntary contributions. These voluntary contributions have been calculated to reflect asset life. Thus, for example, debt used to finance vehicles, and many types of operational equipment has been fully provided for over a 10 to 15-year period and all new buildings over 40. These additional voluntary contributions covered all debt, not just unsupported, and have been calculated using a sinking fund method with reference to asset lives.

It is proposed that if any MRP/Interest budget becomes available due to for example, capital schemes being re phased, a reduction in the capital plan or receipt of additional capital receipts, the Authority may choose to make additional MRP payments providing the financial position remains in line with the approved financial plan. In addition, any revenue budget savings identified during the year may also be used to make one off MRP payments or be transferred to the earmarked capital finance reserve.

It is recommended that this policy is adopted for 2025/26. The features of the policy can be summarised as follows:

- Provision to be made over the estimated life of the asset for which borrowing is undertaken (maximum asset life of 40 years / 50 years for Land)
- To be applied to supported and unsupported borrowing
- Provision will increase over the asset life using sinking fund tables.
- Provision will commence in the financial year following the one in which the expenditure is incurred.

The proposed medium term financial plan includes budget provision to meet the MRP and interest payments based on historical and planned future capital spend. The Authority in the past has determined it can afford and sustain prudential borrowing in order to allow the required level of investment in the infrastructure and assets of the Authority to deliver a modern well-equipped fire and rescue service.

Appendix E

TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The Code requires that where gross debt is greater than the CFR, thereasons for this should be clearly stated in the annual strategy. This does not apply to this Authority as its gross debt will not exceed the CFR.

Interest Rate Exposures

While fixed rate borrowing can contribute significantly to reducing the uncertainty surrounding future interest rate scenarios, the pursuit of optimum performance justifies retaining a degree of flexibility through the use of variable interest rates on at least part of the treasury management portfolio. The Code requires the setting of upper limits for both variable rate and fixed interest rate exposure.

It is recommended that the Authority sets an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 of 100% of net interest payments. It is further recommended that the Authority sets an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 of 40% of its net interest payments.

	Limit 2025/26	Forecast 2025/26
Interest at fixed rates as a percentage of net interest payments	60%-100%	100%
Interest at variable rates as a percentage of net interest payments	0% - 40%	0%

This means that fixed interest rate exposures will be managed within the range 60% to 100%, and variable interest rate exposures within the range 0% to 40%.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is designed to prevent the Authority having large concentrations of fixed rate debt* needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates. It is recommended that the Authority sets upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowings as follows:

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate.	Limit Set 2025/26	Forecast Actual 2025/26
Under 12 months	0% -20%	6.8%
12 months to 2 years	0% -20%	2.5%
2 years to 5 years	0% -60%	5.0%
5 years to 10 years	0% -80%	5.3%
More than 10 years	20% -100%	80.4%

*LOBOs are classed as fixed rate debt unless it is considered probable that the loan option will be exercised.

Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days.

The Authority is not intending to invest sums for periods longer than 364 days.

Liability Benchmark

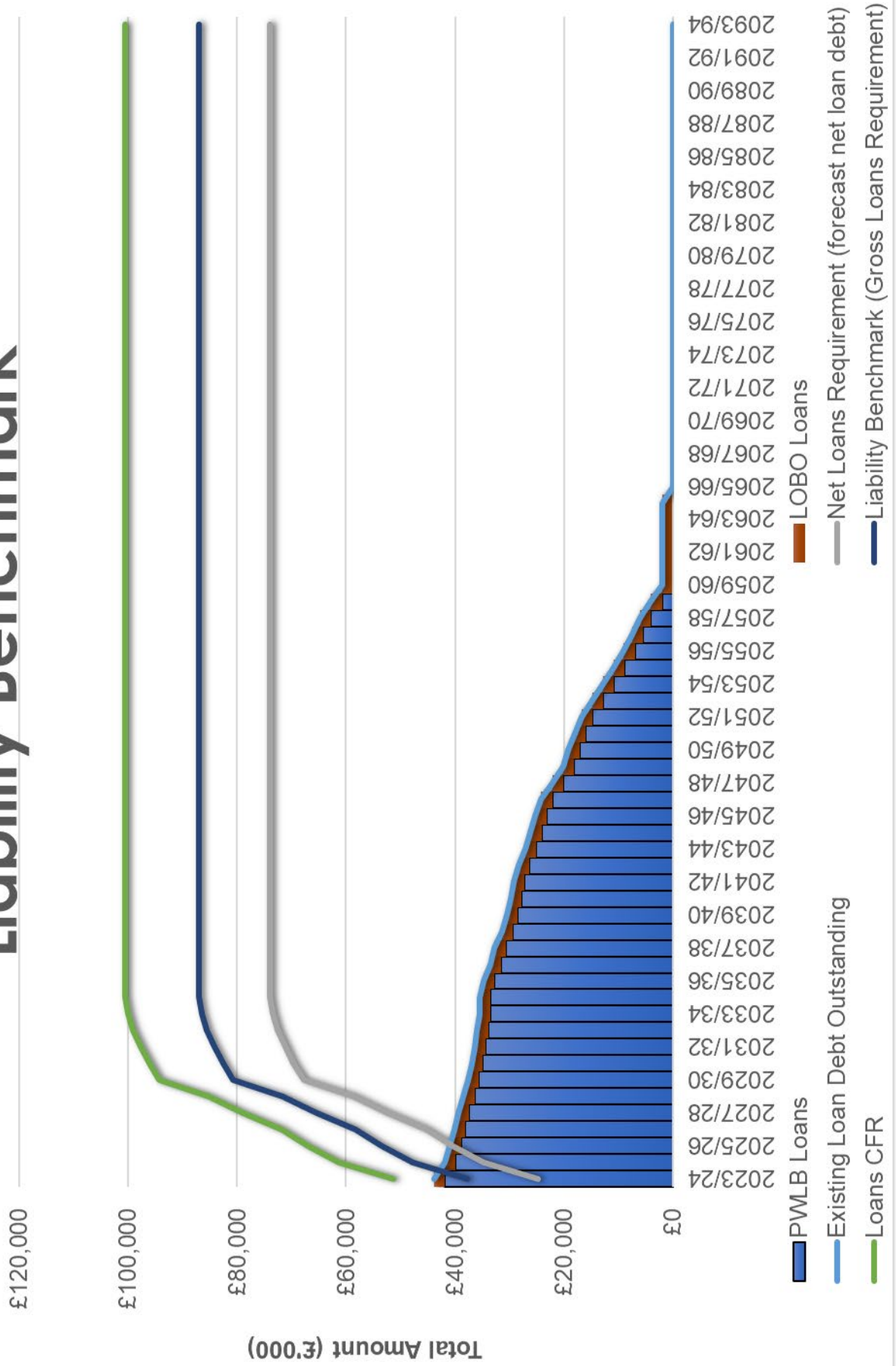
The liability benchmark is a projection of the amount of loan debt outstanding that the authority needs each year into the future to fund its existing debt liabilities, planned prudential borrowing and other cash flows. It is a long-term forecast of the authority's gross loan debt (or 'gross loans requirement') based on its current capital programme and other forecast cash flow movements.

This is shown by the gap between the authority's existing loans that are still outstanding at a given future date and the authority's future need for borrowing (as shown by the liability benchmark).

It therefore shows how closely the existing loans book fits the future needs of the authority based only on its current plans. Any shortfall will need to be met by future borrowing; any excess will have to be invested (unless existing borrowing is prematurely repaid). Refinancing risk, interest rate risk and credit risk can be minimised or reduced by ensuring that the existing loans portfolio shows a profile close to the liability benchmark.

In particular, the liability benchmark identifies the maturities needed for new borrowing in order to match future liabilities. It therefore avoids borrowing for too long or too short.

Liability Benchmark



Appendix F

DEPARTMENT	Forecast Outturn 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
CRMP	£12,784,408	£0	£0	£2,000,000	£6,000,000	£10,000,000	£18,000,000
Employment Services		£40,000	£0	£20,000	£0	£10,000	£70,000
Finance	£765,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£4,000,000
Fire Safety	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£2,000,000
ICT	£705,700	£730,000	£1,120,500	£1,841,500	£483,000	£255,300	£4,430,300
Occupational Health and Safety Unit	£10,000	£34,400	£0	£0	£0	£0	£34,400
Operations Equipment	£3,494,576	£2,699,500	£890,000	£2,003,800	£1,671,500	£835,000	£8,099,800
Property	£1,849,944	£6,140,000	£9,420,000	£5,800,000	£3,000,000	£3,200,000	£27,560,000
Training Centre	£0	£177,400	£69,000	£69,000	£84,000	£69,000	£468,400
Transport	£7,192,543	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
Total	£27,202,171	£11,031,300	£12,699,500	£12,934,300	£12,438,500	£15,569,300	£64,672,900
Financing							
Borrowing	£15,909,171	£3,917,300	£9,849,500	£11,584,300	£11,338,500	£14,469,300	£51,158,900
Reserves	£9,493,000	£5,529,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£7,529,000
Capital Receipts		£985,000	£1,750,000	£250,000			£2,985,000
Revenue (included in capital financing charges)	£1,800,000	£600,000	£600,000	£600,000	£600,000	£600,000	£3,000,000
	£27,202,171	£11,031,300	£12,699,500	£12,934,300	£12,438,500	£15,569,300	£64,672,900

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Agenda item: 11

Pay Policy Statement

Full Authority

Date: 27 February 2025

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: To request approval of the Pay Policy Statement under the Localism Act 2011

Recommendations: That Members approve the Pay Policy Statement.

Summary: The report sets out the Authority's Pay Policy Statement, which requires the approval of Members

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Sonia Pawson, Director of People and Culture
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Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Pay Policy Statement 2025/26

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011, relevant Authorities, (which include Fire and Rescue Authorities) are required to prepare a pay policy statement. These statements must articulate an Authority's own policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff (or 'Chief Officers') and its lowest paid employees.
- 1.2 Pay policy statements must be prepared each financial year. They must be approved by 'Full Council', or a meeting of members in the case of a Fire and Rescue Authority and published. The statement must be approved by March 31st each year.
- 1.3 Each local Authority / Fire Authority is an individual employer in its own right and has the autonomy to make decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and which deliver value for money for local taxpayers. The provisions of the Act do not seek to change this or determine what decisions on pay should be taken or what policies individual employing Authorities should have in place. They require that Authorities are open about their own local policies and how their local decisions are made.

2. Information

- 2.1 The guidance, to which Authorities must have regard when exercising their functions under pay accountability provisions, sets out what the pay policy statements should include and these are:
 - The level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
 - Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment
 - Increases and additions to remuneration of each Chief Officer
 - The use of performance related pay for Chief Officers
 - The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office under, or being employed by, the Authority and
 - The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers
- 2.2 The guidance also sets out what 'remuneration' for these purposes covers.
 - The Chief Officer's salary or, in the case of a Chief Officer engaged by the Authority under a contract for services, payments made by the Authority to the Chief Officer for those services
 - Any bonuses payable by the authority to the Chief Officer
 - Any charges, fees or allowances payable by the Authority to the Chief Officer
 - Any benefits in kind to which the Chief Officer is entitled as a result of the Chief Officer's office or employment
 - Any increase or enhancement of the chief officer's pension entitlement when the increase or enhancement is as a result of a resolution of the authority, and

- Any amounts payable by the authority to the Chief Officer on the Chief Officer ceasing to hold office, under or be employed by the authority other than the amounts that may be payable by virtue of any enactment.

2.3 For the purposes of clarity, Chief Officers in this context will be those officers in this Authority on either gold or blue book conditions i.e. members of the Management Board. The attached pay policy statement addresses all the points and guidance set out above.

2.4 The draft Pay Policy statement for 2025-26 is attached for approval as Annex A

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

5.1 Demonstrating that the Authority has had due regard to advance equality of opportunity (particularly equal pay for employees with protected characteristics) would provide evidence of compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The job evaluation scheme to which the Authority subscribes aims to deliver this

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.

- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.

10. Conclusions

10.1 The attached Pay Policy Statement meets the requirements of Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011. The statement will be published on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority website.

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY PAY POLICY STATEMENT

1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026

Introduction and purpose

This Pay Policy Statement (the 'statement') sets out West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority's (WYFRA) approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency about WYFRA's approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying:

- The methods by which salaries of all employees are determined.
- The detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff i.e. Chief Officers/Directors, as defined by the relevant legislation.
- The Committees/Departments responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout WYFRA and recommending any pay policy amendments to the Fire Authority.

This policy statement has been approved by the Fire Authority and is effective from 1 April 2025. It will be subject to review annually and in accordance with new or proposed legislation to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.

Accountability and decision making

The WYFRA Constitution outlines the responsibilities for decision making in relation to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements in relation to employees of WYFRA.

Responsibility and scale

WYFRA is directly responsible for a budget of circa £117 million and for the employment of 1,391 employees within 1,504 posts. 113 of our current employees hold multiple roles within WYFRA.

Pay strategy and design

In determining the pay and remuneration of its employees, WYFRA complies with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time

Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, the Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and, where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. WYFRA takes the following approach to assessing individual and overall pay levels.

- Salaries of 'Green Book' employees in the Service are set using locally determined pay scales within the nationally determined pay spine and the nationally agreed Job Evaluation Scheme, with the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme being used for posts at Grade EO1 and above.
- Salaries of 'Grey Book' employees in the Service are set using nationally agreed pay levels.
- Where applicable, annual awards are normally made in April for Green Book Employees, July for Grey Book Employees and January for Chief Officers.
- WYFRA does not use performance related pay for its Chief Officers.
- WYFRA does not award bonuses to Chief Officers.

Pay structure

To encourage Green Book employees to develop in their role and to improve their performance, WYFRA has arranged salaries within 13 pay grades. There are also pay increments within each grade. Progression through the pay grade is based on:

- Meeting identified performance goals
- Length of service
- Promotion and development

New employees will usually be appointed to the minimum pay level for the relevant grade unless relevant supporting experience of existing pay can be identified. Managers have the discretion to recommend an employee for acceleration of increments within the grade when they have demonstrated exceptional performance.

Grey Book employees can increase in rank through successfully completing the promotion assessment process. Within role, individuals will either be paid at a competent or development rate. This will be dependent upon them completing the requirements of development for that role.

From time to time, it may be necessary to pay special allowances or supplements to individual employees as part of their employment contract and/or outside of their employment contract, where specific circumstances require this and where it can be justified, with a supporting business case in accordance with WYFRA policies.

Other employment-related arrangements

Subject to meeting the qualifying conditions, employees are automatically opted in to a pension scheme. The pension schemes WYFRA employees are currently members of include:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS): employee contribution rates, which are defined by statute, currently range between 5.5% and 12.5 % of pensionable pay.
- Firefighters Pension Scheme 2015: employee contribution rates currently range between 10.5% and 14.5% of pensionable pay.

Under the LGPS, the Authority has the discretion to augment membership of the scheme up to a maximum of ten extra years or enable early access to the scheme.

Pay arrangements for Chief Officers

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Chief Officers' pay is determined by the conditions of service to which officers are subject.

In this case, they are the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services (Gold Book) and the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (Blue Book).

The information detailed below is approved by the Full Authority of elected members and the statement is available on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority website, www.westyorksfire.gov.uk.

	Salary Point One	Salary Point Two	Salary Point Three	Lease Car Contribution
Chief Fire Officer	£181,521	£185,176	£190,831	£8,655
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£164,057	£168,374	£172,692	£7,588

Assistant Chief Fire Officer	£144,756	£148,566	£152,375	£7,588
Director of Finance and Procurement	£120,630	£123,805	£126,979	£5,419
Director of People and Culture	£120,630	£123,805	£126,979	£5,419
Director of Corporate Services	£86,854	£89,139	£91,425	£5,419

The above is based on Full Time Equivalents.

- The Chief Fire Officer is currently paid at salary point 3
- The Deputy Chief Fire Officer is currently paid at salary point 3
- The Assistant Chief Officer is currently paid at salary point 3
- The Director of Finance and Procurement is paid at salary point 3
- The Director of People and Culture is paid at salary point 1 (this will move to point 2 on 1 July 2025)
- The Director of Corporate Services is paid at salary point 3

Chief Officers also receive reimbursement for internet and telephone charges and for professional subscriptions.

Lowest paid employees

The lowest paid persons employed under a contract of employment with WYFRA are employed on full time 37 hours equivalent salaries in accordance with the salary scale currently in use within WYFRA.

As of 1 April 2024, the lowest scale is point 5 within Grade 1 of the Authority's pay scale and has a salary of £24,790 (£12.89 per hour). The National Living Wage (for those aged 21 and over) currently stands at £11.44 per hour which equates to a salary of £22,010 per annum. This will rise to £12.21 per hour on 1 April 2025. The Authority is committed to paying the Real Living Wage. This currently stands at £12.00 per hour but is set to rise to at least £12.60 an hour. The Real Living Wage rates increase in November each year and the Authority has 6 months to implement any increase (the increase will be implemented on 1 April 2025). It should be noted that the national pay award, effective from 1 April 2025, is still to be determined. It is likely that any award will ensure the Authority's lowest paid employees remain above the living wage. If this

is not the case, then a salary supplement will be paid in accordance with Authority policy.

The term 'lowest paid employees' is defined as a full-time equivalent employee on the bottom scale column point of the Authority's pay scale or the lowest paid role/rank for Grey Book employees.

The Authority adopts this definition because pay arrangements for employees' who are not Chief Officers, are based upon nationally negotiated pay scales from the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services ('Grey Book') and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services ('Green Book').

The relationship between Chief Officers' pay and other Authority employees is represented by the pay multiple between the two categories:

- The pay multiple between the highest and lowest paid salaries is 7.82 (8.01 in 2024-25, 8.12 in 2023-24 and 9.09 in 2022-23)
- The pay multiple between the highest paid salary and the median salary of the whole of the Authority's workforce is 5.07 (5.11 in 2024-25, 5.33 in 2023-24, 5.19 in 2022-23). The current Median salary is £37,675.

Chief Officers' salaries are determined by reference to appropriate National Joint Council conditions of service, comparison of salaries in similar authorities and occasionally by reference to employment consultants. The last external review was completed in 2022, data has been shared for 2023 and 2024.

All the information relating to the remuneration of Chief Officers is available in West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Statement of Accounts published on the website and is also available under 'Transparency' in the Finance section on the Authority website.

In addition, the pay scales of all other senior staff within the Authority are available under 'Transparency' in the Finance section on the Authority website.

Payment on termination of employment

Those Chief Officers who are contracted to the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services are members of the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS). Those within the FPS pay contributions between 13.5% and 14.5%. Any payments made to them on retirement are subject to the rules and regulations of this pension scheme.

Similarly, those Chief Officers contracted to the Joint Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and are subject to the rules and regulations of that pension scheme. Those within the LGPS pay pension contributions of between 9.9% and 10.5%. In addition, there is provision at a local level for them to request flexible retirement via the Flexible Retirement Policy which is available on the Authority website.

Under the LGPS, the Authority also has the discretion to augment membership of the scheme up to a maximum of ten extra years, or to enable early access to the scheme.

In cases where an employee's contract is terminated on the grounds of redundancy or on grounds of efficiency there is discretion to pay a lump sum of up to 104 weeks' pay. Further details of these payments can be found within the Authority's 'Early Termination Policy' sited within the Human Resources section of the Authority website. This will be reviewed once the Government plans to cap public sector exit payments are enacted to ensure full compliance.

Those Chief Officers who are members of the Firefighters Pension Scheme do not receive any enhancements to redundancy payments.

Publication of pay policy statement

Upon approval by the Fire Authority, this statement will be published on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority website; www.westyorksfire.gov.uk. In addition, for posts where the full-time equivalent salary is at least £50,000, the Authority's annual statement of accounts will include a note setting out the total amount of:

- Salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable by the person in the current and previous year
- Any bonuses so paid or receivable by the person in the current and previous year
- Any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax
- Any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination
- Any benefits received that do not fall within the above.

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Agenda item: 12

Capital Investment Plan, Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan

Full Authority

Date: 27th February 2025

Submitted by: Director of Finance and Procurement

Purpose: To present the capital investment plan, revenue budget and the medium -term financial plan and to set a precept for 2025/26

Recommendations: That the resolution detailed in section 13 of this report is approved

Summary: This report presents details of the revenue budget for 2025/26 along with the three-year Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme. Included within the report are details of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2025/26, a standstill budget and the planned use of reserves.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: Nil

Contact Officer: Alison Wood, Director of Finance and Procurement,

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**Background papers
open to inspection:**

None

Annexes:

Appendix A – Capital Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30

Appendix B – Standstill Budget 2025/26

Appendix C – Revenue Budget 2025/26

Appendix D – Directorate Budgets 2025/26

1. Introduction

This is a consolidated report which presents the Executive Leadership Team's proposals for: -

- (i) A Capital Investment Plan for the five years to 2029/2030.
- (ii) The Prudential Indicators to support the financing of the Capital Plan.
- (iii) A Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan for the same period.

2. Information

Proposed Capital Investment

2.1 The Local Government Act 2003 sets out a framework for the financing of capital investments in local authorities which came into operation from April 2004, CIPFA developed the Prudential Code to support authorities' decision making in the areas of capital investment and financing. In December 2017, CIPFA updated the prudential code, whilst the majority of the code remains unchanged, there is now a requirement to produce a capital strategy in order to demonstrate that it takes capital expenditure decisions in line with service objectives and properly takes account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability, and affordability. This is detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy which is subject to a separate report on this agenda.

Capital is considered first in the report so members can clearly consider the revenue impacts of capital investment and borrowing decisions as part of the revenue budget and council tax considerations.

Capital Plan

2.2 The Executive Leadership Team are proposing a five-year capital investment plan of £64.673m which includes expenditure of £11.031m in 2025/2026. This is analysed by department in the table overleaf.

The largest capital schemes in 2025/26 are the completion of the rebuild of Keighley Fire Station, the commencement of the rebuild of Huddersfield Fire Station and the implementation of the new command and control system.

The 2025/26 capital plan also includes:

- Mobile phone replacement
- Refurbishment of Hunslet Fire Station
- Refurbishment of Illingworth Fire Station
- Bradford Fire Station dormitories and showers
- Upgrade to fire station boilers
- PC replacement programme
- Replacement of defibrillators
- Replacement rescue jackets

2.3 Capital Plan including financing

DEPARTMENT	Forecast Outturn 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
CRMP	£12,784,408	£0	£0	£2,000,000	£6,000,000	£10,000,000	£18,000,000
Employment Services		£40,000	£0	£20,000	£0	£10,000	£70,000
Finance	£765,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£4,000,000
Fire Safety	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£2,000,000
ICT	£705,700	£730,000	£1,120,500	£1,841,500	£483,000	£255,300	£4,430,300
Occupational Health and Safety Unit	£10,000	£34,400	£0	£0	£0	£0	£34,400
Operations Equipment	£3,494,576	£2,699,500	£890,000	£2,003,800	£1,671,500	£835,000	£8,099,800
Property	£1,849,944	£6,140,000	£9,420,000	£5,800,000	£3,000,000	£3,200,000	£27,560,000
Training Centre	£0	£177,400	£69,000	£69,000	£84,000	£69,000	£468,400
Transport	£7,192,543	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
Total	£27,202,171	£11,031,300	£12,699,500	£12,934,300	£12,438,500	£15,569,300	£64,672,900
Financing							
Borrowing	£15,909,171	£3,957,300	£9,889,500	£11,624,300	£11,378,500	£14,509,300	£51,358,900
Reserves	£9,493,000	£5,529,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£7,529,000
Capital Receipts		£985,000	£1,750,000	£250,000			£2,985,000
Revenue Contributions	£1,800,000	£560,000	£560,000	£560,000	£560,000	£560,000	£2,800,000
	£27,202,171	£11,031,300	£12,699,500	£12,934,300	£12,438,500	£15,569,300	£64,672,900

Details of the individual schemes included in the draft capital plan is included in Appendix A to this report.

Capital Financing

- 2.4 All capital expenditure must be financed, there are four main sources of capital finance available; capital grants, capital receipts, internal and external borrowing, and the use of reserves, all of which are explained below.

Capital Grants

- 2.5 The Authority does not anticipate the receipt of any capital grants in 2025/26.

Capital Receipts

- 2.6 Capital receipts are used to either purchase new capital assets or repay outstanding loans. The Authority is currently marketing the appliances that have been replaced in the fleet replacement programme and it is expected that the sale of Cleckheaton Fire Station will complete in mid 2025/26.

- 2.7 In addition the Authority will have capital receipts from the sale of the Service Delivery Centre and Oakroyd Hall, albeit the timing of these receipts is unknown at present.

Borrowing

- 2.8 The balance of the expenditure will be funded by borrowing and the use of internal reserves, the table shows a total borrowing requirement of £51.359m over the period. The government provides no additional grant to assist the Authority with financing the capital plan.

- 2.9 Over recent years the Authority has been borrowing internally to fund capital expenditure using its revenue balances and reserves, no new external long-term borrowing has been taken out since December 2011.

- 2.10 Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP, or debt repayments) are charged to revenue, offset by interest receivable. The net annual charges are known as capital financing costs.
- 2.11 Due to the size of the capital plan over the next four years it is likely that the Authority will be required to take out external borrowing in Spring 2025, the costs of current and future debt servicing costs have been built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The Authority does not distinguish between capital and revenue cash flows.

Reserves

- 2.12 The Authority has an earmarked reserve which is specifically for the funding of capital projects. Due to the nature of capital financing charges in the form of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) it is proposed that the purchase of long-life assets is funded from the capital financing earmarked reserve. This means that the only cost to revenue will be the interest charge on external loans and taxpayers of West Yorkshire will not be subject to MRP charges over the next forty years (i.e.) the life of the asset. For example, an asset costing £1m with an estimated life of 40 years the average annual charge of MRP and interest in revenue would be £67k per annum, this saving means that the Authority can spend this money on other areas. To put this into financial context, if the Authority had to borrow in full the cost of the FSHQ development of £31m, the annual cost to revenue would be £2.077m. over the life of the asset which is 40 years this would amount to £83m.

In addition, revenue underspends are either used to make additional voluntary minimum revenue provision charges or transferred to earmarked reserves to support future expenditure plans.

- 2.13 The capital finance reserve, which has a balance of £15.1m as of the 1st of April 2024, will be used on the re-development of FSHQ and the remainder will be used to fund the rebuild of Huddersfield Fire Station. If the Authority underspends the revenue budget in 2024/25, this will be transferred to the capital finance reserve.

3. Prudential Indicators

- 3.1 The CIPFA Prudential Code requires that local authorities produce a number of prudential indicators before the beginning of each financial year and have them approved by the same executive body that approves the budget. The purpose of the indicators is to provide a framework for capital expenditure decision making, highlighting the level of capital expenditure, the impact on borrowing levels, and the overall controls in place to ensure the activity remains affordable, prudent, and sustainable. Fundamentally, the objective of the Code is that the total of an Authority's capital investment remains within sustainable limits, following consideration of the impact on the "bottom line" Council Tax.

Some of the indicators are specific to the Authority's treasury management activity and are set out in the Treasury Management Report. The rest of the indicators are linked to affordability and are set out below.

Capital Expenditure, Capital Financing Requirement and External Debt

- 3.2 The Authority's capital expenditure projections, from para 2.2, impacts directly on the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and the Authority's debt position. The CFR is a calculation of the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. When external borrowing is below the CFR, this reveals that the Authority is using some internal balances, such as reserves/creditors, to temporarily finance capital expenditure as is currently the case.

	Estimate 2025/26 £000's	Estimate 2026/27 £000's	Estimate 2027/28 £000's	Estimate 2028/29 £000's
CFR	64,390	70,336	78,125	84,968

The table shows an estimated borrowing requirement of £84.968m by 2028/29 which reflects the size of the capital plan and the need to take out external borrowing in 2025/26.

Limits to Borrowing Activity

- 3.3 The first key control over the Authority's borrowing activity is a Prudential Indicator to ensure that, over the medium term, net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose. Net external borrowing should not, except in the short-term, exceed the total Capital Financing Requirement in the preceding year, plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for 2024/25 and the next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years.

The Authority comfortably complied with the requirement to keep net borrowing below the relevant Capital Financing Requirement in 2024/25, and no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years.

- 3.4 A further two Prudential Indicators control the overall level of borrowing. These are the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary. The Authorised Limit represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short-term, but is not sustainable. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

- 3.5 The Authorised Limit is based on the Authority's plans for capital expenditure and financing and is consistent with its Treasury Management Policy. It allows for sufficient headroom to switch financing for capital projects from reserves, capital

receipts and revenue contributions to external borrowing. The Operational Boundary is based on the probable external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit, and actual borrowing could vary around this boundary for short times during this year.

- 3.6 The Authority is asked to approve the following limits for its total external debt, gross of any investments. These limits separately identify borrowing from other long-term liabilities such as finance leases.

	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's
Authorised Limit for External Debt	65	74	86	97
Operational Boundary for External Debt	60	69	81	92

Affordability Prudential Indicators

- 3.7 The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. The following indicator provides an indication of the capital investment plans on the overall finances of the Authority:

Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital against the net revenue stream (amounts met from Revenue Support Grant, local taxpayers, and balances):

	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28	Estimate 2028/29
Ratio of Financing costs to net revenue stream	6.11%	6.29%	6.11%	5.94%	6.28%

It is accepted practice that this should not exceed 10%, this is due to the inability to influence capital financing charges once the capital investment has been committed. Other expenditure in the revenue budget can be reduced in the short to medium term if required, there is little flexibility to do the same with capital financing charges.

4. Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan

- 4.1 Whilst the Authority will only be required to approve the budget and precept for 2025/26 it is important that the Authority consider the medium-term impact of the decision.

This section is split into five key areas: -

- 1 Review of the economy, cost pressures and the current year's budget position
- 2 The cost of a standstill budget for 2025/26
- 3 The draft Local Government Finance Settlement
- 4 Medium-Term Financial Plan
- 5 Reserves

National Overview

- 4.2. The country is continuing to face difficult economic times with high inflation, the highest interest rates in fifteen years and the general cost of living crisis. Although inflation has fallen, the cost of goods and services and the delivery of the capital plan has not reduced.
- 4.3 In Spring 2020, the Authority, along with all the other fire and rescue services funded the formation of a central spending review team which was a collaborative team comprising the Local Government Association (LGA), National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Home Office. The remit of the team was to work with the Home Office to produce a collective business case highlighting the challenges facing the sector and the potential new burdens resulting from the Hackett and Grenfell inquiries and the HMICFRS State of Fire report to support bids for increases to fire funding to the Treasury.

This business case report, named the Fire Spending Proposal, was updated in September 2024 to reflect the current budgetary pressures affecting Fire and Rescue Authorities and was submitted to the Treasury to support additional and sustained funding for the fire sector. In return the fire sector will continue to deliver the efficiency and productivity commitments made in the last spending review.

- 4.4 The business case highlighted the cost pressures that are currently being faced across the sector:
- Increases in costs associated with fire reform such as new national fire standards, NJC reform and the College of Fire and Rescue.
 - Potential that the new costing regime for the Building Safety Regulator is not cost neutral and could incur additional costs for the Authority if all work is not chargeable.
 - Costs associated with achieving environmental targets such as net zero and

costs incurred which are due to extreme weather conditions from flooding and wildfires.

- Costs associated with recommendations that fall out of the Grenfell Tower Phase 2 report which was published in September 2024.
- The fire standard on driver training and section 19 of the Road Safety Act has created additional driver training requirements which requires additional resources.

4.5 The business case requested the following to be considered in the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26:

- Precept flexibility of £5 on a band D property, the current increase without holding a referendum is 2.99%. A £5 precept will provide the Authority with an additional £2.4m of council tax funding from that included in the 2025/26 Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- All grants continue to be fully paid, are rolled into core funding, and uplifted by CPI inflation. The receipt of annual grants does cause financial uncertainty as these have been subject to reductions in recent years. For example, the services grant has reduced from £1.7m to £0.173m over the past 3 years, a reduction of some 90%.
- Reintroduction of capital funding, Fire and Rescue Services unlike Local Authorities and the Police receive no capital funding. All capital expenditure has to be funded by either internal or external borrowing.

The business case was supported by a letter from the Chair of the Authority to MPs, and Ministers at MHCLG, the Home Office and the Treasury.

Details of the Local Government Finance Settlement are provided in Section 5.3 of this report.

4.6 There are three major reviews of Local Government funding which will commence in March 2025. These could have a significant impact on the level of funding for the Authority from 2026:

1. Government Spending Review 2025

4.7 On the 12th of December, the Chancellor Rachel Reeves published the details of the upcoming Government Spending Review which is due to commence in March 2025. The outcome of the Spending Review will result in a multi-year settlement for the Local Government Sector.

During the review Government departments will be expected to find savings and efficiencies in their budgets, in a push to drive out waste in the public sector and

ensure all funding is focused on the government's priorities. Every single pound the government spends will be subjected to a line-by-line review to make sure it's being spent to deliver the Government's Plan for Change and that it is value for money.

It will be the first time in over a decade that government departments have been asked to take such an approach, with what's called a "zero-based review" last undertaken 17 years ago.

Departments will need to ensure budgets are scrutinised by challenge panels of external experts including former senior management of Lloyd's Banking Group, Barclays Bank and the Co-operative Group. Panels will bring an independent view to what government spend is or isn't necessary, with a mixture of expertise from local delivery partners, think tanks, academic experts and private sector backgrounds. Departments will be advised that where spending is not contributing to a priority, it should be stopped.

2. Local Authority Funding Reform

- 4.8 The Autumn 2024 Budget announced the Government's intention to pursue a comprehensive set of reforms to place local government in a more sustainable position, based on a deprivation-based approach in 2025/26 followed by broader reform through a multi-year settlement from 2026/27. The current system is no longer fit for purpose with differences in assessments of how much different councils need to spend and how much they can raise themselves via council tax were last updated in 2013/14. Reform has been discussed for a number of years which was previously called "The Fair Funding Review".

The government's view is that there is a strong rationale for retaining a bespoke formula for Fire and Rescue Services and as such fire would be out of scope of this review. The government is considering updating the existing fire and rescue services Relative Needs Formula which was last updated over a decade ago and will be using data that is no longer reflective of the current need for Fire and Rescue Services. The current formula includes a basic allocation of funding per resident, with adjustments for coastline, population, density and sparsity, deprivation, property and societal, high fire risk areas (COMAH sites) and community fire safety.

Consultation on the Local Authority Funding Reform was released at the same time as the Local Government Finance Settlement on the 18th of December and closed on the 12th of February 2025.

3. Business Rates Reset

- 4.9 Business Rates baselines will be reset in 2026/27, the first in over a decade. The intention of the reset is to ensure funding is targeted where it is needed most and restoring the balance between aligning funding with need and rewarding business rates growth. The impact on the Fire Authority is unknown but it is expected that the

Government will introduce transitional arrangements to take into account the financial impact of the reform.

Fire Funding Reform – Business Case for Sustained Fire Funding

- 4.10 To support the fire sector’s case in the 2026/27 spending review, NFCC, LGA and the Home Office will be submitting a business case to support funding fire reform. It’s worth pointing out that fire is not deemed to be a protected service unlike the NHS, defence and education so it is vital that the business case addresses the need for sustained and increased funding for the fire sector.

The business case details ten areas of investment that are required in the fire sector, these include; investment to tackle the increase in calls and emerging diversity of risk; maintaining core functions to include increases to core spending power, fully funded NI and pension costs, including precept flexibility; investment in capital funding, investment to address the sustainability of the on-call system; investment to ensure protection services can support growth and new burden expectations; investment in firefighter safety; investment in culture change; investment in technology, data and research; investment in the fire sector infrastructure and finally that government take the opportunity to support the design of an improved pay structure.

Economic Overview

- 4.12 In terms of the overall economic position, the Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) has decreased steadily through to September 2024, where it hit 1.7%, the lowest level since April 2021. However, in both October and November CPI rose to 2.3% and 2.6% respectively before reducing slightly to 2.5% in December 2024. It must be noted that inflation forecasts are subject to change and are dependent on the world economy.

The Bank of England’s monetary policy committee at its meeting on the 5th of February voted to reduce the base interest rate to 4.5%. Our treasury management consultants, Link Group, forecast that the bank rate will reduce during 2025, but will be dependent on a fall in inflation.

High interest rates over the past couple of years is having a favourable effect on the Authority’s investment income, it is forecast that in 2024/25 £1.400m will be earned in investment income. This is significantly higher than that received when interest rates were low which generated investment income of £0.100m in 2021/22. This increase in investment income is used to support the capital plan. It must be recognised that the Authority has used its cash reserves to pay for the development of FSHQ and as such the amount earned in investment interest will be somewhat reduced in 2025/26.

Financial Overview of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

4.13 Unlike other public services, which are demand led, the Authority needs to have enough resources available to provide an emergency response in times of exceptional demand. This includes the ability to deal with large scale emergencies, a range of smaller incidents that may happen together and/or incidents that are of an extended duration. During the peak period (17.00 to 21.00), the service responds to five new incidents every hour, often requiring more than one fire engine to each incident. On top of this business-as-usual demand, the service has responded to thirty emergencies requiring eight or more fire engines. The occurrence of wildfires and flooding and the associated financial pressures it brings has increased over the past few years, however, government funding has not increased to reflect this financial burden.

The Authority considered its revenue budget and precept strategy on the 29th of February 2024 and approved a precept increase of 2.99% resulting in a Band D property precept of £79.49. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue still remains the fourth lowest precepting Fire Authority in England and Wales.

There are a number of financial pressures that continue to impact the Authority's budget:

Pay Awards

4.14 Because direct employee costs constitute 78% of our expenditure, the impact of pay awards can have a significant impact on the revenue budget. Fortunately, the Authority approved a pay award provision of 5% in 2024/25 which was 1% over the agreed pay award. This saving enabled the service to run a mini budget review in June which saw new bids amounting to £0.379m being approved. For every 1% increase in the pay award over and above budget provision costs an additional £0.664m for all staff groups.

The Fire Brigades Union will likely submit a request for pay rises which are in excess of inflation and in line with those already approved for the public sector in 2024; teachers, NHS workers received a pay increase of 5.5% and Police 4.75%. Unison has already submitted their pay claim which is for £3,000 for all pay scales, which is significantly higher than 4%, with the increase ranging from 12.1% for those employees on the lowest scale to 3.98% for those on the highest pay scale. To put this into financial context, if this was agreed, it would cost an additional £0.728m.

Increases to the National Living Wage will impact the support staff budget. Although the Authority's lowest grade pays higher than the National Living Wage (NLW), the margin is becoming reduced. In April 2025 the NLW is to increase to £12.21 an hour an increase of 6.7%, the lowest grade employee at West Yorkshire receives an hourly rate of £12.65.

Industrial Action

4.15 Finance and Resources Committee in October 2022 approved the creation of a new earmarked reserve for industrial action by the transfer of £1.00m from the pension ill health reserve. There is currently a balance of £0.610m in the reserve. In addition the

Authority has continued to train and employ contingency crews albeit on a much-reduced level. The threat of industrial action has not gone away, as mentioned in section 4.26 the FBU have yet to submit a pay request which if unaffordable by fire and rescue services could result in industrial action.

The Authority needs to ensure that it has the funding to manage this should it occur. If such costs from industrial action could not be met from existing budgets the Authority would need to call upon its reserves. If the reserve were fully spent, funding from existing revenue budgets would be required. More detail on reserves is provided in section 9 of this report.

Pensions

- 4.16 The impact of pensions is two-fold, firstly there is the administrative burden of software and admin costs that has fallen on the Authority to implement the McCloud/Sargeant remedy and secondly, the increase in employers pension contribution rates to 37.6% from the 1st of April 2024. This increased employer contributions by £3.590m which is included in base budgets.

Unfortunately, this increase in pension contributions is not fully funded by the Home Office, the amount of grant received is £2.977m, amounting to a shortfall of £0.613m equating to 84% being funded by grant. This grant has not been increased by the corresponding 2024/25 pay award of 4%, but the data used to calculate the grant has been updated for 2025/26. This has resulted in £0.062m of additional grant allocated. However, because the grant is not included in our core funding, there is always uncertainty regarding the continuation of the grant, as the Home Office has to submit a bid to the Treasury each year to secure the funding.

It is expected that the pension grant will be rolled into core funding from 2026/27.

In addition, there are the financial burdens from the O'Brien/Matthews case which effects our on-call firefighters. The Matthews case will introduce a second options exercise for on-call firefighters to join the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2006 from the start date of their employment. This will pose an administrative burden on the Authority and changes to employers' rates will be included in the 2024 Government Actuary Department (GAD) actuarial valuation. These increases will take effect from April 2026.

National Insurance Funding

- 4.17 The Government will increase Employers National Insurance Contributions by 1.2% to 15% from April 2025 and reduce the per-employee threshold at which employers become liable to pay National Insurance from £9,100 to £5,000. This change has increased employee budgets by £2.095m from 2025/26. The Local Government Finance Settlement provided details on how local government will be reimbursed for this increase. The amount of grant allocated in 2025/26 for the increase in National Insurance is £515.00m of which £17.00m which has been specifically earmarked for Fire and Rescue Services. The formula is based on net current expenditure for each

Local Authority, Fire Authority and Police Authority in 2024/25 (with some exclusions) which is collected on a central Government return called the Revenue Outturn.

West Yorkshire will receive £0.699m of grant for the NI increase, a shortfall of £1.396m which equates to 33% funding. All Fire Authorities have a similar proportion shortfall in grant which the Home Office is aware of.

New Burdens

- 4.18 The Authority has received an annual grant since 2020/21 to fund the financial pressures of the implementation of the Building Safety Bill, totalling £0.310m. Although this funding is welcomed, it is not built into the Authority's base budget and any spending commitments that extend beyond the grants will have to be funded from existing budgets. This means that long term spending plans cannot be based on one-year grants without no certainty of receiving the grants going forward. Furthermore, in February 2025 the Home Office confirmed that only 50% of this grant has been guaranteed for 2025/26, with the remaining 50% to be confirmed later in the year following consideration of how services have used this grant. It has been assumed that the Authority will receive full funding of £0.310m in 2025/26.

The introduction of more thorough DBS checks for employees and the need to comply with the new Driver Training Fire Standard has resulted in additional financial burden for the Authority, amounting to £0.250m per annum. The Authority has received no additional funding to meet these new burdens.

Moreover, the Authority received notification from the Home Office in February 2025 that the Fire Link grant is going to cease in 2025/26, a year earlier than planned. This has resulted in a grant shortfall of £0.089m.

The introduction of the Building Safety Regulator could pose further funding challenges for the sector. The Hackitt Review stated that the new regulatory regime should be cost neutral. However, because of continuing uncertainty over how the regime will work in practice, combined with concerns that the secondary legislation underpinning the Building Safety Act (which has established that commercial parts of mixed-use buildings are no longer within scope), the NFCC is not convinced that all new burdens will be rechargeable. This would be at a cost to the Authority.

Inflationary pressures

- 4.19 Although inflation is reducing, the impact of inflation is continuing to have an impact on the Authority. The budgets for electricity and vehicle fuel were increased by £1.041m in 2023/24 and there has been no reduction in the cost of goods and services during the current financial year. It is expected that the increase in NI from April 2025, will push up prices in the private sector which could impact the cost of the Authority's existing and future contracts.

There have been large increases in the cost of capital schemes over the past two years, with both the re-development of the FSHQ site and the rebuild of Keighley Fire

Station realising a 40% increase in cost against estimates. Initial estimates for the rebuild of Huddersfield fire station, is showing a 300% increase in cost from similar rebuilds completed pre covid.

The capital plan also includes provision to rebuild Halifax fire station over the next three years which may also experience even higher price increases. In addition, unless the capital finance reserve is “topped up,” the Authority will have to borrow to pay for the rebuilds. This increases the capital financing charges which are charged to the revenue budget.

Data and Digital Strategy

- 4.20 The implementation of the data and digital strategy and the introduction of new technology is creating an increasing cost pressure on the revenue budget. This is because the purchase of software licences and ICT development is chargeable to revenue and cannot be capitalised. Previously, the Authority would purchase the system and host it on Authority owned servers which is a capital cost but now most systems are accessed via the cloud and as such the Authority does not own the system. If the Authority is to continue in its ICT transformation, there will need to be ongoing increases in the revenue budget in the Medium-Term Financial Plan to facilitate this.

Commitment to Net Zero

- 4.21 The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-25 sets out how the Authority will reduce its impact on the environment. The new FSHQ has been designed to have the latest energy efficient technologies including LED lighting, smart thermostats, solar panels, water- saving fixture to name a few. Although these will reduce the cost of electricity, these advanced systems will require detailed management and maintenance which was not required in the previous HQ. A revenue bid totalling £0.150m has been submitted by the Head of Estates to recognise the increase in maintenance of the new HQ.

Financial Position 2024/25

- 4.22 In terms of the financial outturn, the Authority is forecast to under-spend the revenue budget by a forecast £0.184m for the current financial year. Any budget underspends will be used to make additional voluntary minimum revenue provision charges or make additional contributions to the capital financing reserve, which will reduce the Authority’s capital financing requirement and reduce the revenue cost of the capital plan over the long term.

Background on West Yorkshire Central Government Funding

- 4.23 From 2010/11 to the end of the spending review period in 2019/20, the Authority had a total reduction of £26.1m in central government funding. This meant the Authority had to implement a station rationalisation programme and a fundamental review of support services to meet this funding gap.

To put the grant reductions into context, the table below shows the reduction in firefighter numbers and assets employed by the Authority from 2010 to date:

	2010	2022	Reduction
Firefighters (Wholetime)	1,490	937	-553
Control Staff	56	48	-8
Support Staff	383	312	-71
Fire Stations	48	40	-8
Fire Appliances	62	46	-16

The one-year settlements over the past five years have included no real terms growth in funding as central government grants were only inflated by CPI.

A Standstill Budget for 2025/26 – Maintaining the current level of service

- 4.24 A standstill budget has been prepared for 2025/26, for the purpose of providing a baseline from which to measure changes in the proposed budget. This is calculated by updating the 2024/25 budget for increases in pay and prices, new capital financing charges and other budget calculation adjustments. A standstill budget for 2025/26 would amount to £116.359m.

The changes from the 2024/25 budget are detailed in the table below.

	£m
2024/25 approved revenue budget	112.904
<u>Pay and price increase 2025/26</u>	
Employee Inflation	2.786
Non Employee Inflation	0.453
Budget Adjustments	1.370
One off Revenue Bids in 2024/25	-1.153
2025/26 Standstill Budget	116.359

The above table shows standstill budgets and do not include areas for growth and savings which are identified separately in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

- 4.25 The main changes to the 2024/25 budget are explained below:

- a) **Pay and Price Increases** These represent the full year effect of the 2024/25 pay awards for operational staff and a provision for a 4% pay award for all staff in 2025/26. It also includes price increases that have been built into the base budget for 2025/26.
- b) **Budget Adjustments** The revenue budget is calculated on a zero-based budget basis, so the budget adjustments represent the changes between the budget calculations in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

For example, the changes could be one off costs, reductions in costs due to contract renewals, demand changes etc.

- c) **One off Revenue Bids** In the budget setting process managers are asked to submit revenue bids for expenditure that is not included within the base budget. Some of these bids may be for one off purchases and as such do not need budget provision in the following year. For example, the purchase of equipment, employment of temporary staff and attendance on training courses.

A subjective analysis of the Standstill budget for 2025/26 is shown in Appendix B.

Revenue Balances

- 4.26 The Authority maintains both earmarked reserves and a general fund reserve, earmarked reserves are amounts set aside for a specific purpose and the general fund reserve is used to manage fluctuations in revenue budgets. The Authority's reserves strategy was approved at F&R in October 2024 and is published on the Authority's website.

The strategy for the use of reserves to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan is detailed in section 8 of this report.

Minimum Revenue Balance

- 4.27 The Authority needs to maintain a level of general fund reserves as a safety net to meet any unforeseen and/or unplanned expenditure. This would include changes in interest rates, greater than budgeted pay awards, legal challenges and increases in activity.

As of the 1st of April 2024 the Authority had £5.700m of general fund reserves and £25.986m in earmarked reserves.

The minimum level of balances required is calculated using the Authority's corporate risk register. This document identifies all the major risks to business continuity the Authority may face, evaluates the potential cost, and looks at measures to control or limit the risk. The risk register is maintained by the Risk Management Strategy Group, which is chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and reports quarterly to the Audit Committee.

The General Fund reserve balance of £5.700m represents 4.9% of the draft revenue budget, which is in line with the National Framework guidance on balances.

5. Local Government Finance Settlement

- 5.1 The finances of government departments are determined by a process called the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR); the Authority's last multi-year settlement

ended in 2019/20. Since then, the Authority has received one-year roll over budgets up to the current financial year.

Following the conclusion of the CSR, funding allocations are distributed by the Local Government Finance Settlement, this is called the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue receives its annual SFA via the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) the SFA is comprised of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Baseline Funding levels which is the Business Rates Top Up grant which is the governments projection of the Authority's 1% share of the business rates income raised in West Yorkshire. The Authority also receives specific grants from the Home Office to fund pensions, national resilience, and fire protection.

Settlement

- 5.2 The 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement was received on the 3rd of February 2025.

The grant allocations for 2025/26 are shown in the table below.

	2024/25	2025/26
	£m	£m
Settlement Funding Assessment:		
Revenue Support Grant	20.783	21.137
	20.783	21.137
<u>Base line funding (business rates)</u>		
Top Up Grant (Central Pool)	18.499	18.703
Top Up (Local)	8.273	8.364
Local Government Finance Settlement	47.555	48.204

- 5.4 The revenue support grant has increased in line with September CPI, which was 1.7% and overall baseline funding has increased by 1.1% which a combination of the freezing of the small business rates multiplier, an increase in the standard multiplier to 55.5p, and the 1.7% CPI uplift on baseline funding levels.
- 5.5 The Local Government Finance settlement for 2025/26 has increased by £0.648m. Unfortunately, the reduction in CPI inflation in September to 1.7% had an adverse effect on the amount of core funding to be received in 2025/26. Included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan was a 2% assumption for CPI inflation increase, this 0.3% reduction resulted in a £0.142m reduction in central government funding. Moreover, inflation is currently at 2.5%, meaning that there are real terms cut in the settlement funding assessment.

Core Spending Power

- 5.6 The core spending power is a measure of the estimated resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It sets out the money that has been made available to local authorities through the Local Government Finance Settlement. Core spending power includes funding available from the Settlement Funding Assessment, council tax and central government grant.

For 2025/26, the average increase in core spending power across the Local Government sector is a 6.8% increase, with Metropolitan District Councils receiving the largest increase of an average of 9.2%. Core spending power for all standalone Fire Authorities has increased by 3.5%.

The 2025/26 core spending power for West Yorkshire has increased from £108.689m in 2024/25 to £112.624m in 2025/26, an increase of 3.6%.

Changes to Grants 2025/26

- 5.7 The following grants (applicable to fire and rescue authorities) are to be removed in 2025/26:
- a) The Funding Guarantee Grant was introduced in 2024/25 to ensure that all authorities received at least a 4% increase in their core spending power before council tax is increased. The 2025/26 settlement announced that this funding guarantee has been adjusted so that the increase in council tax is now included in the calculation and that eligibility to receive the grant is based on whether an Authority maintains its core spending power in cash-terms (i.e. no increase is factored into the formula). Thus, if council tax is increased then no Authority will receive the funding guarantee grant. In 2024/25, West Yorkshire received £1.369m of funding guarantee grant. The Medium-Term Financial Plan assumed a 50% reduction in this grant based on the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of annual grants not rolled into core funding.
 - b) The Services Grant has also been removed, the amount of grant the Authority received had significantly reduced from £1.700m in 2022/23 to £0.173m in 2024/25. Once again, the Medium-Term Financial Plan assumed a 50% cut in this grant in 2025/26.
 - c) The Rural Services Delivery Grant was payable to fire and rescue services who faced financial challenges in providing a fire service in rural areas. West Yorkshire have never received this funding allocation.

Central Government Grants

The grants below are not included in core funding and as such are subject to change in future years.

National Insurance Grant

- 5.8 As detailed earlier in section 4.19, this is a new grant payable in 2025/26 to compensate local government for the increase to employers' national insurance from the 1st of April 2024. It has been confirmed that the Authority will receive £0.699m of this grant which represents a shortfall of £1.366m.

Under Indexation Grant

- 5.9 The Non-Domestic (NDR) Act received Royal Assent on the 26th of October 2023. The Act created a number of changes to the way business rate multipliers are calculated and applied. The Act has decoupled the small business rating and the standard rating multipliers which will change the calculation to the compensation for the freezing of business rates. At successive Autumn Statements since 2013 the Chancellor has announced changes to business rates. In any year, the financial impact of these measures is met by central government to ensure that authorities will be in the same financial position in which they would have been if these measures have not been made.

The government announced in the Autumn Statement that the small business rate multiplier for 2025/26 will be frozen at 49.9p and the standard business rates multiplier has increased in line with the change in the Consumer Price Index between September 2023 and September 2024 to 55.5p. Local authorities are compensated from the small business rate multiplier freeze by a Section 31 grant called the Under Index Grant. The calculation of the grant has become very complicated due to the uncoupling of the small and standard business rates multiplier in 2024/25. The Director of Finance and Procurement has been working closely with CIPFA to determine the correct methodology for the calculation of the grant for the fire sector.

It has been estimated that the Authority will receive £3.756m of under index grant direct from central government in 2025/26.

Business Rates

- 5.10 All business rates used to be paid directly from central government. In order to devolve responsibility locally, from 2013/14 local councils maintain 50% of business income, with the other 50% being redistributed by government via a business rates pool. The fire authorities receive 1% of the business rates collected by the district councils.

The settlement shows that the Authority will receive £27.067m in business rate income with £18.703m paid directly from central government in the form of top up grant and the balance of £8.364m being paid by the five district councils which equates to 1% of the income they collect. Following receipt of the National Non-Domestic Rate returns (NNDR1) the amount to be received from the local share of business rates has been confirmed at £8.492m, which is £0.126m higher than that estimated in the Settlement Funding Assessment.

- 5.11 The Authority in addition receives Section 31 grant to compensate for any policy changes introduced around local business rates. The district councils confirm the size of grant when they submit their NNDR1 return to the MHCLG on the 31st of January. The Authority's share of this grant which is paid direct to the Authority by the five district councils will be £3.127m in 2025/26, this is £0.183m less than that received in 2024/25.

Collection Fund

- 5.12 The district councils collect West Yorkshire Fire's share of council tax on our behalf and manages this through a collection fund, if the collection rate is higher than expected this generates a collection fund surplus. Conversely, if the collection rate is set higher than actual receipts this will cause a collection fund deficit. The Authority has in previous years (excluding 2020/21) benefited from a collection fund surplus, which is used to support the revenue budget.

Returns from the five district councils have declared a collection fund deficit of £0.428m, this is significantly higher than that forecast in the 2024/25 Medium-Term Financial Plan of £0.095m. The business rates deficit for 2025/26 has been confirmed at £0.038m

For prudence, an estimated surplus is not factored into the Medium-Term Financial Plan due to the potential volatility caused by the fact that the collection rate and policy is beyond our control.

Tax Base

- 5.13 The tax base is the overall number of weighted equivalent Band D properties that each of the five local councils can collect council tax from, a change in the tax base is usually the result of:

- The building and completion of new housing
- Changes in council tax banding due to adjustment and appeals
- Discounts, exemptions, and reliefs, for example, changes in the council tax support scheme
- Ending of the discount period on empty properties or their reoccupation.

Both central government and Local Authority finance directors assume that the tax base will increase each year, which is primarily due to the increase in house building.

The five district councils have declared an average tax base increase of 1.33% in 2025/26 which is higher than the 1.1% forecast increase included in the 2024/25 Medium-Term Financial Plan, this has generated an additional £0.133m of precept income than that forecast. The lowest increase was Wakefield at 0.27% and the highest been Calderdale at 3.48%.

Referendum Principles

- 5.14 The Local Government Finance Settlement has set the basic referendum limit for Fire Authorities at £5 in 2025/26 and 2.99% for local authorities.

For information, local authorities are able to increase the precept by an additional 2.0% for adult social care, and shire district councils in two-tier areas will be allowed increases of up to 2.99% or up to and including £5 whichever is higher.

For six local authorities, the Government has applied exceptional council tax principles which means that they can increase their council tax in excess of the referendum principles. These range between 7.5% and 10%.

The referendum threshold for the Police and Crime Commissioners has been set at £14 (£13 in 2024/25).

There are no council tax referendum principles for Mayoral Combined Authorities or parish councils.

Precept Income

- 5.15 As Members are aware, the Authority is also dependent upon precept income from the five districts which will provide £54.389m of its income in 2024/25. This income is dependent upon two factors, namely the size of the tax base and the precept set by the Authority.
- 5.16 A precept increase of £5, would generate an additional £4.195m in 2025/26 of precept income from that generated in 2024/25.
- 5.17 The table below shows the effect on the precept to a Band A to a Band D council taxpayer based on a £5 and a 2.99% precept increase:

Precept Increase £5				
	Annual	Per month	Per Week	Increase from 24/25
Band A	£56.33	£4.69	£1.08	£3.34
Band B	£65.71	£5.48	£1.26	£3.89
Band C	£75.10	£6.26	£1.44	£4.45
Band D	£84.49	£7.04	£1.62	£5.00

Precept Increase 2.99%				
	Annual	Per month	Per Week	Increase from 24/25
Band A	£54.58	£4.42	£1.02	£1.59
Band B	£63.67	£5.15	£1.19	£1.85
Band C	£72.77	£5.89	£1.36	£2.11
Band D	£81.87	£6.62	£1.53	£2.38

6. Positive Assurance Statement

- 6.1 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act (2003) the statutory Chief Financial Officer is required to give positive assurance statements in the robustness of budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves and balances.
- 6.2 If Members approve the recommendations in this report on the level of specific reserves and the strategy for use of balances, I can give the Authority positive assurance on the adequacy of reserves and balances. This assurance is given having considered the following matters: -
- a) This Authority has robust risk management arrangements, and the Director of Finance and Procurement uses a Risk Management Matrix to calculate the minimum level of balances.
 - b) The Authority is single purpose and does not face a full a range of risks to manage as a multi-purpose authority.
 - c) The Authority's revenue reserves have not been consumed during the year by overspendings but have been maintained throughout the year.
- 6.3 I can also give you positive assurance on the accuracy and robustness of all the forecasts and estimates in the budget proposals.

In giving these assurances, I have considered the following matters: -

- a) The internal control environment and, in particular, the checks and balances within our budget process and our arrangements for budgetary control. In addition, I am satisfied that the Authority's financial systems provide a sound basis for accurate financial information.
- b) The long-term tradition and record of the Authority in managing its overall budget Financial Implications

7. Revenue Budget 2025/26

- 7.1 The table below shows the revenue budget and estimated funding for 2025/26 and shows the impact of a precept increase of £5 and an increase in precept of 2.99%. Based on funding, if members decide to increase the precept by £5 or 2.99%, the Authority either deliver a balanced budget or require the use of reserves of £1.823m respectively.

	£5	2.99%
Revenue Budget	£m	£m
Calculated Budget	115.905	115.905
Revenue Bids	1.138	1.138
Cost pressures	0.154	0.154
Budget 2025/26	117.197	117.197
Funding		
Revenue Support Grant	21.137	21.137
Business Rates - Top Up	18.703	18.703
Business Rates - Local Share	8.492	8.492
Collection Fund Deficit	-0.428	-0.428
Business Rates Deficit (net)	-0.038	-0.038
Business Rates- Section 31 Grant - Local Share	3.127	3.127
Under Index Grant	3.756	3.756
National Insurance Grant	0.699	0.699
Pension Grant	2.977	2.977
Precept income	58.584	56.761
Recruitment Reserve	0.188	0.188
Funding 2025/26	117.197	115.374
Budget Deficit	0.000	-1.823

Budget Calculations

- 7.2. A more detailed budget monitoring system was introduced in 2018/19 which is based on a RAG rating method of reporting. The intention being to make budget holders and managers more accountable for their budgets. Explanations for the variances on the RAG ratings have to be reported to the Director of Finance and Procurement accompanied with an action plan for correction or re-alignment.
- 7.3 The transfer of budgets to contingencies that were approved at Finance and Resources in July and October 2024 and increases and changes to employee budgets approved at People and Culture Committee in March and July 2024 have been incorporated into the base budget for 2025/26.
- 7.4 The budget is calculated ensuring that each area of expense, whether it be revenue or capital, meets one or more of the Authorities' CRMP priorities:
- a) Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies
 - b) Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
 - c) Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
 - d) Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.

- e) Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- f) Develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

7.5 Budget holders are actively involved directly in the budget setting process and a system of capital and revenue bids are used to identify areas of growth and savings. This is a thorough process which commences in October and is finalised in January when the Executive Leadership Team meet at a special meeting called the Star Chamber and agree the budget to present to members for approval. Each capital and revenue bid are scrutinised by the Executive Leadership Team to ensure that it meets the service priorities.

Recruitment and Retirements

7.6 There are twenty-nine planned retirements, of which fifteen have already handed in their notice to retire and twenty new recruits in 2025/26, these are phased during the year, but due to external factors timings are subject to variation. The operational employee budget is calculated using the workforce plan which underpins the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The workforce plan manages the recruitment process so that employee strength is aligned to the establishment, which is currently 939 whole-time employees.

Recruitment Reserve

7.7 It is forecast that the Authority will be three posts above establishment as of the 1st of April 2025, this is an additional cost of £0.188m which will be met from the recruitment reserve. This new reserve was approved at Finance and Resources Committee in July 2024 and will be used for periods when the Authority is running above establishment.

Capital Finance Reserve

7.8 The Authority has included provision in the capital plan to rebuild Huddersfield and Halifax fire stations within the next four years, and due to inflation, it is likely that these estimates will increase; the cost of both FSHQ and Keighley Fire Station rebuild increased by 40% from estimates. If the Authority does not use reserves for the replacement of long-life assets, it means that MRP charges will need to be applied to the rebuilds, which will be charged over the life of the asset (40 years).

It is thus important that the capital finance reserve is topped up, so that it can fund future station rebuilds.

Budget Growth, Savings and Cost Pressures 2025/26

7.9 In addition to the budget adjustments approved at committee during 2024/25 there are a number of areas of growth, savings and cost pressures that have been identified as part of the budget planning process. Revenue bids totalling £3.169m were

submitted of which £1.138m of this growth is unavoidable and hence essential. Due to the current financial position, only the essential bids have been approved.

The £0.154m identified as cost pressures may have to be met regardless of funding levels.

Revenue Bids

i) Employee Budgets

- a) A bid totalling £0.072m has been submitted for the extension to a fixed term post to project manage the rebuild of Huddersfield Fire Station; by managing this in-house, it saves the cost of employing consultants to manage the project which would be more costly.

(ii) Non-Employee Budgets

- b) £0.465m has been added to training budgets, the training budget has been reduced over a number of years, resulting in the number of training bids that have been submitted for 2025/26 has exceeded budget provision. This additional funding is essential to support safety-critical, mandatory and service priority courses and qualifications. This budget was increased for one year in 2024/25 and is forecast to be fully spent.
- c) Currently, LGV training, assessment, and theory tests are conducted internally, with the driver training team completing an average of twenty-five LGV five-day courses per year. This approach offers flexibility and comes at a significantly reduced cost. Some individuals take up to 12 months to complete the LGV theory test, prolonging training periods thus delaying the availability of qualified drivers which then impacts appliance availability. Current capacity allows for only fifteen Emergency Fire Advanced Driving (EFAD) courses per year.

Outsourcing initial LGV training at a cost of £0.107m in 2025/26, will free up approximately 125 driver training days over the next three years. This additional capacity will enable the Driver Training school to increase Emergency Response Driving (ERD) courses from fifteen to thirty-two per year, thus increasing the number of fully trained ERD drivers.

- d) £0.258m has been included for the increase in maintenance costs in the running of the new FSHQ, additional inspection costs for diesel tanks on fire stations due to contaminants and a small increase in the service and maintenance costs of EV chargers.
- e) A move to clean cab ways of working and decontamination have seen a change in how often firefighter PPE is laundered. The kit has a lifespan of fifty washes which is less than under previous cleaning arrangements. A revenue

bid of £0.150m is required to increase the stock of PPE as it is anticipated that the lifespan of the kit will be considerably reduced.

- f) £0.058m has been included for an increase for the cost of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) licences and associated support and maintenance.
- g) There are a number of smaller growth requests which are for water testing and Motion Picture Licencing Company licence costs totalling £0.028m.

Cost Pressures

A cost pressure is a cost that is may will occur, but the timing and the actual cost are subject to variation.

- h) (£0.220m) has been deducted from employee budgets for vacancy management for support staff.
- i) The overtime budget is forecast to overspend in 2024/25, this is due to increase in sickness, attendance on training courses and staff vacancies. A cost pressure was included in 2024/25 to fund this scenario which has been duly called upon to support the employee budget in this financial year. For prudence, a provision of £0.100m has been included to support the employee budgets if overtime remains at a high level in 2025/26.
- j) £0.100m has been included for retained recruitment in order to increase retained availability.
- k) A provision of £0.124m has been included in employer pension contributions to fund the cost of those firefighters who have opted out of a pension scheme, re-joining. This provision assumes that 25% may decide to opt back in.
- l) £0.050m has been included for pension abatement costs for retired operational employees that join the Authority in a support staff role. This is primarily for fire protection posts.

Budget Calculation Assumptions

7.11 The main financial assumptions underpinning both spending and funding forecasts in the MTFP are:

- A precept increase of £5 in 2025/26, 2.99% each year thereafter.
- Tax base increases in 2025/26 of 1.33% and 1.1% increase each year thereafter.
- Pay increases for all staff groups of 4% in 2025/26, and 2% each year onwards.

- General price inflation of 2% in 2025/26, and 2% each year there after
- Central government grant to increase by September CPI inflation, at 1.7% in 2025/26 and 2% each year thereafter.
- Employees retire as per their budgeted projected retirement date and the Authority continues to recruit in order to maintain establishment at 939 whole time employees.
- The Authority will fully recover the costs associated with the Building Safety Regulator.

As with any assumptions, those built into the MTFP will be at risk from factors beyond the Authority's control, which can have the effect of increasing or decreasing the projected financial position.

8. Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP)

- 8.1 The MTFP sets out the framework for understanding the financial challenges faced by the Authority over the medium term. Although the MTFP is a four-year plan it is updated at least annually to consider financial forecasts and factors external to the organisation.

As mentioned in the introduction to the report, the Authority will be asked to approve a four-year MTFP, including the revenue budget for 2025/26. The MTFP will address the key issues of central government funding, precept strategy, cost pressures and the use of balances. This will be discussed with political groups and presented to the Authority within the final budget report to the Authority in February.

Financial Planning April 2025 Onwards

- 8.2 Although members will be asked to approve the budget for 2025/26, the longer-term impact on the MTFP also needs to be considered.

The table below shows the MTFP from 2026/27 to 2028/29, based on a precept increase of £5 in 2025/26. For all the three years there is a small deficit; £0.060m in 2026/27 reducing to £0.019m in 2028/29 which the Authority will need to either use reserves or find efficiency savings to balance the budget.

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employees	97,088	100,068	102,874
Non Employee expenditure	17,040	17,371	17,710
Capital Financing Charges	7,367	7,367	8,032
Income	-2,828	-2,704	-2,641
Revenue Budget	118,667	122,102	125,975
Cost Pressures	936	1,036	1,050
Revenue Growth			
Revenue Bids	974	976	901
Use of Reserves	-60	-42	-19
Net Budget Requirement	120,517	124,072	127,907
Funded by:			
Council Tax Precept	60,960	63,414	65,949
Collection Fund Deficits	-363	-263	-163
Local Business rates	8,661	8,835	9,011
Revenue Support Grant	21,560	21,991	22,431
Top Up grant	19,077	19,458	19,848
Section 31 Grants	6,946	6,961	7,155
Pension Grant	2,977	2,977	2,977
National Insurance Grant	699	699	699
Total Funding	120,517	124,072	127,907

The MTFP has been prepared considering the assumptions outlined in 7.11

The figures in the table above have been calculated on the assumption that there will be no cuts to funding in the next Comprehensive Spending Review from 2025/26 and no impact from the review of the Fire Funding Formula.

Local Government Funding Projections

- 8.3 As detailed in section 4.8 of this report, the Government confirmed in the Local Government Settlement that there is to be local government funding reform in Spring 2025 that will review the current formula for the distribution of core funding to the local government sector. This is also known as the Review of Relative Needs and Resources (The Fair Funding Review). Although the fire sector falls outside the review, there is to be a separate review into the allocation of fire resources which will include the updating of current data sets. This could have an unfavourable impact on this Authority if current formula is changed significantly as a large proportion of funding is related to population and deprivation. There is also to be a reset of the

retained business rates retention system in 2026/27 which will have an impact on the Authority's proportion of retained business rates it receives from the district councils.

- 8.4 It has been assumed that there will be no cuts to central base line funding from 2026/27 and that government grant will continue to rise in line with September CPI inflation. The Local Government Spending Review which will commence in Spring 2025 may result in a reduction in the overall funding for fire and rescue services. Details of this review were outlined in section 4.7.

There has been no guarantee that the Authority will continue to receive the annual grant to cover the costs falling out of Grenfell and the Building Safety Bill. As detailed in 4.18, the Authority has only been guaranteed to receive 50% of this grant in 2025/26. If this grant was ceased the Authority would have to meet these costs from existing budgets or stop the work on these projects.

- 8.5 It has been assumed that the new National Insurance Grant, the Pensions Grant and the Under Indexing of Business Rates grant, for which the Authority will receive an estimated £7.370m in 2025/26 will remain at the same level in future settlements. Because these are not built into the base budget, continuation at the same level cannot be guaranteed. The 2025/26 settlement has seen the removal of both the Services Grant and the Funding Guarantee Grant so caution must be exercised when making assumptions around the continuation of grants that are not rolled into core funding.

- 8.6 The effect on the cost of goods and services from inflation and ongoing supply issues due to the world economy may add further pressure to the revenue budget. Moreover, the impact of the increase of the rate of national insurance on the cost of goods and services from the 1st of April 2025 is unknown which could potentially push our costs higher.

- 8.7 As detailed in section 4.14 of this report the Authority is facing a number of cost pressures particularly around pay which constitutes 78% of total expenditure. These are the pressures on pay awards, and the increase in fire fighter employer contributions from the actuarial valuation of pensions. A one percent increase in the pay award from that budgeted would increase ongoing employee costs by £0.664m per annum.

- 8.8 As Director of Finance and Procurement Officer and as Section 73 officer there is a statutory duty to present a balanced budget as the use of reserves cannot be sustained over the longer term.

- 8.9 An assessment against the Financial Resilience Index has been conducted to assess the financial risk facing the Authority. The Financial Resilience Index is a tool developed by CIPFA which is made up of a set of indicators which take publicly available data and compare similar authorities across a range of factors. There is no single overall indicator of financial risk, so the index instead highlights areas where additional scrutiny should take place in order to provide additional assurance.

8.10 There is a mandatory requirement for a Local Authority to undertake an assessment of their financial resilience, however this is not compulsory for Fire and Rescue Authorities. CIPFA have devised a model to facilitate the financial resilience. An assessment of the Authority's financial reliance was undertaken prior to the setting of the 2025/26 budget which included an assessment against the three indicators in the CIPFA model.

8.11 These indicators are usable reserve levels, social care ratio and gross external debt. Based on these indicators, the Director of Finance and Procurement has assessed that the Authority has strong financial resilience, in that, usable reserves amount to 29% of the 2024/25 annual revenue budget, there is no social care requirement, and the Authority has a low level of debt.

9. Reserves

9.1 Finance and Resources Committee approved the Reserves Strategy in October 2024.

There are two types of reserves: general fund and earmarked reserves.

- General Fund – this reserve is necessary to fund any day-to-day cash flow requirements and also to provide a contingency in the event of any unexpected events or emergencies; and
- Earmarked Reserves – these have been created for specific purposes and involve funds being set aside to meet known or predicted future liabilities. By establishing such reserves, it will smooth the expenditure profile and avoid liabilities being met from Council Tax in the year that payments are made.

9.2 It is proposed that reserves will be used to support the MTFP over the next four years as summarised in the table below:

Reserve Description	Origin	Reserves 2024/25	Planned Use 2024/25	Planned Use 2025/26	Planned Use 2026/27	Planned Use 2027/28	Planned Use 2028/29	Closing Balance 31/03/2029
General Fund		-£5,700,000						-£5,700,000
Transparency	Government Grant	-£76,890						-£76,890
Regional Control Funding	Government Grant	£0						£0
Enhanced Logistical Support	Government Grant	-£188,209			£100,000	£88,209		£0
Decontamination of Body Bags	Government Grant	-£40,000						-£40,000
Council Tax Reform	Government Grant	-£27,000						-£27,000
Business Rate Appeals	Internal & Grant	-£1,301,160						-£1,301,160
Tax Income Guarantee	Government Grant	£0						£0
COVID19	Government Grant	£0						£0
Pension Admin Remedy	Government Grant	-£134,413	£30,000	£40,000	£40,000	£24,413		£0
Serious Violence Duty	Government Grant	-£4,592	£4,592					£0
Insurance Claims	Internal	-£440,068						-£440,068
Service Support Reserve	Internal	-£641,132	£50,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£141,132	£0
Pension Ill Health Reserve	Internal	-£3,436,844			£1,458,000	£1,458,000	£520,844	£0
Provision for pay and prices	Internal	-£1,069,075						-£1,069,075
Industrial Action	Internal	-£610,302						-£610,302
Recruitment Reserve	Internal	-£1,459,000		£188,000	£188,000	£188,000	£188,000	-£707,000
Capital Financing Reserve	Internal	-£15,163,848	£9,493,000	£5,529,000	£141,848			£0
ESMCP	Internal	-£247,084			£247,084			£0
Medium Term Funding Impact	Internal	-£2,000,000			£1,000,000	£1,000,000		£0
Total Earmarked		-£26,839,618	£9,577,592	£5,907,000	£3,324,932	£2,908,622	£849,976	-£4,271,496
TOTAL USABLE RESERVES		-£32,539,618	£9,577,592	£5,907,000	£3,324,932	£2,908,622	£849,976	-£9,971,496

It is worth noting that those earmarked reserves highlighted in orange in the table are the result of the receipt of a government grant and as such will have to be spent on the purpose specified in the grant terms and conditions as stipulated in accounting conventions. These reserves cannot be used to fund expenditure in other areas.

It is important to note that reserves can only be used once and cannot be used in the medium to long term to fund ongoing expenditure.

9.3 The Earmarked reserves will be used to support the MTFP as follows.

- a) It is recommended that one off costs associated with the implementation of the performance management system, the data and digital strategy and firefighter apprenticeship support are met from the Service Support Reserve. It is expected that these projects will generate ongoing revenue benefits over the longer term even though they will need initial investment in the first instance.
- b) The pension ill health reserve may be called upon from 2026/27 to fund any increase in cost resulting from the increase in firefighter pension contributions that will not be met by government grant. Although it has been confirmed that the Authority will receive the £2.915m pension grant in 2025/26, this is a one-off grant and could be subject to reductions in future years. In addition, the financial impact of the Matthews exercise on employer pension contributions which is for on-call employees will be included in the firefighters' 2024 pension actuarial valuation. This could once again lead to an increase in employers pension contributions from April 2026.
- c) The pay and prices reserve may be called upon to fund any inflationary increases in contracts that are not included in base budgets or pay awards that are over and above budget provision. To put this into financial context, for each additional 1% pay award costs £0.664m per annum.
- d) Both the Fire Brigades Union have yet to submit a pay claim for 2025/26 and Unison have recently submitted a pay claim for £3,000 for all pay grades. If this is higher than the national employers can afford, it could lead to industrial action. For prudence, it is recommended that the industrial action reserve is maintained at its current level.
- e) As detailed in paragraph 7.7, the Authority will be using the recruitment reserve in 2025/26 to fund the cost of being over establishment as of the 1st of April. It is intended that the Authority will recruit in advance to prevent going under establishment during the year. The reserve will be used to support this.
- f) The capital finance reserve will be almost spent on the FSHQ redevelopment. Any underspends on the revenue budget will be moved to this reserve. If rebuilds are paid from reserves, it will mean that capital financing charges in the form of statutory Minimum Revenue Provision is not charged to capital investment resulting in revenue savings over many years. This is because Minimum Revenue

Provision is chargeable to revenue over the life of the asset, in the case of a new fire station, which is 40 years. It is proposed that the capital finance reserve is maintained and “topped up”, it is intended this reserve will be used to fund station rebuilds that are in the capital plan.

The Authority has included provision in the capital plan to rebuild Huddersfield and Halifax fire stations within the next four years, and due to inflation, it is likely that these estimates will increase; the cost of both FSHQ and Keighley Fire Station rebuild increased by 40% from estimates. If the Authority does not use reserves for the replacement of assets, it means that MRP charges will need to be applied to the rebuilds, which will be charged over the life of the asset (40 years).

- g) The Emergency Services Network (ESN) reserve may be called upon to fund the replacement of control room servers if the funding from the Home Office is less than the cost. There is currently a halt on the implementation of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) programme with the Home Office requesting return of unspent ESN grants by the 1st of April 2024. It is thus prudent to maintain this reserve at its current level as funding going forward remains uncertain.
- h) As explained in sections 4.7 and 4.8 there is to be a Local Government Spending Review and Funding Review in Spring 2025, and it is expected that this will include the updating of data sets which are used in the existing fire funding formula. If from 2026/27 the funding settlement is not as favourable as forecast in the MTFP and results in real terms funding cuts, the Authority will need to call upon its reserves in order to achieve a balanced budget. This will be met from the Medium-Term Funding Impact reserve. Moreover, as explained in the funding section of the report there are some grants that are not rolled in core funding and as such are subject to variation.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Authority is required to set a budget/issue a precept for 2025/26 before 1st March 2025. This decision is reserved to the Authority and cannot be taken by the Committee or delegated to officers, although the Finance & Resources Committee has to recommend a budget to the Authority. Before setting the level of the precept, the Authority must have agreed a balanced budget which is sufficient to meet estimated revenue expenditure, levies, contingencies, any deficit estimated to be brought forward from previous years, and any amounts required to be transferred between funds. The precept itself must be sufficient to cover the difference between the agreed budget less government grants credited to the consolidated revenue account, and any other expenditure which must be met from the Collection Fund, less any surplus (or plus any deficit) brought forward from previous years.
- 10.2 In addition, the Authority’s Chief Financial Officer (under s73 Local Government Act 1985) is required to report to the Authority on the robustness of the estimates made

for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The Authority must have regard to the report when making decisions about the calculations in connection with which it is made. The Chief Financial Officer is also obliged to report to the Authority if in relation to the previous financial year it appears that a controlled reserve is or is likely to be inadequate. A controlled reserve is one where the Secretary of State has, by regulation, defined the appropriate minimum level of reserve. The S73 officer must report the reasons for that situation, and the action, if any, which she considers it would be appropriate to take to prevent such a situation arising in relation to the corresponding reserve for the financial year under consideration. No Regulations defining controlled reserves have been made.

- 10.3 In reaching decisions on these matters, Members are bound by the general principles of administrative law. Lawful discretions must not be abused or fettered, and all relevant considerations must be taken into account. No irrelevant considerations may be taken into account, and any decision made must be one which only a reasonable authority, properly directing itself, could have reached. Members must also balance the interests of service users against those who contribute to the Authority's finances. The resources available to the Authority must be deployed to their best advantage. Members must also act prudently.
- 10.4 Among the relevant considerations which Members must take into account in reaching their decisions are the views of business ratepayers and the advice of officers. The duty to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on the Authority's expenditure plans is contained in Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 10.5 In considering the advice of officers, and the weight to be attached to that advice, Members should have regard to the personal duties placed upon the Director of Finance and Procurement as Chief Financial Officer. The Authority may take decisions which are at variance with her advice, providing there are reasonable grounds to do so. However, Members may expose themselves to risk if they disregard clearly expressed advice, for example as to the level of provision required for contingencies, bad debts, and future liabilities.
- 10.6 The Chief Finance Officer is required by Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 to ensure that the Authority's budgeting, financial management, and accounting practices meet relevant statutory and professional requirements. She is in addition subject to the requirements set out in paragraph 11.2 above.
- 10.7 Members must also have regard to, and be aware of, the wider duties placed upon the Authority by various statutes governing the conduct of its financial affairs. These include the distinction between revenue and capital expenditure, specified in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The law in relation to the Authority's borrowing was changed by the Local Government Act 2003. The previous regime of capital controls was abolished, and the Authority is required to set prudential indicators in line with capital investment plans that are prudent, affordable, and sustainable. The prudential indicators include the borrowing limits and Treasury

Management Strategy that were formerly set by the Authority as part of the budget process. The implications of this are explained more fully in the body of the report.

- 10.8 In setting the precept for the next financial year and in agreeing the Authority's budgetary requirements, the Authority also needs to take into account the fact that the Government still has power to cap local authority budgets under the Local Government Act 1999. The Government may either set a maximum amount for the budget in the forthcoming year or put an authority on notice to set a maximum budget in the next financial year. If the Government proposes to cap the authority, the Authority will be given a short period to put its case. If the cap is then confirmed in the current year, this could require the authority to revisit its budget decisions and would be likely to require rebilling of precept.
- 10.9 Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 makes it a criminal offence for any Member with arrears of council tax which have been outstanding for two months or more to attend any meeting at which a decision affecting the budget is to be made, unless the Member concerned declares at the outset of the meeting that he or she is in arrears and will not be voting on the decision for that reason. The Member concerned must not vote but may speak. The application of Section 106 of the 1992 Act is very wide and Members should be aware that the responsibility for ensuring that they act within the law at all times rests solely with the individual Member concerned.

11. Recommendations

Members to consider the joint report of the Chief Fire Office/Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Procurement, which presents an overview of the financial position for the current year together with the revenue budget for 2025/26, the capital plan for 2025/26 to 2029/30, the four-year medium-term financial plan and the precept options.

The detail of the report advises Members of:

- (i) The content of the five-year capital plan £67.673m with a forecast spend by the end of 2025/26 of £11.031m (as set out in Appendix A).
- (ii) Capital Financing Requirement of £64.390m in 2025/26.
- (iii) The Authorised Limit for external debt of £65.0m and an Operational Boundary of £60.0m.
- (iv) Capital finance charges of 6.29% of the revenue budget.
- (v) Forecast general fund balances of £5.7m by 31 March 2025 with a minimum balance to be maintained at £5.7m.
- (vi) A council tax collection fund deficit of £428,050.
- (vii) Details of the Local Government Finance settlement 2025/26.

- (viii) Positive assurance from the Chief Finance Officer under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 of the adequacy of balances and the robustness of the budget estimates.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 – 2029/30 (incorporating revenue budget and capital plan).

- (ix) Set a revenue budget of £117.196m incorporating the budget growth and cost pressures set out in paragraph 7.10.

- (x) Approve a precept increase of £5 for 2025/26.

12. Resolution

12.1 That Members give approval to the Prudential Indicators in respect of:

- a) the Capital Financing Requirement as set out in paragraph 3.2.
- b) the level of External Debt also set out in paragraph 3.3.
- c) the Authorised limit for external debt as set out in paragraph 3.4.
- d) the Operational Boundary for external debt also set out in paragraph 3.4.

12.2 Having considered the recommendations of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Procurement on service delivery and related budget requirements and, having taken account of the views of the consultees and, acting in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) (“the Act”) and, having approved a capital expenditure programme for the financial year 2025/26 of £11.031m and, having calculated its basic amount of council tax for the year by dividing its council tax requirement by its council tax bases, which the Authority notes have been determined by the District Councils, the figures are as follows for financial year 2025/26.

Authority	Tax Base 2025/26
Bradford	147,730.00
Calderdale	66,245.58
Kirklees	128,741.90
Leeds	243,974.10
Wakefield	106,690.00
TOTAL	693,381.58

12.3 The Authority calculates its council tax requirements under Sections 40 to 47 of the Act for Financial Year 2025/26 as the aggregate of the following:

12.3.1 The Authority calculates the aggregate of (A) as set out in Appendix B.

- £117,196,376 The expenditure the Authority estimates it will incur in the year in performing its functions and will charge to the revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices.
- £0 The allowance as the Authority estimates will be appropriate for contingencies in relation to amounts to be charged or credited to the revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practice.
- £188,149 The financial reserves which the Authority estimates it will be appropriate to raise in year for meeting estimated future expenditure.
- £0 Financial reserves as are sufficient to meet so much of the amount estimated by the Authority to be a revenue account deficit for any earlier financial year as has not been provided for.

12.3.2 The Authority calculates the aggregate of (B) as set out in Appendix B

- £58,424,418 The income which it estimates that will accrue to it in the year and which it will credit to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices other than income which it estimates will accrue to it in respect of any precept issued by it to be.
- £188,149 The amount of financial reserves which the Authority estimates that it will use in order to provide for the items mentioned.

12.3.3 Council Tax Requirement

- £58,583,808 The aggregate calculated under subsection 42a (2) (aggregate of A) of the Act exceeds the amount calculated under subsection 42a (3) (aggregate of B) which is calculated to be the council tax requirement for the year.

12.3.4 Basic amount of council tax

- £84.49 The Authority calculates its basic amount of council tax by dividing the council tax requirement by the council tax base. The council tax requirement is £58,583,807 and the council tax base is 693,381.58 which is equal to £84.49 at band D. This calculation meets the requirement under S42B of the Act.

12.4 The Authority calculates the Council Tax sums pursuant to Section 47 of the Act as follows:

Band A	£56.33
Band B	£65.71
Band C	£75.10
Band D	£84.49
Band E	£103.27
Band F	£122.04
Band G	£140.82
Band H	£168.98

12.5 The Authority calculates the resultant precept amounts payable by each constituent District Council pursuant to Section 48 of the Act as follows:

District	Precept
Bradford	£12,481,708
Calderdale	£5,597,089
Kirklees	£10,877,402
Leeds	£20,613,371
Wakefield	£9,014,238
TOTAL	£58,583,808

12.6 Resolved that the precept for each constituent District Council, as calculated and set out above, be issued to them pursuant to Section 40 of the Act.

Appendix A

Directorate	Department	Scheme Name	Total	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Service Support	Property	2025/26 Boiler Replacement Schemes	£250,000	£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 Appliance bay door replacement	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/2026 Boiler controls	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 Leeds Refurbishment	£1,200,000	£480,000	£720,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 Fairweather Green Refurbishment	£1,200,000	£600,000	£600,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 LED Lighting	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 EV Charging points	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2026/27 Refurbishments	£11,600,000	£0	£2,600,000	£2,800,000	£3,000,000	£3,200,000
Service Support	CRMP	2026/27 CRMP	£18,000,000	£0	£0	£2,000,000	£6,000,000	£10,000,000
Service Support	Property	2025.26 Station Rebuild	£11,000,000	£3,000,000	£5,000,000	£3,000,000	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/26 Ilkley Fire Station Refurbishment	£160,000	£160,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2025/26 PC refresh	£1,160,300	£210,000	£220,500	£231,500	£243,000	£255,300
Service Support	ICT	25/26 WiFi Refresh	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2025/26 Firewalls Refresh	£480,000	£240,000	£0	£0	£240,000	£0
Service Support	ICT	2025/26 Email and Web security	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2025/26 Backup solution	£120,000	£120,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2025/26 ITSM tool review	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2026/27 Multimedia Storage	£170,000	£0	£170,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2026/27 GPS Repeaters on station	£80,000	£0	£80,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2026/27 VOIP Server refresh	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2026/27 PA Systems on stations	£410,000	£0	£410,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2026/27 ESM (ITSM) Review	£40,000	£0	£40,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2027/28 Nimble Storage	£180,000	£0	£0	£180,000	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2027/28 Network Switches	£650,000	£0	£0	£650,000	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2027/28 UPS on stations	£280,000	£0	£0	£280,000	£0	£0
Service Support	ICT	2027/28 MDT Hardware	£500,000	£0	£0	£500,000	£0	£0
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 Laptop purchase	£30,000	£15,000	£0	£0	£15,000	£0
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 Trauma Manikins	£28,000	£28,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 Thermal Imaging Cameras (x4 cameras)	£19,600	£19,600	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 Thermal Imaging cameras (Flir)	£17,000	£17,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 Competency Dashboard System	£373,700	£97,700	£69,000	£69,000	£69,000	£69,000
Service Support	Training Centre	2025/26 PDRpro (Maintenance of Competence solution)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Transport	2026/26 Workshops Lifting Ramp	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Firefighter Structural PPE	£1,393,000	£1,393,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Support	Property	2025/2026 Hunslet Fire Station	£1,500,000	£1,000,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Breathing Apparatus Cleaning and Drying Units	£175,000	£65,000	£0	£55,000	£0	£55,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 BA Mask Comms	£19,000	£19,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Drones	£13,500	£13,500	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Fire Ground Radios	£625,000	£625,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Powerboat Engines	£37,500	£37,500	£0	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Gas Tight Suits	£51,800	£11,500	£0	£13,800	£26,500	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Lay Flat Hose and Hosereels	£350,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Hydrants	£2,070,000	£450,000	£360,000	£450,000	£360,000	£450,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2025/26 Water Rescue Equipment	£75,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2026/27 High Pressure Airmats	£125,000	£0	£125,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2026/27 Radiation Survey Meter	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2026/27 Dosimeters personal radiation monitor	£260,000	£0	£260,000	£0	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2027/28 Battery Powered Handtools	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2027/28 BA Apparatus	£1,300,000	£0	£0	£1,300,000	£0	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2028/29 RTC Cutters, spreaders and rams	£1,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£1,000,000	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2028/29 PPV Fans	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£200,000	£0
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2029/30 Ground Monitors	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2029/30 Standpipes	£45,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£45,000
Service Delivery	Operations Equipment	2029/30 ULPP's	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Service Delivery	Fire Safety	2025/26 Smoke Alarms	£2,000,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000
People and Culture	Employment Services	2025/26 Production and design for revised Induction	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
People and Culture	Employment Services	2025/26 Induction production costs	£70,000	£40,000	£0	£20,000	£0	£10,000
People and Culture	Employment Services	2025/26 Occupational Psychology support for Wholetime Trainees	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
People and Culture	OHSU	2025/26 Replacement of gym dumbbells	£34,500	£34,500	£0	£0	£0	£0
Finance and Procurement	Finance	2025/26 Vehicle Leases	£4,000,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000
		TOTAL	£64,672,900	£11,031,300	£12,699,500	£12,934,300	£12,438,500	£15,569,300

Appendix B

2024/25	STANDSTILL REVENUE BUDGET	2025/26
£69.027	Firefighters	£74.543
£15.551	Support Staff	£17.135
£1.600	Pensions	£1.600
£1.760	Other Employees	£1.945
£5.921	Premises	£6.331
£2.521	Transport	£2.208
£6.500	Supplies and Services	£7.289
£0.349	Lead Authority Charges	£0.381
£7.755	Capital Financing	£7.367
£0.450	Contingency	£0.450
£111.434	GROSS EXPENDITURE	£119.249
-£2.964	Less Income	-£2.890
£108.469	NET EXPENDITURE	£116.359

Appendix C

2024/25 £m	REVENUE BUDGET	2025/26 £m
67.989	Firefighters	74.413
14.926	Support Staff	17.037
1.600	Ill Health Pensions	1.600
2.416	Other Employees	2.517
6.115	Premises	6.589
2.377	Transport	2.208
7.549	Supplies and Services	7.525
0.358	Lead Authority Charges	0.381
8.172	Capital Financing	7.367
3.695	Contingency	0.450
0.850	Contribution to Capital	0.000
116.047	GROSS EXPENDITURE	120.086
-3.143	Less Income	-2.889
112.904	NET EXPENDITURE	117.197

2024/25 £m	FUNDING	2025/26 £m
18.499	Top Up Grant	18.703
20.783	Revenue Support Grant	21.137
6.898	Section 31 Grants	6.883
2.916	Pension Grant	2.977
0.173	Services Grant	0.000
1.370	Funding Guarantee	0.000
0.000	NI Grant	0.699
8.035	Local Business rates	8.492
-0.159	Collection Fund Deficits	-0.466
0.000	Recruitment Reserve	0.188
58.515	GOVERNMENT FUNDING	58.613
54.389	PRECEPT	58.584

Appendix D

2024/25 £m	REVENUE BUDGET	2025/26 £m
67.989	Firefighters	74.413
14.926	Support Staff	17.037
1.600	III Health Pensions	1.600
2.416	Other Employees	2.517
6.115	Premises	6.589
2.377	Transport	2.208
7.549	Supplies and Services	7.525
0.358	Lead Authority Charges	0.380
8.172	Capital Financing	7.367
3.695	Contingency	0.450
0.850	Contribution to Capital	0.000
116.047	GROSS EXPENDITURE	120.086
-3.143	Less Income	-2.890
112.904	NET EXPENDITURE	117.196

2024/25 £m	Service Delivery	2025/26 £m
63.332	Firefighters	67.884
4.519	Support Staff	5.833
0.000	III Health Pensions	0.000
0.001	Other Employees	0.001
2.715	Premises	3.281
0.135	Transport	0.111
1.957	Supplies and Services	2.158
0.000	Lead Authority Charges	0.000
2.387	Capital Financing	1.453
0.000	Contingency	0.000
0.000	Contribution to Capital	0.000
75.046	GROSS EXPENDITURE	80.721
-2.411	Less Income	-2.212
72.635	NET EXPENDITURE	78.509

2024/25 £m	Service Support	2025/26 £m
5.673	Firefighters	5.161
5.793	Support Staff	6.452
0.000	III Health Pensions	0.000
1.412	Other Employees	0.934
2.970	Premises	3.221
1.971	Transport	1.805
4.003	Supplies and Services	4.102
0.000	Lead Authority Charges	0.000
1.699	Capital Financing	0.985
0.000	Contingency	0.000
0.000	Contribution to Capital	0.000
23.521	GROSS EXPENDITURE	22.660
-0.284	Less Income	-0.388
23.237	NET EXPENDITURE	22.272

2024/25 £m	Corporate Services & Governance	2025/26 £m
0.066	Firefighters	0.153
0.958	Support Staff	0.919
0.000	III Health Pensions	0.000
0.001	Other Employees	0.000
0.000	Premises	0.000
0.004	Transport	0.004
0.500	Supplies and Services	0.430
0.000	Lead Authority Charges	0.000
0.000	Capital Financing	0.000
0.000	Contingency	0.000
0.000	Contribution to Capital	0.000
1.529	GROSS EXPENDITURE	1.505
-0.016	Less Income	-0.012
1.513	NET EXPENDITURE	1.493

2024/25 £m	People and Culture	2025/26 £m
0.568	Firefighters	0.685
2.245	Support Staff	2.398
1.600	Ill Health Pensions	1.600
0.941	Other Employees	1.416
0.000	Premises	0.000
0.004	Transport	0.003
0.332	Supplies and Services	0.327
0.067	Lead Authority Charges	0.079
0.000	Capital Financing	0.009
0.000	Contingency	0.000
0.000	Contribution to Capital	0.000
5.757	GROSS EXPENDITURE	6.518
-0.014	Less Income	-0.016
5.743	NET EXPENDITURE	6.501

2024/25 £m	Finance & Procurement	2025/26 £m
0.234	Firefighters	0.211
1.131	Support Staff	1.368
0.000	Ill Health Pensions	0.000
0.092	Other Employees	0.165
0.091	Premises	0.086
0.260	Transport	0.281
0.776	Supplies and Services	0.473
0.291	Lead Authority Charges	0.301
5.887	Capital Financing	4.921
0.215	Contingency	0.450
0.850	Contribution to Capital	0.000
9.827	GROSS EXPENDITURE	8.258
-0.417	Less Income	-0.261
9.410	NET EXPENDITURE	7.997

2024/25 £m	Chief Fire Officer	2025/26 £m
0.290	Firefighters	0.318
0.052	Support Staff	0.067
0.000	Ill Health Pensions	0.000
0.000	Other Employees	0.000
0.000	Premises	0.000
0.004	Transport	0.003
0.021	Supplies and Services	0.036
0.000	Lead Authority Charges	0.000
0.000	Capital Financing	0.000
0.000	Contingency	0.000
0.000	Contribution to Capital	0.000
0.367	GROSS EXPENDITURE	0.424
0.000	Less Income	0.000
0.366	NET EXPENDITURE	0.424

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Agenda item: 13

Programme of Change Update

Full Authority

Date:	27 th February 2025
Submitted by:	Director of Service Support
Purpose:	To update members of the progress of the Programme of Change 2024/25.
Recommendations:	That members note the report.
Summary:	The report highlights progress against the Programme of Change 2024/25.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Toby May, Service Support AM Toby.May01@westyorksfire.gov.uk
Background papers open to inspection:	None
Annexes:	Annex 1 – Programme of Change 24/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Organisational Annual Planning Cycle is an embedded process which aims to achieve the following:
- Improve the logical flow of activities.
 - Allow greater planning time.
 - Allow scrutiny of proposed change activities.
 - Streamline and avoid duplication of effort with reporting.
- 1.2 The approved change activities which fall out of the planning process become programmes or projects of varying scale and form the Programme of Change.
- 1.3 Lower-level change is often managed within departments or districts as part of their Business as Usual (BaU).

2. Information

- 2.1 Progress on the programme's implementation is reported to each Full Authority. [Annex 1](#) shows the status of current projects.
- 2.2 Out of the 16 projects; 11 projects are on track, 1 is behind schedule, 2 are on hold and 2 are completed.
- 2.3 Evaluation reports for the closed project were presented at the recent Change Management Board meeting. Projects will be removed from the Programme of Change, and lessons learned will be explored.
- 2.4 HQ fire control project is showing as behind schedule due to issues identified as a BT configuration problem which have now been resolved and the project is on track for May go live date.
- 2.5 In addition, progress is reported at Change Management Board on a six-weekly basis.
- 2.6 A proposal is under consideration to implement an integrated annual planning cycle that will unify Finance, CRMP, BaU, and Change processes. This integrated approach aims to align processes, enhance efficiency, and inform future planning steps. Key benefits include increased efficiency, optimised resource allocation, and improved strategic alignment.
- 2.7 Work is additionally being undertaken to explore the implementation of an Integrated Project Management and Benefits Management Framework alongside an Evaluation Framework. The framework aims to ensure that projects are delivered on time and within budget, while also achieving their intended benefits to provide value for WYFRS. The evaluation framework will offer a structured approach to measure success and promote continuous improvement, ensuring that strategic objectives are met, and resources are used efficiently.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Although there are no financial implications arising from this report each project completed a full business case highlighting any financial implications.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no Human Resources and Diversity implications arising from this report at the time of submission.

5.2 All projects are required to assess the HR implications and undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? Yes

6.2 Each project/programme is required to complete an individual EIA.

6.3 The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorkshire.gov.uk

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report at the time of submission.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no Environmental implications arising from this report at the time of submission.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Improve the safety and effectiveness of our firefighters.
- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.

- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Continuously improve using digital and data platforms to innovate and work smarter.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Our programme of continuous improvement focuses on efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity.

10.2 The status of each project can be seen in Annex 1.

11. Annex 1 – Programme of Change 2024/25

Data as of 30/01/25

Project / Initiative	Project / Initiative Description	Target Completion Date	Strategic Alignment	Project Status	% Complete
FSHQ Programme	Deliver a modern, energy-efficient Headquarters with a purpose-built training arena. Refurbish existing buildings to provide a new 3 appliance bay Fire Station, a recruit and staff training centre, and a Command training facility whilst retaining the capacity to deliver BA training. Maximise space within the site to provide a new outdoor RTC training facility	02/01/2025	38	On track	95%
OneView Programme	Performance management programme to provide a transparent, timely and flexible method of sharing performance data with our colleagues, partners, and the communities.	17/05/2025	36	On track	80%
HQ Fire Control	The existing mobilising system is approaching end of life. In order to meet the ever-changing demands placed on WYFRS and to continue	31/01/2025	33	On track	70%

	provide a resilient, effective service a new mobilising system and ICCS is required.				
Microsoft 365	Technical requirements to keep Microsoft office products up to date with the latest features and security. This includes the implementation of SharePoint Online, MS Teams and some Viva Products which all enhance work productivity and collaboration	31/10/2024	30	Completed	100%
Keighley Fire Station	The construction of a new fire station on the existing site to replace an oversized and outdated fire station	15/12/2026	28	On track	55%
Command Support Software	Implement Airbox Mosaic command support software.	31/08/2024	16	On hold	40%
Grenfell Programme	Implement the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 Report.	30/09/2025	20	On track	80%
Special Projects Implementation	Following the conclusion of the Special Projects research phase on Aerial Appliances, Fire Appliances and Fire Station Design, the project has moved onto the implementation phase.	31/07/2025		On track	85%
Halifax Fire Station	The construction of a new fire station on the existing site to replace an oversized and outdated fire station	tbc		On hold	

Huddersfield Fire Station	The construction of a new fire station on the existing site to replace an oversized and outdated fire station	30/04/2027		On track	5%
MDT Software	This project will replace the existing Systel LEGO software and provide a new solution based primarily on an Android platform that will link to the new Frequentis Control System. WYFRS will procure a replace system and appoint a specialist contract that will partner who, in partnership, will collaborate with WYFRS and Frequentis to successfully and professionally deliver a fully supported MDT software solution to help achieve our organisational aims & objectives	30/09/25	22	On track	25%
Risk and capabilities review	To review all WYFRS specialist asset locations, staffing and operational activity to ensure they are aligned to risk and to identify areas to improve efficiency and operational effectiveness without compromising Service Deliver	31/01/2025	20	On track	85%
National Operational Guidance (NOG)	The National Operational Guidance (NOG) project will improve the access to operational information based around the Product Pack concept bringing together policy, guidance, training materials and more into a single easy to access location. The vision is to create a 'Firefighters Hub' which will provide a modern solution, establishing a 'one-stop-shop' for all operational needs. The concept is based around	31/12/2026	18	On track	5%

	<p>the user identifying the 'incident type' they wish to explore e.g. building fires, RTC, HazMat etc. Once the user has selected the incident type they wish to view, they would be presented with a standardised sub areas (Policy, Training, Equipment etc.), the content of each sub area is bespoke to its overarching incident type.</p>				
Operational Staffing	<p>In September 2022, the Operational Staffing project was initiated to review all wholetime operational staffing, with the objective being to improve the flexibility, resilience, and efficiency of staffing on wholetime fire stations. Phase one has now completed and the project has moved into phase two which will see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of wholetime operational staffing transition to a fully locally managed system. • Changes to local Staffing Management Structure. • Increased effectiveness of Employee Resources Team to support District Management Teams managing workforce planning, leave and absence management. • Further reduction in overtime and pre-arranged detached duty costs. • Introduction of Short-Term Flexibility Contracts. • Re-introduction of On-Call to Wholetime transfer process. 	31/12/2024	23	Completed	100%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition of Organisational Training to a crew-based training model. <p>Review of organisational/duty system attribute requirements.</p>				
Culture Review	OUR WYFRS will look at how we, as WYFRS, embed, develop, and display the recommendations from the LFB report, HMICFRS report, NFCC Culture action plan and our own strategies (people, leadership, diversity and inclusion, talent management). The project will pull together the workstreams involved in delivering the action plans and ensure the changes are embedded and understood by all.	30/06/2025		On track	20%
Digital and Data Programme	Migration of legacy systems on to the Power Platform and the development of new automations and applications into the Power Platform.	tbc		Behind schedule	20%

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Agenda item: 14

Quarterly HMICFRS Progress Update

Full Authority

Date:	27 February 2025
Submitted by:	Director of Corporate Services
Purpose:	To update members on the progress of the HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services) Actions.
Recommendations:	That members note the report.
Summary:	The report highlights progress against our HMICFRS Action Plan 2025.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Judi Haigh, Service Improvement and Assurance Team (SIAT) Manager Judith.Haigh@westyorksfire.gov.uk
Background papers	None
Annexes:	Annex 1 – HMICFRS Action Plan 2025 Progress

1. Introduction

1.1 The HMICFRS Action Plan was developed to manage and monitor our areas of improvement identified during the inspection process, in one central action plan. It is updated via quarterly workshops with action owners. This is an embedded process which aims to achieve the following: -

- Delivery at pace
- Organisational overview of progress
- Greater transparency
- Collaborative working

1.2 The HMICFRS Action Plan contains the 7 actions that were identified as areas of improvement by the HMICFRS and also 11 that have been identified internally as part of our continuous improvement journey.

2. Information

2.1 Going forward progress of our areas of improvement will be reported to each Full Authority.

2.2 All of the 18 actions on our HMICFRS Action Plan are currently 'On Track'. A more in-depth look at progress and action taken so far can be viewed in the meeting from the live HMICFRS Action Plan.

2.3 Progress is updated with action owners in HMICFRS Workshops which are held quarterly.

2.4 Completed actions remain on the action plan (in the completed bucket) until they are discharged by HMICFRS in our next inspection.

2.5 Moving forward all HMICFRS areas for improvement and recommendations will be managed via the new HMICFRS Monitoring Portal which will be shared with members at next Full Authority meeting.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report although each action may have some financial implications.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no Human Resources and Diversity implications arising from this report but individual actions may have some Human Resources or Diversity implications.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 There are no Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications from this report but individual actions may have some Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no Environmental implications arising from this report but individual actions may have environmental implications.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Improve the safety and effectiveness of our firefighters.
- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Continuously improve using digital and data platforms to innovate and work smarter.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Our HMICFRS Action Plan focuses on actions we plan to achieve meet inspectorate standards and as part of our continuous improvement journey.

10.2 The details within the live HMICFRS Action Plan will be shared during the meeting.

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Agenda item: 15

Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2

Full Authority

Date: 27 February 2025

Submitted by: Director of Service Delivery

Purpose: To provide the Fire Authority information on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report.

Recommendations: That members note the contents of the report.

Summary: This report provides information on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report, its associated impacts and the ongoing work within West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS), the wider FRS and partners.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

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Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 14 June 2017 the tragic fire occurred at Grenfell Tower, London which resulted in the loss of 72 lives. Now, over 6.5 years on, the impact of the fire continues to have a devastating and long-lasting effect on the victims' families, survivors, local communities, the firefighters, and other agencies that responded to it.
- 1.2 The Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) was split into two phases. Phase 1 focused on the events on the night of 14 June 2017. The Phase 1 report was released on 30 October 2019 and identified a variety of findings along with 46 recommendations to London Fire Brigade, HM Government, wider FRS, and other Services.
- 1.3 Phase 2 of the Inquiry examined the causes of these events, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase 1. The Phase 2 report was published on 4 September 2024, it runs to 1,700 pages and identified a variety of findings along with 58 recommendations to the construction industry and regulators, Fire engineers, Architects and Building Control, London Fire Brigade, HM Government, wider FRS, and other agencies/services such as Local authorities.
- 1.4 Over the course of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Inquiry it disclosed over 320,000 documents, received more than 1,600 witness statements and held 400 days of testimony, costing around £150 million.
- 1.5 Whilst outside the scope of the inquiry, the Met Police's independent criminal investigation is ongoing, so far it has identified 19 companies or organisations and 58 individuals as suspects. The latest reports indicate that criminal charges won't be brought until 2026 at the earliest with no one expected to be in court until at least 2027.

2. Phase 1

- 2.1 Following the publication of the GTI Phase 1 report, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) established a small project team to undertake a gap analysis to consider all 46 recommendations, identify risks, action owners, the financial impacts, and any other implications. This led to a wide-ranging action plan that was developed around ten thematic areas with service leads for each area. The thematic areas included: Buildings and Fire Safety Measures, Operational Pre-planning, Command and Control, Operations, Control, Communications, Equipment, Human Factors, Training and Miscellaneous areas.
- 2.2 Our approach meant we adopted all 46 GTI recommendations and built in additional objectives to ensure we had taken the fullest account of the recommendations and broader learning from the report. In total this resulted in 88 objectives within our GTI Phase 1 action plan.

2.3 Of the original 88 objectives, 86 have been closed or completed, 2 local objectives remain open and ongoing with regards to the latest policy release and training for Fires in Tall Buildings. 17 of the 46 GTI Phase 1 recommendations were directly related to all FRS, each of these recommendations have been completed by WYFRS.

3. Phase 2

3.1 The GTI Phase 2 report concluded that the fire which killed 72 people was the culmination of “*decades of failure by central government and others in the construction industry*”.

3.2 The chair of the Inquiry, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, gave the following statement as part of its release "The simple truth is that the deaths that occurred were all avoidable and those who lived in the tower were badly failed over a number of years and in a number of different ways by those who were responsible for ensuring the safety of the building and its occupants. They include the government, the tenant management organisation, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, those who manufactured and supplied the materials used in the refurbishment, those who certified their suitability for use on high-rise buildings, the architect, the principal contractor, and some of its subcontractors... Some of the consultants..., the local authorities building control department, and the London Fire Brigade." He went on to attribute this to “incompetence, dishonesty and greed”.

3.3 There are 58 recommendations, these are split between London Fire Brigade (LFB), all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), His Majesty’s Government (HMG), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), British Standards Institution (BSI), The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), the Tenant Management Organisation (TMO), Legislation and guidance, Local Authority Building Control, Local Resilience Forums, London Local Authority Gold arrangements, Building Safety Regulator (BSR), Fire Performance and Certification Bodies, fire risk assessors, building contractors, architects, fire engineers, the construction industry and product manufacturers.

3.4 Below are the key findings summarised by organisation/context:

Government

3.5 The report finds that Government had missed multiple opportunities to identify and take action to address the risks of combustible cladding and insulation. As late as 2016, Government was aware of the risks but failed to address them.

3.6 In 2001, a large-scale test of a system incorporating aluminium composite material (ACM) panels was undertaken. Government failed to publish the results or warn the construction industry of the risks posed by these materials.

- 3.7 The statutory guidance for the Building Regulations 2010 concerning fire safety, Approved Document B (ADB), is described as *“vague and ill-considered”*, perpetuated *“erroneous assumptions”*, and the official responsible for the regulations was not given *“adequate oversight”*.
- 3.8 The report found that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, now MHCLG) did not treat the coroner’s recommendations following Lakanal House *“with a sense of urgency”* and that civil servants *“did not explain clearly to the Secretary of State what steps were required to comply with them”*. The report found that *“the department displayed a complacent and at times defensive attitude to matters affecting fire safety”* and *“disregarded”* fire safety in favour of a deregulatory agenda.
- 3.9 It was also during this post-Lakanal deregulatory period that “Government determinedly resisted calls from across the fire sector to regulate fire risk assessors and to amend the Fire Safety Order (FSO) to make it clear that it applied to the exterior walls of buildings containing more than one set of domestic premises”.
- 3.10 At a 2009 Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA, now NFCC) enforcement working group meeting, it was noted that “although the department recognised that many would welcome a nationally recognised accreditation scheme for fire risk assessors, it was not something that Government intended to develop”.
- 3.11 In response to a consultation on the Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats guide, CFOA stated *“that not to include advice on the evacuation of disabled people was a fundamental error”*. Despite this view, the drafting group did not commission research or examine ways of helping those unable to escape unaided. The CFOA response was *“either considered and rejected or simply ignored”*.

Building Research Establishment (BRE)

- 3.12 The report found that the privatisation of BRE limited the scope of advice on fire safety matters. On occasions, it deliberately curtailed investigations before any proper conclusion had been reached.
- 3.13 BRE recognised as early as 1991 following the Knowsley Heights fire *“that small-scale testing”*, which provided the basis for the national standard, *“did not enable a proper assessment”* for how an external wall system would react to fire. However, BRE did not draw this fact to Government’s attention. The report also found that BRE failed to draw attention to the way ACM panels with unmodified polyethylene cores *“behaved and the dangers they presented”* following its large-scale test in 2001.
- 3.14 The Inquiry found BRE’s reports into three major fires (Knowsley Heights [1991], Garnock Court [1999] and the Edge [2005]), were *“far from comprehensive”* and that every report *“failed to identify or assess important contributory factors”*. This resulted in giving DCLG the false impression that *“the regulations and guidance were working effectively”*.

3.15 Weakness in the way BRE carried out tests and in its record keeping allowed it to be manipulated by *“unscrupulous product manufacturers”*. It found that senior BRE staff gave advice to customers, such as Kingspan and Celotex, on *“the best way to satisfy the criteria for a system to be considered safe”*. The accommodation (in some cases) of existing customers was at the *“expense of maintaining the rigour of its processes and considerations of public safety”*.

The Construction Industry

3.16 Almost all of those involved in the design, build and sign-off of the Grenfell Tower refurbishment come under heavy criticism for immoral business practices and the *“merry-go-round of buck-passing”* famously stated by Richard Millett KC during the Inquiry. To address this, the Inquiry calls on Government to establish a new Construction Regulator and Chief Construction Adviser to oversee the industry, new licensing and accreditation schemes for professionals in the design and build process, and a fundamental review of the Building Control model including the role of commercial incentives. It does, however, note that a single regulator may not *“solve the problem because the system will still depend on the effectiveness of the conformity assessment bodies and the limited oversight of UKAS.”*

3.17 Much greater importance has been placed on the importance of fire engineering as a discipline. Several recommendations call for new steps of the building safety regime to be carried out by fire engineers and call on Government and the wider industry to formalise and increase the number of people entering the profession and improve knowledge across the sector, particularly for senior FRS staff, through new CPD courses.

Product Manufacturers

3.18 The report is clear that safety in the built environment depends on knowing how products and materials will react to fire. A significant reason for Grenfell Tower being clad in combustible materials was due to *“systematic dishonesty”* by those who made and sold rain-screen cladding and insulation products *with “deliberate and sustained strategies to manipulate the testing processes, misrepresent test data and mislead the market”*.

3.19 These strategies were successful because certification bodies *“failed to ensure that the statements in their product certificates were accurate and based on test evidence”*. The body with oversight of the certification bodies also failed to *“apply proper standards of monitoring and supervision”*.

Arconic

3.20 From 2005 until after the Grenfell Tower fire, *“Arconic deliberately concealed from the market the true extent of the danger”* of its Reynobond 55 PE rainscreen product in cassette form *“particularly on high-rise buildings”*. This was *“not an oversight”* but a

“deliberate strategy” to continue selling the product in the UK “based on a statement about its fire performance that it knew to be false”.

3.21 From early 2005, Arconic had been in possession of test data showing the cassette product *“reacted to fire in a very dangerous way”* and could not be classified in accordance with European Standards. Despite knowledge of the danger of the product in cassette form and concerns in the construction industry around ACM, Arconic *“was determined to exploit what it saw as weak regulatory regimes”* to sell the product. After cladding fires in Dubai in 2012 and 2013, they did not withdraw the product in favour of a new fire-resistant version.

Celotex

3.22 In an attempt to break into the market of insulation suitable for high-rise buildings, Celotex embarked on a *“dishonest scheme to mislead its customers and the wider market.”* Celotex deliberately tested its RS5000 insulation product in 2014 *“with the complicity of the BRE”* in a manner to ensure it passed. It then obtained a BRE test result that omitted the use of magnesium oxide boards in the testing, rendering the report *“materially incomplete and misleading”*.

3.23 Celotex marketed the product, referring to the successful test, as acceptable for use in buildings above 18 metres. From 2011, it was sold and marketed as having Class 0 fire performance though this was *“false and misleading”*.

Kingspan

3.24 From 2005 until after the inquiry began, Kingspan *“knowingly created a false market in insulation for use on buildings over 18 metres”*. Kingspan knew its K15 product could not be sold as suitable for use in external walls of buildings over 18 metres in height. They relied upon results of a single 2005 test on a system whose components were not representative of a typical external wall. It continued to rely on the test despite changing the composition of the product in 2006.

3.25 Kingspan concealed from the British Board of Agrément (BBA) that the product they were selling differed from the 2005 test product. The BBA certificate contained three fire performance statements which were untrue and used a form of words suggested by Kingspan and drawn from the company's marketing literature. The re-issued 2013 certificate contained a false implication that the product was of limited combustibility.

3.26 Kingspan also obtained a Local Authority Building Control (LABC) certificate in 2009 containing false statements. It used the LABC certificate to *“mask or distract from”* the absence of supporting test evidence.

3.27 When Kingspan returned to testing on systems containing K15, they did not use the product which was currently on the market yet used those results to support the sale for use on buildings over 18 metres until October 2020.

Regulatory Bodies and Compliance

3.28 The report is clear that all of the “*certification bodies that provided assurance to the market of the quality and characteristics of the products [used on and in Grenfell Tower] failed to ensure that the statements in the certificates they issued were accurate and based on appropriate and relevant test evidence*”.

British Board of Agrément (BBA)

3.29 The BBA, responsible for product compliance with legislation, awarded certificates of compliance to insulation products used in Grenfell Tower, and the report finds that it was neither “*independent nor rigorous*”. This is attributed to an “*ingrained willingness to accommodate customers instead of insisting on high standards*”, along with “*inadequate levels of competence*” among its staff.

3.30 The BBA’s certificates of compliance were found to contain false information and were allowed to be dictated by the manufacturers themselves. In some cases, the BBA did not even assess or test products before issuing certificates

Local Authority Building Control (LABC)

3.31 LABC is responsible for verifying the compliance of construction products with the Building Regulations. The Inquiry found that it failed “*to take basic steps*” to ensure its compliance certificates were accurate, that it failed to properly scrutinise products, that its staff were not competent to undertake their roles, and that it was “*vulnerable to manipulation*”.

National House Building Council (NHBC)

3.32 NHBC provided building control services to a large proportion of the construction industry. Evidence found that NHBC was “*nervous*” about the use of Celotex insulation in high-rise buildings, and even consulted FRSs on the issue. The report describes NHBC as “*unwilling to upset its own customers*”, however, and that building control bodies “*preferred to co-operate with applicants...rather than enforce the Building Regulations rigorously*”.

United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS)

3.33 UKAS is appointed by the Government to assess and accredit organisations that provide services including certification, testing, and inspection. UKAS “*relied too much on the candour and co-operation of the organisations being assessed and too much was left to trust*”.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) Council and the Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)

3.34 The Inquiry found that RBKC and the TMO, jointly responsible for Grenfell Tower’s fire safety management, showed “*persistent indifference*” to safety requirements. Residents of the tower repeatedly raised dissatisfaction with their treatment by the TMO, argued the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower (which fitted the building with

combustible cladding) was mismanaged by the TMO, and that by the time of the fire relationships between the organisation and Grenfell Tower's residents *"had deteriorated to the point at which they could be described as hostile"*.

- 3.35 The TMO's Chief Executive *"consistently failed"* to draw attention to the London Fire Brigade's (LFB) concerns about the tower's failure to comply with the Fire Safety Order (FSO), either to the TMO board or RBKC.
- 3.36 Despite a 2009 recommendation from an independent fire safety consultant, no fire strategy had been approved by the TMO or RBKC at the time of the fire. The TMO's only fire assessor was not subject to *"any formal selection or recruitment process"*. The report notes that LFB raised concerns about the assessor's competence, which were subsequently ignored.
- 3.37 Fire risks identified in the tower were not remedied suitably or efficiently. The *"TMO had developed a huge backlog of remedial work"*, information about vulnerable occupants was not collected, and senior management reduced the importance attached to certain fire safety works, considering them as *"an inconvenience"*.
- 3.38 Grenfell Tower's fire protection systems did not work effectively and were in some instances not present at all. The TMO *"failed to specify the correct fire safety standard"* when ordering fire protection measures despite a 2015 Enforcement Notice from LFB on the same failure in another property in the TMO's portfolio.
- 3.39 In 2010, a fire had broken out in the lobby of Grenfell Tower but was quickly extinguished by LFB. The TMO's post-fire report, provided to the TMO board on 17 June 2010, is described by the Inquiry to have *"grossly understated the extent to which smoke had spread within the tower and was seriously misleading"*. The spread of smoke in this fire led LFB to issue a 2014 deficiency notice to the TMO for its failure to maintain the smoke ventilation system. The system was only replaced in 2016. The report also notes several other instances of LFB advice that went ignored by the TMO, which *"failed to give sufficient weight to the advice of the LFB"*. One example shows that, in 2014, LFB requested for a premises information box to be installed, which was denied by the TMO's fire assessor, and another relates to the deficiency notice given by LFB in 2016 as relating to the lack of self-closing doors.

London Fire Brigade (LFB)

- 3.40 The report is critical of LFB's senior leadership, noting that the *"Lakanal House fire in July 2009 should have alerted the LFB to the shortcomings in its ability to fight fires in high-rise buildings... Those shortcomings could have been made good if LFB had been more effectively managed and led."*
- 3.41 The Inquiry pointed to complacency and overconfidence in processes set up to review and report on necessary changes, but monitoring did not occur to ensure changes had been implemented. This resulted in growing knowledge in some parts

of LFB about the dangers presented by the increasing use of combustible materials not being reflected in operational policies and procedures.

- 3.42 It finds that LFB did not provide sufficient guidance or training for control room operators dealing with many concurrent calls, fire survival guidance refresher training, nor training for firefighters in dealing with uncontrolled external wall fires.
- 3.43 LFB's policies for firefighting in high-rise buildings were found not to reflect national guidance at the time, and had a "*well known problem*" with radio communication equipment, which did not adequately function inside the tower, was not addressed.
- 3.44 The criticism continues for the inadequacy of training for staff and incident commanders on such areas as loss of communications, water supplies, and briefing/debriefing of BA wearers.
- 3.45 On operational pre-planning LFB "*consistently failed to implement an effective system for the collection, storage and distribution of operational risk information*".

College of Fire and Rescue

- 3.46 The Inquiry also calls on Government to expedite the establishment of a College of Fire and Rescue. The envisaged role for the College goes beyond that outlined in the White Paper, recommending access to physical premises with a role for providing training as well as monitoring standards and research.

Civil Contingencies Act (CCA)

- 3.47 The Inquiry criticises the support provided to Grenfell Tower survivors and other local community members affected by the fire and calls on the Government to reform the Civil Contingencies Act and on local authorities and other Category 1 responders to improve preparedness, response and recovery activities, including improvements to training, guidance and procedures.

Vulnerable People

- 3.48 The Phase 2 report recommends that further consideration be given to the recommendations made in the Phase 1 report with regards to the preparation and sharing of information on vulnerable people.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Whilst on first review, only a minority of the recommendations directly relate to fire and rescue services activities and responsibilities, a number of the recommendations will require a multi-disciplinary approach to resolve.
- 4.2 The Service is continuing to undertake a detailed analysis of the report working alongside the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) and other stakeholders to fully understand the requirements and implications of the 58 recommendations.

- 4.3 Further to this, there is significant learning found within the 1,700 pages that do not on their own constitute recommendations, however, will require further consideration in order to effectively respond to the entirety of the Grenfell Tower Phase 2 Inquiry report.
- 4.4 Whilst the Government is yet to respond to the recommendations, it is expected that the routine reporting of progress against the recommendations will be required to the Home Office and NFCC.

5. Current Progress

- 5.1 We are working towards mitigating, where required, the recommendations aimed at LFB, the NFCC and the broader Fire and Rescue Services and we have provided our position and, where relevant, our progress against those considered to be within our sphere of influence below.
- 5.2 We are also developing a position on the wider recommendations that, although not aimed at WYFRS, are relevant to our communities and include wider building and fire safety issues.

Recommendation	WYFRS Response
<p>113.43 We understand that since the problem came to light the LFB has taken steps to ensure that only drop keys of an approved pattern are carried by its firefighters. The evidence does not enable us to assess with any confidence whether similar problems have been encountered by other fire and rescue services and, if so, what steps they have taken in response. Accordingly, we are not in a position to determine whether greater standardisation of fire control switches and keys is required. We therefore recommend that the government seeks urgent advice from the Building Safety Regulator and the National Fire Chiefs Council on the nature and scale of the problem and the appropriate response to it.</p>	<p>Whilst this recommendation does not sit directly with WYFRS, we advocate for an improved level of lift operation standardisation including lift keys.</p> <p>We provide a variety of lift keys on all front-line appliances. These include a traditional Fire Brigade Drop Key, GAL Type Drop Key and Triangular Lift Key.</p> <p>We have limited records of learning issues directly related to lift keys. However, there has been some recent evidence of crews being unable to operate/open lifts with the keys provided and instructions for the use of the lift being unclear. Work is currently ongoing to understand this further and to look at a more robust and standardised approach to lift key provision. This is due to identifying a number of variations of keys, and/or additional keys on appliances that have been provided through local means such as site visits etc., where it has been</p>

	<p>identified locally that there was a bespoke key(s) required.</p> <p>Training in the use of lift keys is provided through watch members passing on their knowledge and experience to others due to the large variety of lift types and operating instructions.</p>
<p>113.59 We have explained in Chapter 80 why communication by radio is inherently likely to be adversely affected in certain environments, including tall buildings constructed mainly of dense or reflective materials such as stone, concrete, brick and steel. It is apparent, however, that the use of low-power intrinsically safe radio equipment exacerbates the problem because of its more limited transmission range. In many firefighting situations the danger of a spark from a radio igniting flammable gases is very low. The fire at Grenfell Tower is one example. We understand that intrinsically safe radios capable of operating at higher power are now available. We therefore recommend that fire and rescue services that continue to use low power intrinsically safe radios as part of breathing apparatus consider reserving them only for situations in which there is a real risk of igniting flammable gases and generally using radios of higher power, particularly in high-rise buildings.</p>	<p>All WYFRS front-line appliances carry 4 “high power” fire ground digital radios that are used with breathing apparatus in the majority of circumstances. Each appliance also carries a single “low power” intrinsic analogue radio for use in when deployed into a known hazardous/flammable atmosphere.</p> <p>The “high power” digital radio has an analogue mode to ensure we are able to communicate with cross border pumps and the intrinsic “low power” analogue radio.</p> <p>We intend to replace both our "high power" digital radios and "low power" intrinsic analogue radios in 25/26, moving all radios to digital by the end of 2025.</p> <p>We have radio repeaters available to deploy on to the fire ground to improve/extend ranges where radio communications issues are identified.</p>
<p>113.60 There is strong evidence that in general digital radios are more effective than analogue radios. We therefore recommend that all fire and rescue services give consideration to providing all firefighters with digital radios.</p>	<p>All WYFRS front-line appliances carry 4 “high power” fire ground digital radios that are used with breathing apparatus in the majority of circumstances. Each appliance also carries a single “low power” intrinsic analogue radio for use in when deployed into a known hazardous/flammable atmosphere.</p> <p>We intend to replace both our "high power" digital radios and "low power"</p>

	<p>intrinsic analogue radios in 25/26, moving all radios to digital by the end of 2025.</p>
<p>113.61 Since radio communications are inherently unreliable in certain environments, we recommend that firefighters be trained to respond appropriately to the loss of communications and to understand how to restore them.</p>	<p>WYFRS provides training to all firefighters to ensure they can use all available communication options on the incident ground, this includes both digital and analogue radios.</p> <p>This starts with firefighters on their initial trainee course and throughout their development on station and is tested through practical training, exercising and assessment locally and during BA assessments.</p> <p>Through the Grenfell phase 1 work we introduced mobile radio repeaters and provided updated guidance on communications.</p> <p>Further training and input will be given to all staff later in 2025 through the replacement of the fireground radios.</p>
<p>113.62 On the night of the Grenfell Tower fire firefighters were unable to distinguish between different types of hydrant. That is a clear indication of a need for better training and we therefore recommend that basic training on the structure and operation of the water supply system, including the different types of hydrants in use and their functions, be given to all firefighters. Training should also be given on effective measures to increase water flow and pressure when necessary.</p>	<p>WYFRS provides training to all firefighters to on water supplies and hydrants. This starts with firefighters on their initial trainee course and covers the types and use of hydrants and water supply zones.</p> <p>Our Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's) have the locations of all hydrants available visibly via the map. This includes the size of the water main the hydrant is located on.</p> <p>All buildings with risk information includes the local hydrants and for those buildings considered to be of higher risk, this includes the location of strategic hydrants and other sources of water.</p> <p>Control, Command Units and all FDS officers have access to WYfiremap which</p>

	<p>also shows the location of strategic hydrants.</p> <p>For over 10 years we have had a request for assistance (RFA) process in place with Yorkshire Water (YW).</p>
<p>113.63 The Grenfell Tower fire made unusual demands on the supply of water, but other major fires may make similar demands in future. If it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of the statutory water undertaker to increase the volume or pressure of the supply, the fire and rescue service should be able to communicate with it quickly and clearly. We therefore recommend that all fire and rescue services establish and periodically review an agreed protocol with the statutory water undertakers in their areas to enable effective communication between them in relation to the supply of water for firefighting purposes.</p>	<p>For around 10 years we have had a request for assistance (RFA) process in place with Yorkshire Water (YW).</p> <p>Through the rollout of the original calm networks training, we introduced the concept of YW providing the location of the most suitable hydrant(s) and improving the arrangements for YW to support large scale incidents. Through this process YW identify hydrants across their network to optimise the water supply at incidents.</p> <p>This information is passed through Control to our Water Sector Commander and when in place the Command Unit/Command Support Officer.</p> <p>A YW water engineer can also be requested to attend the incident ground if further help/assistance is required.</p> <p>Through the Grenfell phase 1 actions we provided Water Sector Commander training/input to all junior officers to give an understanding of the role and responsibilities at an incident and the ways in which YW can support our needs at larger scale incidents.</p>
<p>113.65 How to deploy the available firefighters must remain the responsibility of the incident commander, who alone can judge how best to make use of the available resources. We also recognise that firefighters must be allowed to exercise discretion in how best to carry out their instructions. However, anyone reading Part 9 of the report will be struck by the number</p>	<p>WYFRS support this recommendation, however, the dynamic nature of incidents means that firefighters must be able to recognise and react to the events they encounter and changes in the risks following their deployment in BA. This includes making decisions which deviate from instructions where necessary. However, further consideration of the</p>

<p>of times crews despatched to the highest floors of the tower in response to calls for assistance failed to reach their destinations because they decided to help people they encountered on the stairs on their way up. We cannot tell whether in any of those cases they would have been able to rescue people higher up the building if they had not done so, but we recommend that National Fire Chiefs Council consider whether, and if so in what circumstances, firefighters should be discouraged from departing from their instructions on their own initiative and provide appropriate training in how to respond to a situation of that kind.</p>	<p>guidance and training available to support firefighters in making these decisions would be beneficial for the sector and should be based on the 'Safe Person' concept within National Operational Guidance. The safe person concept is a health and safety principle that states that individuals are responsible for their own and others' safety while at work.</p> <p>WYFRS use a BA Briefing Log to ensure that BA briefing is undertaken consistently and captures the requirements of the incident/sector commander and therefore the tasks given to the specific BA teams.</p> <p>BA training includes the potential for changes in circumstances after a team is deployed from the Entry Control Point (ECP), this includes the BA Team Leader making contact with the ECP to update on their circumstances and any changes to their allocated task(s).</p>
<p>113.55 The demands imposed on the LFB's control room by the Grenfell Tower fire were very great, but even so, its performance did not meet reasonable expectations. That was principally the result of inadequate training and a failure to carry out regular exercises, itself the result of poor management. The establishment of a College of Fire and Rescue could be expected to create improvements in all those areas by setting standards for training, by training more senior ranks to perform management roles effectively and by sharing best practice. In the meantime, we recommend that His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services ("the Inspectorate") inspect the LFB as soon as reasonably possible to assess and report on:</p>	<p>Whilst this recommendation is specific to LFB, WYFRS supports the principle of this recommendation. Since the Grenfell phase 1 report, the service has implemented a significant programme of training across Control, which includes aligning Control Officer roles to National Operational Guidance with a focus on service delivery.</p> <p>Control Room Officers are now attending the National Control Liaison Officer (NCLO) with 11 Control officers qualified so far.</p> <p>A Control Training Manager role is embedded within service to oversee and provide training to new Control operatives and officers along with overseeing the ongoing maintenance of competence of Control staff.</p>

<p>a. the extent to which the control room is now integrated into the organisation;</p> <p>b. the effectiveness of the arrangements for identifying the training needs of control room staff, delivering effective training and recording its outcomes;</p> <p>c. the effectiveness of the control room generally;</p> <p>d. the ability of the control room to handle a large number of concurrent requests for advice and assistance from people directly affected by fires or other emergencies; and</p> <p>e. the quality and effectiveness of the arrangements for communication between the control room and the incident commander.</p>	<p>We availability allows we invite Control operators and ranks to exercises and have a process in place to deploy them to an incident, where it is deemed there would be a benefit to do so.</p> <p>Control also take part in large scale training/exercises including live play and tabletop CPD sessions.</p> <p>There is ongoing Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) training to ensure Control operators are able to deal with these calls and have a dedicated procedure in place for handling large numbers of concurrent calls along with processes to interface with the incident ground and share FSG information.</p> <p>The performance of Control is monitored Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which relate to: time taken to answer 999 calls, time taken to mobilise resources and quality of the interaction with the caller with a particular focus on FSG calls.</p> <p>We are part way through a significant investment into Control, with a new control system being deployed in mid-2025. This will include an improved layout of the control room, efficiencies in the operation of the system, and visual footage for situational awareness through the ability to share video footage from end users making the 999 calls.</p>
<p>113.56 In Chapter 72 we are critical of the LFB’s arrangements immediately before the Grenfell Tower fire for assessing the competence of those expected to act as incident commanders, particularly in the early stages of the response to a fire in a high-rise residential building. Steps have already been taken to respond to the criticisms made by the chairman in his Phase 1 report, but in order to reassure those who live in London we recommend</p>	<p>WYFRS has a Command and CPD framework which outlines a defined structure compliant with national requirements clearly defining command competence requirements.</p> <p>The framework outlines qualification type and revalidation for each rank:</p> <p>Initial command (CM/WM):</p>

<p>that as soon as reasonably possible the Inspectorate inspect the LFB to examine and report on the arrangements it has in place for assessing the training of incident commanders at all levels and their continuing competence, whether by a process of revalidation or otherwise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFJ award Lv3 initial acquisition and SFJ ICL1 revalidation every 2 years. <p>Intermediate command (SM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFJ award Lv4 initial acquisition and SFJ ICL2 revalidation every 2 years. <p>Advanced command (GM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFJ award Lv6 initial acquisition and SFJ ICL3 revalidation every 2 years <p>Strategic command (AM/PO):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFJ award Lv7 initial acquisition (SCG) • SFJ ICL4 initial acquisition (Strategic tactical) and SFJ ICL4 revalidation (Strategic tactical) every year. <p>These are consistently achieved, with completion rates over 95% across all levels of incident command.</p> <p>Alongside formal revalidation assessments, we include regularly quarterly CPD sessions for Intermediate, Advanced and Strategic commanders across a range of scenarios and risks including (but not limited to) fire, hazmat, high-rise and terrorist attack.</p> <p>The redevelopment of our HQ and Training Centre now provides additional options for improved command training through the updated command suite.</p> <p>Throughout the first half of 2025 we are undertaking further high-rise/fires in tall buildings training/input to all staff, which includes online input along with in person walk-throughs and practical assurance exercises.</p>
<p>113.57 In the years before the Grenfell Tower fire the LFB consistently failed to implement an effective system for the</p>	<p>Through the Building Risk Review (BRR) process WYFRS undertook a review of 'in-scope' buildings throughout 2021.</p>

<p>collection, storage and distribution of operational risk information, in particular in relation to high-risk, high-rise residential buildings. We therefore recommend that as soon as reasonably practicable the Inspectorate inspect the LFB to examine and report on its arrangements for collecting, storing and distributing information in accordance with section 7(2)(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, and in particular its arrangements for identifying high-risk residential buildings and collecting, storing and distributing information relating to them.</p>	<p>Note: an 'in-scope' building was considered to be a building that is at least 7 storeys or 18 metres above ground level (measured from the lowest ground level adjoining the outside of the building to the height of the floor in the top storey, ignoring any top storey that contains only plant or machinery).</p> <p>Each building had a fire safety audit completed along with a tactical information plan (TIP) being created and Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) being updated to compliment them. Each TIP includes details of the buildings layout, specific building features of note and a bespoke Evacuation Board.</p> <p>The TIPs and SSRI are available to operational staff through the MDT's and Tablets available on appliances. Control have access through the OSARIS risk database.</p> <p>All staff with works laptops and/or mobile phones can access the MDT portal which holds the SSRI and TIPs in SharePoint online.</p> <p>Through the regulations introduced by the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 we now receive information from Responsible Persons of "in scope" buildings regarding any changes they make or defects to building safety features. This information is shared with Control, Fire Protection and the Operational Risk Management Team to allow for an assessment of the changes and for the update of risk information held.</p> <p>WYFRS continue to interact with 'in-scope' buildings as part of our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). There are around 140 buildings that continue to have some form of issue, to</p>
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	<p>varying extents, which includes, but is not limited to cladding, external wall systems or other historic fire safety defects.</p>
<p>113.58 The LFB took steps to examine incidents, collect relevant information, establish boards and committees to digest it and produce appropriate changes to working practices. In most cases, however, the process was excessively bureaucratic and undermined the purpose for which it had been established. As a result, too little of the available information was translated into practical outcomes. We therefore recommend that the LFB establish effective standing arrangements for collecting, considering and effectively implementing lessons learned from previous incidents, inquests and investigations. Those arrangements should be as simple as possible, flexible and of a kind that will ensure that any appropriate changes in practice or procedure are implemented speedily.</p>	<p>WYFRS follow the principles of the National Operational Learning (NOL) Good Practice Guide, which is designed to assist with capturing and sharing learning from operational activities as part of a continual improvement cycle.</p> <p>Following incidents and exercises staff are able to submit Operational Learning Forms to highlight identified learning and notable practices.</p> <p>We deploy Operational Assurance (OpA) officers to specific 2 pump incident types and all incidents over 3 pumps. The aim of OpA is to take steps to improve our operational performance, culture and safety by supporting the development of commanders (and firefighters) through monitoring of operational performance at incidents.</p> <p>Further to this we have Reality Testing through our Service Improvement and Assurance Team (SIAT), as part of our organisational assurance. This is an in-depth review of smaller incidents (4 pumps or under) that tests our policies and procedures to gauge how effectively they are working.</p> <p>These submissions are then reviewed through local and/or structured debriefs, the outcomes of which are fed into the Operational Learning Evaluation Board. The evaluation board identifies the route through which the service will share the learning both internally and externally, through the likes of policy/training updates, or via the operational bulletin and other communications channels.</p>

<p>113.28 We also recommend that the government, working in collaboration with industry and professional bodies, encourage the development of courses in the principles of fire engineering for construction professionals and members of the fire and rescue services as part of their continuing professional development.</p>	<p>WYFRS support this recommendation and believe that updated information and guidance is required.</p> <p>We are interested to understand how this recommendation is taken forwards and how WYFRS are able to meet it.</p>
<p>In the Phase 1 report the chairman recommended that the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to prepare personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for all residents whose ability to evacuate the building without assistance may be compromised (such as persons with reduced mobility or impaired cognition) and to include current information about them and their associated PEEPs in a premises information box.</p> <p>113.82 We recommend that further consideration be given to the recommendations made in the Phase 1 report in the light of our findings in this report.</p>	<p>WYFRS has progressed many of the recommendations that were given in the Phase 1 report. However, many required, and still require changes to legislation or updates to regulations to allow these to be taken forwards in a meaningful manner. This includes those regulations on vulnerable persons.</p> <p>In February 2024 the Home Office: Evacuation Guidelines for Fire and Rescue Services were published with no opportunity for the FRS sector to review and comment. We and others in the fire sector including the NFCC were concerned that a number of these guidelines do not seem to align with the law, legal precedents, and various guidance documents and regulations. When all these sources are considered together, they demonstrate that the law intends for all residents and lawful visitors to be able to evacuate the building to a safe place outside, without needing external assistance. However, the Evacuation Guidelines imply that there will be a transfer of existing duties from the Responsible Persons (RP's) to the FRS, by suggesting that RPs are not already required to ensure all residents can evacuate. Clarity was sought from the Home Office and received with the Home Office's reassertion of the responsibilities of the Responsible Person (RP) in ensuring all residents can</p>

	<p>evacuate, and that these responsibilities do not transfer to the FRS.</p> <p>In practice, FRSs, in their role to protect life, will perform a rescue using best endeavours, and supporting the emergency evacuation of vulnerable people where there is a serious fire in the building. In this context, our view remains that rescue and/or emergency evacuation by the FRS should always be viewed as a variable last resort, and not as an assumption or failsafe to enable building owners to evade their responsibilities.</p>
<p>113.83 We recommend that the advice contained in paragraph 79.11 of the LGA Guide be reconsidered.</p>	<p>WYFRS support this recommendation and notes that Paragraphs 79.9-79.11 have been removed from the most recent available versions of the Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Guide as this was considered through the governments Personal Emergency Evacuations Plan consultation and the subsequent Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing Plus (EEIS+) consultation.</p> <p>The government’s response to the consultation on EEIS+ was published in December 2024, in the conclusion it states <i>“Government will work with a variety of stakeholder and representative bodies on developing the operational detail of the policy and Regulations, the guidance and the RP toolkit... Subject to parliamentary approval, the government will then proceed to draft and lay Regulations to enact the above consultation outcomes on Residential PEEPs and building level evacuation plans as quickly as the parliamentary timetable allows.”</i></p> <p>Conclusion 13 states <i>“In the event of a fire, the FRS will fight the fire, and undertake the evacuation and rescue of</i></p>

	<p><i>vulnerable residents. To support FRSs in carrying out these emergency evacuations, we will require, in Regulation, specific information on all vulnerable residents in in-scope buildings to be made available by RPs to their local FRS. This will be supported by Article 50 guidance.”</i></p> <p>In an emergency situation the provision of up-to-date vulnerable persons information would clearly be key and therefore this responsibility would be on the RP to maintain and provide this information in a timely manner. However, where a resident is unable to evacuate, FRS, in their role to protect life, will perform a rescue or evacuation using best endeavours, this should always be viewed as an unreliable last resort and not as an assumption or failsafe to enable building owners to evade their responsibilities.</p> <p>WYFRS await the detail of the draft regulations to fully understand the impacts and requirements. However, we are working with Leeds City Council on a proof-of-concept data sharing agreement on vulnerable persons data as a precursor to the regulations.</p>
<p>113.51 we recommend that the government establish a college of fire with sufficient resources to provide the following services nationally:</p> <p>a. practical training at all levels supplementary to that provided by individual fire and rescue services;</p> <p>b. education in the form of lectures and seminars on different aspects of the work of the fire and rescue services in order to share experience and promote good practice;</p>	<p>WYFRS support this recommendation. We believe that the fire and rescue sector would benefit from a properly funded National College of Fire, to provide education and agreed set standards/models. This should be led by fire service professionals and overseen by a suitable board of directors (or similar) drawn from a range of backgrounds.</p> <p>We would welcome the opportunity to engage with government, NFCC, other</p>

<p>c. research into matters that may affect the work of the fire and rescue services, including major fires;</p> <p>d. the development of equipment, policies and procedures suitable for ensuring the effectiveness of fire and rescue services nationally and the safety of firefighters and the public;</p> <p>e. setting and maintaining national standards of managerial competence for senior managers, including control room managers, and providing management training for, and regular assessment of, senior ranks by reference to such standards.</p>	<p>stakeholders and the wider sector in the planning and delivery of a college.</p>
<p>113.53 Although it is for the government to decide how the college should be constituted, we recommend that it should have a permanent staff of sufficient size to manage its operations and develop its functions in response to the demands of fire and rescue services nationally and the requirements of the board. The college will need access to permanent facilities, including facilities for practical training and education. We envisage that much of the training and education will be delivered and led by firefighters of suitable experience drawn as the occasion requires from fire and rescue services around the country.</p>	<p>WYFRS support this recommendation. We believe that the fire and rescue sector would benefit from a properly funded National College of Fire, to provide education and agreed set standards/models. This should be led by fire service professionals and overseen by a suitable board of directors (or similar) drawn from a range of backgrounds.</p> <p>We would welcome the opportunity to engage with government, NFCC, other stakeholders and the wider sector in the planning and delivery of a college.</p>

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are currently no direct financial implications associated with this report, however, as work progresses from the assessment and review stages into the implementation phase, we anticipate future costs of staffing and resources to undertake the work.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

8. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

8.1 There are currently no HR or diversity implications associated with this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 As work progresses and objectives are set/agreed Equality Impact Assessments will be completed on the workstreams.

10. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

10.1 There are currently no direct Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications associated with this report. However, as the GTI report identifies *“the safety of people in the built environment depends principally on a combination of three primary elements, good design, the choice of suitable materials and sound methods of construction, each of which depends in turn in a large measure on a fourth, the skill, knowledge and experience of those engaged in the construction industry. Unfortunately, as our investigations have shown, at the time of the Grenfell Tower fire there were serious deficiencies in all four of those areas”*. (113.3)

10.2 Therefore, the report once again highlights the need for our continued work to improve where possible, the provision of equipment, training, knowledge and understanding of fires in the built environment to mitigate the failures of others. In doing so, we will reduce the risk to our staff and members of the public within West Yorkshire.

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.
- Improve the safety and effectiveness of our firefighters.
- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Collaborate with partners to improve of our services.

12. Conclusions

12.1 The significant amount of work undertaken in the years since the fire and first report such as changes to training, equipment, guidance, policy or procedure provide a solid foundation for the service to assure the Fire Authority that we are working hard to mitigate the risks to ourselves, our staff and the public of West Yorkshire.

- 12.2 However, the Phase 2 report, asks us to review those previous actions, objectives and decisions, to assure ourselves that those that have been closed and or/ or completed are reconsidered in the context of the GTI Phase 2 report. The service is undertaking a review of the objectives of the Phase 1 action plan and considering if the outcomes of each were fully achieved when closed, or whether those actions that were moved across to business-as-usual processes, teams or depts have been suitably embedded or whether further work is required to mitigate these.
- 12.3 We are working towards mitigating, where required, the Phase 2 recommendations aimed at LFB, the NFCC and the broader Fire and Rescue Services and we have provided our position and, where relevant, our progress against those considered to be within our sphere of influence.
- 12.4 We are also developing a position on the wider recommendations that, although not aimed at WYFRS, are relevant to our communities and include wider building and fire safety issues and partners.
- 12.5 Increasing the provision of equipment, training, knowledge and understanding of fires in the built environment, particularly around high-rise and cladded buildings will reduce the risk to our staff and members of the public within West Yorkshire and this continues to be one of our organisational priorities.

13. Appendix 1 – GTI Phase 2 Recommendations

This appendix lists the 58 Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations as they appear in the final report.

The construction industry

We therefore recommend that the government draw together under a single regulator all the functions relating to the construction industry to which we have referred. (113.6)

Construction Industry Regulations

We therefore recommend that the definition of a higher-risk building for the purposes of the Building Safety Act be reviewed urgently. (113.7)

Government

We therefore recommend that the government bring responsibility for the functions relating to fire safety currently exercised by MHCLG, the Home Office and the Department for Business and Trade into one department under a single Secretary of State. (113.8)

Chief Construction Adviser

We therefore recommend that the Secretary of State appoint a Chief Construction Adviser with a sufficient budget and staff to provide advice on all matters affecting the construction industry (113.9)

Legislation and guidance

We therefore recommend that the statutory guidance generally, and Approved Document B in particular, be reviewed accordingly and a revised version published as soon as possible. (113.11)

We therefore recommend that a revised version of the guidance contain a clear warning in each section that the legal requirements are contained in the Building Regulations and that compliance with the guidance will not necessarily result in compliance with them. (113.12)

We therefore recommend that, as far as possible, membership of bodies advising on changes to the statutory guidance should include representatives of the academic community as well as those with practical experience of the industry (including fire engineers) chosen for their experience and skill and should extend beyond those who have served on similar bodies in the past. (113.14)

Fire safety strategy

A fire safety strategy for a building should describe its structure and the various fire protection systems it contains and set out how they work together to ensure the safety of the occupants in the event of a fire. Those involved in the design and execution of the Grenfell Tower refurbishment failed to understand properly the need for a fire safety strategy and therefore failed to ensure that a final version of the Outline Fire Safety Strategy begun by Exova was completed. That allowed the building to be in a dangerous condition on completion. In order to avoid a repeat of that error, we consider that there is a compelling case for requiring a fire safety strategy to be produced as a condition of obtaining building control approval for the construction or refurbishment of any higher-risk building and for it to be reviewed and approved on completion. **We therefore recommend** that it be made a statutory requirement that a fire safety strategy produced by a registered fire engineer (see below) to be submitted with building control applications (at Gateway 2) for the construction or refurbishment of any higher-risk building and for it to be reviewed and re-submitted at the stage of completion (Gateway 3). Such a strategy must take into account the needs of vulnerable people, including the additional time they may require to leave the building or reach a place of safety within it and any additional facilities necessary to ensure their safety. (113.15)

Fire Performance Tests

As is apparent from the experiments conducted by Professor Bisby and Professor Torero for Phase 2 of our investigations, the factors that affect the way in which fire spreads over ventilated rainscreen external wall systems are complex and understanding them is an evolving science. Intuitive judgements are often wrong because a small change in the system can have a significant effect on the outcome. It follows that assessing whether an external wall system can support a particular evacuation strategy is difficult because the necessary information is not always available. **We therefore recommend** that steps be taken in conjunction with the professional and academic community to develop new test

methods that will provide the information needed for such assessments to be carried out reliably. (113.17)

BS 9414: Fire performance of external cladding systems

In the light of Professor Torero's evidence we think that BS 9414 will encourage people who are not trained fire engineers to think that they can safely assess the performance of a proposed external wall system by extrapolation from information obtained from tests on one or more different systems. For the reasons given by Professor Torero we think that BS 9414 should be approached with caution and **we recommend** that the government make it clear that it should not be used as a substitute for an assessment by a suitably qualified fire engineer (113.18)

Construction Regulator

We therefore recommend that the construction regulator should be responsible for assessing the conformity of construction products with the requirements of legislation, statutory guidance and industry standards and issuing certificates as appropriate. We should expect such certificates to become pre-eminent in the market. (113.22)

In our view clarity is required to avoid those who rely on certificates of conformity being misled. **We therefore recommend:**

- a. that copies of all test results supporting any certificate issued by the construction regulator be included in the certificate;
- b. that manufacturers be required to provide the construction regulator with the full testing history of the product or material to which the certificate relates and inform the regulator of any material circumstances that may affect its performance; and
- c. manufacturers be required by law to provide on request copies of all test results that support claims about fire performance made for their products. (113.23)

Fire engineers

We therefore recommend that the profession of fire engineer be recognised and protected by law and that an independent body be established to regulate the profession, define the standards required for membership, maintain a register of members and regulate their conduct. In order to speed up the creation of a body of professional fire engineers **we also recommend** that the government take urgent steps to increase the number of places on high-quality masters level courses in fire engineering accredited by the professional regulator. (113.25)

The development and maintenance of a statement of professional skills should ultimately be the responsibility of the body that regulates the profession, but pending the establishment of such a body **we recommend** that the government convene a group of practitioner and academic fire engineers and such other professionals as it thinks fit to

produce an authoritative statement of the knowledge and skills to be expected of a competent fire engineer. (113.27)

We also recommend that the government, working in collaboration with industry and professional bodies, encourage the development of courses in the principles of fire engineering for construction professionals and members of the fire and rescue services as part of their continuing professional development. (113.28)

Architects

We recognise that both the Architects Registration Board and the Royal Institute of British Architects have taken steps since the Grenfell Tower fire to improve the education and training of architects. **We recommend** that they should review the changes already made to ensure they are sufficient in the light of our findings. (113.30)

We also recommend that it be made a statutory requirement that an application for building control approval in relation to the construction or refurbishment of a higher-risk building (Gateway 2) be supported by a statement from a senior manager of the principal designer under the Building Safety Act 2022 that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that on completion the building as designed will be as safe as is required by the Building Regulations. (113.31)

Contractors

We therefore recommend that a licensing scheme operated by the construction regulator be introduced for principal contractors wishing to undertake the construction or refurbishment of higher-risk buildings and that it be a legal requirement that any application for building control approval for the construction or refurbishment of a higher-risk building (Gateway 2) be supported by a personal undertaking from a director or senior manager of the principal contractor to take all reasonable care to ensure that on completion and handover the building is as safe as is required by the Building Regulations. (113.33)

Building Control

We therefore recommend that the government appoint an independent panel to consider whether it is in the public interest for building control functions to be performed by those who have a commercial interest in the process. (113.37)

The shortcomings we have identified in local authority building control suggest that in the interests of professionalism and consistency of service all building control functions, including those currently performed by local authorities, should be exercised nationally. Accordingly, **we recommend** that the same panel consider whether all building control functions should be performed by a national authority. (113.38)

A construction library

Those who design buildings, particularly higher-risk and complex buildings, would benefit from having access to a body of information, such as data from tests on products and materials, reports on serious fires and academic papers. In Chapter 112 we have referred to the Cladding Materials Library set up by the University of Queensland, which could form the basis of a valuable source of information for designers of buildings in general. **We recommend** that the construction regulator sponsor the development of a similar library, perhaps as part of a joint project with the University of Queensland, to provide a continuing resource for designers. (113.39)

Response to recommendations

Our investigations have revealed that some important recommendations affecting fire safety were ignored by the government in the years leading up to the Grenfell Tower fire. Recommendations made by the Select Committee in 1999 were not implemented and the department's response to the recommendations made by the Lakanal House coroner was inadequate. The department had no system for recording recommendations made by public bodies or keeping track of its response to them. That was obviously unsatisfactory. **We recommend** that it be made a legal requirement for the government to maintain a publicly accessible record of recommendations made by select committees, coroners and public inquiries together with a description of the steps taken in response. If the government decides not to accept a recommendation, it should record its reasons for doing so. Scrutiny of its actions should be a matter for Parliament, to which it should be required to report annually. (113.40)

Fire risk assessors

As we have pointed out in Chapter 12, concern has been expressed for many years about the competence of some of those offering their services as commercial fire risk assessors and the absence of any scheme of regulation to ensure that responsible persons under the Fire Safety Order can have confidence in the skill and experience of those whom they instruct to carry out fire risk assessments on their behalf. **We therefore recommend** that the government establish a system of mandatory accreditation to certify the competence of fire risk assessors by setting standards for qualification and continuing professional development and such other measures as may be considered necessary or desirable. We think it necessary for an accreditation system to be mandatory in order to ensure the competence of all those who offer their services as fire risk assessors. (113.41)

Fire control switches in lifts

We understand that since the problem came to light the LFB has taken steps to ensure that only drop keys of an approved pattern are carried by its firefighters. The evidence does not enable us to assess with any confidence whether similar problems have been encountered by other fire and rescue services and, if so, what steps they have taken in response. Accordingly, we are not in a position to determine whether greater standardisation of fire control switches and keys is required. **We therefore recommend** that the government seeks urgent advice from the Building Safety Regulator and the

National Fire Chiefs Council on the nature and scale of the problem and the appropriate response to it. (113.43)

Pipeline isolation valves

Pipeline isolation valves are a critical part of the gas distribution network because they are intended to enable the supply of gas to be shut off quickly in an emergency. At the time of the fire at Grenfell Tower the valves could not be operated because they had been covered over in the course of hard landscaping. There was evidence that it was a common problem in the industry for pipeline isolation valves to be lost in that way. In our view that poses an unacceptable risk to health and safety and could have significant consequences. **We therefore recommend** that every gas transporter be required by law to check the accessibility of each such valve on its system at least once every three years and to report the results of that inspection to the Health and Safety Executive as part of its gas safety case review. (113.44)

A College of Fire and Rescue

Although the National Fire Chiefs Council provides a forum for discussions and the formulation of policy, there is currently no central body that is equipped to provide education and training across the board to nationally approved standards. We welcome the government's ambition to create an independent College of Fire and Rescue expressed in the white paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service and **we therefore recommend** that the government establish such a college immediately with sufficient resources to provide the following services nationally:

- a. practical training at all levels supplementary to that provided by individual fire and rescue services;
- b. education in the form of lectures and seminars on different aspects of the work of the fire and rescue services in order to share experience and promote good practice;
- c. research into matters that may affect the work of the fire and rescue services, including major fires;
- d. the development of equipment, policies and procedures suitable for ensuring the effectiveness of fire and rescue services nationally and the safety of firefighters and the public;
- e. setting and maintaining national standards of managerial competence for senior managers, including control room managers, and providing management training for, and regular assessment of, senior ranks by reference to such standards. (113.51)

Although it is for the government to decide how the college should be constituted, **we recommend** that it should have a permanent staff of sufficient size to manage its operations and develop its functions in response to the demands of fire and rescue services nationally and the requirements of the board. The college will need access to permanent facilities, including facilities for practical training and education. We envisage

that much of the training and education will be delivered and led by firefighters of suitable experience drawn as the occasion requires from fire and rescue services around the country. (113.53)

The London Fire Brigade

The demands imposed on the LFB's control room by the Grenfell Tower fire were very great, but even so, its performance did not meet reasonable expectations. That was principally the result of inadequate training and a failure to carry out regular exercises, itself the result of poor management. The establishment of a College of Fire and Rescue could be expected to create improvements in all those areas by setting standards for training, by training more senior ranks to perform management roles effectively and by sharing best practice. In the meantime, **we recommend** that His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services ("the Inspectorate") inspect the LFB as soon as reasonably possible to assess and report on:

- a. the extent to which the control room is now integrated into the organisation;
- b. the effectiveness of the arrangements for identifying the training needs of control room staff, delivering effective training and recording its outcomes;
- c. the effectiveness of the control room generally;
- d. the ability of the control room to handle a large number of concurrent requests for advice and assistance from people directly affected by fires or other emergencies; and
- e. the quality and effectiveness of the arrangements for communication between the control room and the incident commander. (113.55)

In Chapter 72 we are critical of the LFB's arrangements immediately before the Grenfell Tower fire for assessing the competence of those expected to act as incident commanders, particularly in the early stages of the response to a fire in a high-rise residential building. Steps have already been taken to respond to the criticisms made by the chairman in his Phase 1 report, but in order to reassure those who live in London **we recommend** that as soon as reasonably possible the Inspectorate inspect the LFB to examine and report on the arrangements it has in place for assessing the training of incident commanders at all levels and their continuing competence, whether by a process of revalidation or otherwise. (113.56)

In the years before the Grenfell Tower fire the LFB consistently failed to implement an effective system for the collection, storage and distribution of operational risk information, in particular in relation to high-risk, high-rise residential buildings. **We therefore recommend** that as soon as reasonably practicable the Inspectorate inspect the LFB to examine and report on its arrangements for collecting, storing and distributing information in accordance with section 7(2)(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, and in particular its arrangements for identifying high-risk residential buildings and collecting, storing and distributing information relating to them. (113.57)

The LFB took steps to examine incidents, collect relevant information, establish boards and committees to digest it and produce appropriate changes to working practices. In most cases, however, the process was excessively bureaucratic and undermined the purpose for which it had been established. As a result, too little of the available information was translated into practical outcomes. **We therefore recommend** that the LFB establish effective standing arrangements for collecting, considering and effectively implementing lessons learned from previous incidents, inquests and investigations. Those arrangements should be as simple as possible, flexible and of a kind that will ensure that any appropriate changes in practice or procedure are implemented speedily. (113.58)

We have explained in Chapter 80 why communication by radio is inherently likely to be adversely affected in certain environments, including tall buildings constructed mainly of dense or reflective materials such as stone, concrete, brick and steel. It is apparent, however, that the use of low-power intrinsically safe radio equipment exacerbates the problem because of its more limited transmission range. In many firefighting situations the danger of a spark from a radio igniting flammable gases is very low. The fire at Grenfell Tower is one example. We understand that intrinsically safe radios capable of operating at higher power are now available. **We therefore recommend** that fire and rescue services that continue to use low power intrinsically safe radios as part of breathing apparatus consider reserving them only for situations in which there is a real risk of igniting flammable gases and generally using radios of higher power, particularly in high-rise buildings. (113.59)

There is strong evidence that in general digital radios are more effective than analogue radios. **We therefore recommend** that all fire and rescue services give consideration to providing all firefighters with digital radios. (113.60)

Since radio communications are inherently unreliable in certain environments, **we recommend** that firefighters be trained to respond appropriately to the loss of communications and to understand how to restore them. (113.61)

On the night of the Grenfell Tower fire firefighters were unable to distinguish between different types of hydrant. That is a clear indication of a need for better training and **we therefore recommend** that basic training on the structure and operation of the water supply system, including the different types of hydrants in use and their functions, be given to all firefighters. Training should also be given on effective measures to increase water flow and pressure when necessary. (113.62)

The Grenfell Tower fire made unusual demands on the supply of water, but other major fires may make similar demands in future. If it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of the statutory water undertaker to increase the volume or pressure of the supply, the fire and rescue service should be able to communicate with it quickly and clearly. **We therefore recommend** that all fire and rescue services establish and periodically review an agreed protocol with the statutory water undertakers in their areas to enable effective communication between them in relation to the supply of water for firefighting purposes. (113.63)

In paragraph 81.23 of Chapter 81 we considered British Standard 750:2002 relating to the flow coefficient of fire hydrants and noted that the standard does not state whether the figure stated in paragraph 10.2 relates to a simple hydrant tested under factory conditions or to a hydrant installed in the pipework necessary to connect it to the water network. Any confusion could easily be dispelled by a small amendment to the standard. **We therefore recommend** that the British Standards Institution amend BS 750 to include a description of the circumstances under which the flow coefficient to which it refers in paragraph 10.2 is to be measured. (113.64)

How to deploy the available firefighters must remain the responsibility of the incident commander, who alone can judge how best to make use of the available resources. We also recognise that firefighters must be allowed to exercise discretion in how best to carry out their instructions. However, anyone reading Part 9 of the report will be struck by the number of times crews despatched to the highest floors of the tower in response to calls for assistance failed to reach their destinations because they decided to help people they encountered on the stairs on their way up. We cannot tell whether in any of those cases they would have been able to rescue people higher up the building if they had not done so, but **we recommend** that National Fire Chiefs Council consider whether, and if so in what circumstances, firefighters should be discouraged from departing from their instructions on their own initiative and provide appropriate training in how to respond to a situation of that kind. (113.65)

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The government's powers in sections 5 and 7 of the Act to intervene in response to an emergency are far-reaching but they do not enable it to intervene promptly or decisively when a Category 1 responder is failing to rise to the challenge. **We therefore recommend** that the Act be reviewed and consideration be given to granting a designated Secretary of State the power to carry out the functions of a Category 1 responder in its place for a limited period of time. (113.67)

The response of local voluntary organisations to the disaster demonstrated their capacity to act as valuable partners in responding to an emergency. Regulation 23 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005 requires a Category 1 responder to have regard when making its plans to the activities of relevant voluntary organisations. **We therefore recommend** that the regulation be amended to require Category 1 responders to establish and maintain partnerships with the voluntary, community and faith organisations in the areas in which they are responsible for preparing for and responding to emergencies. (113.68)

Guidance

The current guidance on preparing for emergencies is contained in several documents, all of which are unduly long and in some respects out of date. **We recommend** that the guidance be revised, reduced in length and consolidated in one document which lays greater emphasis on the need for those leading the response to consider the requirements for recovery, the need to identify vulnerable people, the importance of identifying and

ensuring co-operation with voluntary, community and faith groups and is consistent with the Equality Act 2010. **We also recommend** that regard for humanitarian considerations be expressly recognised by making it the ninth principle of effective response and recovery. (113.69)

London Local Authority Gold arrangements

Although each London borough is a separate Category 1 responder, there are arrangements for promoting resilience across the capital as a whole, in particular through the London Local Authority Gold arrangements. Events demonstrated, however, that there is a need for a clearer understanding of the nature of the London Gold arrangements, in particular in situations in which a single borough is affected. **We therefore recommend** that the guidance on the operation of those arrangements be revised and that existing and newly appointed chief executives be given regular training to ensure they are familiar with its principles. (113.70)

Local resilience forums

Our investigations revealed the inability of the London Resilience Forum to monitor the quality of its members' planning, training and preparation for responding to emergencies. Neither Minimum Standards for London, which applied at the time, nor its replacement, Resilience Standards for London, gave the local resilience forum any means of securing compliance with the standards they prescribed. We note that in the Resilience Framework the government has recognised the need to strengthen local resilience forums. **We therefore recommend** that local resilience forums adopt national standards to ensure effective training, preparation and planning for emergencies and adopt independent auditing schemes to identify deficiencies and secure compliance. **We also recommend** that a mechanism be introduced for independently verifying the frequency and quality of training provided by local authorities and other Category 1 responders. (113.71)

Local authorities

We therefore recommend that local authorities train all their employees, including chief executives, to regard resilience as an integral part of their responsibilities. (113.73)

We recommend that all local authorities devise methods of obtaining and recording information of that kind, if possible in electronic form, and practise putting them into operation under a variety of different circumstances. (113.74)

We recommend that all local authorities make such arrangements as are reasonably practicable for enabling them to place people in temporary accommodation at short notice and in ways that meet their personal, religious and cultural requirements. Such arrangements should, as far as possible, involve local providers of social housing. (113.75)

We recommend that all local authorities include in their contingency plans arrangements for providing immediate financial assistance to people affected by an emergency. We also recommend that as part of their planning for emergencies local authorities give detailed consideration to the availability of key workers and the role they are expected to play so

that suitable contingency arrangements can be made to ensure, as far as possible, continuity of support. (113.76)

We recommend that as part of their emergency planning local authorities make effective arrangements for continuing communication with those who need assistance using the most suitable technology and a range of languages appropriate to the area. (113.77)

We recommend that all local authorities include in their plans for responding to emergencies arrangements for providing information to the public by whatever combination of modern methods of communication are likely to be most effective for the areas for which they are responsible. In future, to avoid confusion, wasted effort and frustration **we also recommend** that what in the past has been called by the police a “casualty bureau” be described in a way that makes it clear that it does not provide information to the public about people affected by the emergency. (113.78)

Vulnerable people

We therefore recommend that further consideration be given to the recommendations made in the Phase 1 report in the light of our findings in this report. (113.82)

We also recommend that the advice contained in paragraph 79.11 of the LGA Guide be reconsidered. (113.83)

OFFICIAL

Agenda item: 16

Local Remediation Acceleration Plan

Full Authority

Date: 27 February 2025

Submitted by: Director of Service Delivery

Purpose: To provide information to members on the Local Remediation Acceleration Plan and the government's own Acceleration Plan following the publication of the final Grenfell Tower Inquiry report.

Recommendations: That members note the contents of the report.

Summary: This report provides information on the work the Fire Protection team have been undertaking to support the West Yorkshire Combined Authority in the development of a Local Remediation Acceleration Plan, this follows a request of the Deputy Prime Minister in her letter to the West Yorkshire Mayor in November 2024.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Chris Kemp – Senior Fire Protection Manager
christopher.kemp@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: A – West Yorkshire Local Remediation Acceleration Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Grenfell Tower disaster in 2017, in which 72 people tragically lost their lives, and many others were affected, highlighted serious concerns and risks across all high-rise residential buildings. Many buildings since then have been identified as having dangerous cladding or other elements of the external wall system (EWS), and other internal fire safety defects. Some of these buildings have been remediated, however there remain buildings across the country where work to make them safe in the long-term are yet to be started. This has left some residents having to move out of their homes or live in buildings with ongoing safety concerns. Some residents have been burdened with the high costs of the works or have been unable to sell or remortgage until work is completed. Remediation works must be able to progress as quickly as possible, so the safety and wellbeing of residents can be assured.

2. Information – Local Remediation

- 2.1 On 13th September, following publication of the final Grenfell Tower Inquiry report, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner wrote to all Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA), requesting that they work with regulators and key partners to prepare a local remediation acceleration plan. The purpose of this is to identify how the pace of remediation can be increased at a local level and what help is needed to support this.
- 2.2 The letter explained the publication of the final Grenfell Tower Inquiry report represents a significant milestone, and seven and a half years on from Grenfell, it is unacceptable that so many people are still living in buildings with unsafe external wall systems. The letter went on to say, everyone deserves to live in a safe home, and the new government are determined to redouble efforts to make buildings safe. This will require a collective effort, with all parts of central and local government working together.
- 2.3 The aim of the local remediation acceleration plan is to articulate how the pace of remediation can be increased in West Yorkshire and what support is needed to enable this, alongside a requirement to share with Government an initial draft of the remediation acceleration plan for West Yorkshire which is included as annex A.
- 2.4 The Deputy Prime Minister's letter placed a strong emphasis on how the Combined Authority in West Yorkshire will work with local partners to make sure they all use their legal powers to increase the pace of remediation in the highest risk buildings, and that West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service continue to do everything necessary in the meantime to keep people safe in their homes while they are awaiting or undergoing remediation.
- 2.5 WYFRS and Local authorities have already been working together since the tragic events at Grenfell to address high rise buildings with unsafe external wall systems across West Yorkshire. We have utilised our existing powers and responsibilities, however until now, the Combined Authority has not played a role in this. The

Combined Authority received the letter ahead of receiving data on the issues MHCLG perceive, the first steps have been to understand the nature and scope of the governments ask.

- 2.6 Within West Yorkshire there are circa 550 High Rise Residential Buildings (HRRB), the ownership of these varies from social housing, private owner-occupied flats and leasehold properties. Officers from WYFRS have over the last 7.5 years worked with local authorities and building owners to push remediation. This has resulted in all HRRB's in West Yorkshire identified as having ACM having been remediated. The completion rate for buildings with remaining EWS issues within West Yorkshire is significantly higher than the national average. This is based on MHCLG data showing West Yorkshire at 37.5% with the national average at 30%.
- 2.7 Given the complexities of many of these HRRB's in terms of design, EWS or height, it was a straightforward process to consider a higher level of risk within these buildings and therefore incorporate them within our Risk Based Inspection Programme.
- 2.8 Within the data set received from MHCLG, it has been identified that the scope of the governments remediation plan is extending to Medium Rise Residential Buildings (MRRB), these are buildings between 11m and 18m in height. Unfortunately, the data on the number of these buildings is not conclusive and MHCLG are currently looking at innovative ways, incorporating artificial intelligence, to identify the number of buildings involved. Initial numbers show that in Leeds alone there are circa 20,000 MRRB's, MHCLG have estimated over 540,000 nationally.
- 2.9 Through the work with the Combined Authority, we are currently working with Leeds City Council to develop a resourcing methodology, this will enable to CA to understand the number of resources that are required to support them and the government in achieving their aim. Once we are aware of the total number of buildings in scope, the methodology calculations will be applied which will provide a set number of resources needed per 1000 buildings. The CA will have the opportunity to request additional funding from government to enable the delivery of the Acceleration Plan, however, without suitable resourcing from government, the successful delivery of the plan will be unachievable if blended into business as usual within WYFRS and the Local Authorities
- 2.10 Data sharing between combined authorities and MHCLG is currently being developed, however until this is in place, there is a limiting impact on the ability of mayors to understand the nature of the problem within their area and this impacts the ability to move quickly.

3. Information – National Remediation

- 3.1 On 2 December 2024 the government published their own policy on Remediation Acceleration Plan. This Remediation Acceleration Plan sets out the government's approach to tackle remediation issues for buildings in England. The plan recognises that the scale and importance of the challenge is so significant that they expect to

publish a further update on this plan in summer 2025 to report on progress and to reflect the second phase of the spending review.

3.2 Within the government's plan they identify 3 core objectives:

Objective 1 – Fix buildings faster.

Objective 2 – Identify all buildings with unsafe cladding.

Objective 3 – Support Residents

3.3 Through this plan, the government aim that by the end of 2029 all 18m+ (HRRB) buildings with unsafe cladding/EWS in a government funded scheme will have been remediated. Furthermore, by the end of 2029, every 11m+ (MRRB) building with unsafe cladding/EWS will either have been remediated, have a date for completion, or the landlords will be liable for severe penalties.

3.4 In order to achieve this the government will:

- create a legal obligation on landlords to remediate unsafe cladding so that those who should take action, but don't, face severe penalties.
- give regulators – local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, and the Building Safety Regulator – robust new powers to enforce remediation.
- crack down on bad actors, by providing funding for regulators so they have the capacity to tackle hundreds of cases a year.
- begin accelerating remediation of social housing while working with the sector to announce a long-term strategy in Spring 2025
- encourage and support developers to achieve their stretch target to start or complete remedial works on 80% of the buildings for which they are responsible by July 2026, and on 100% of those buildings by July 2027
- speed up the progress of buildings in government-funded schemes by reducing the time from application to works starting on site.
- empower metro mayors to work in partnership with local authorities and regulators to drive remediation in local areas through Local Remediation Acceleration Plans – bringing together expertise, local knowledge and resources to create single area strategies.

4. Barriers to Remediation

4.1 The Building Safety Regulator who carries oversight of the Safety Case regime for HRRB's is a welcome addition to the regulatory framework. However, there are concerns about the timescales related to the submission of information and capacity within the Building Safety Regulator to deal with the volume of buildings requiring

remediation. The BSR are still in the early phases and have indicated that they will not be utilising any of their enforcement powers in the first 5 years due to workload demands.

- 4.2 There is a limited number of contractors with the knowledge and expertise to carry out remediation works. Limited appetite for the levels of risk they must sign up to as legislation changes may limit interest from the wider industry to upskill the workforce.
- 4.3 Availability and lack of recruitment of specialist skill sets especially in fire safety is also causing delays to progress.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The initial draft set out at Annex A has been shared with MHCLG. The Plan is a live document and is being continually developed to incorporate such areas of resource requirements and numbers of buildings in scope.
- 5.2 Work is ongoing to obtain information on the buildings within West Yorkshire that still require remediation work. MHCLG have provided an initial list of 58, however only 29 of these are HRRB's, the remainder are either MRRB or low rise. We are currently working on a data sharing agreement, and we are also working directly with local authority partners to enable sharing of information directly.
- 5.3 Meetings are taking place with MHCLG officials. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the powers available to Combined Authorities, MHCLG expectations for the remediation acceleration plans, and how the department can best support us moving forward. Clarity will be sought on the scope of the work to ensure the Combined Authority's continues to be developed accordingly.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Currently we are working with Leeds City Council to provide the Combined Authority with data on the cost of staffing resources. It is not expected that this work would be carried out by, or any new staff employed by, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

8. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 8.1 There are currently no HR or diversity implications associated with this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 The work schemes that will be developed and linked to this paper will be individually assessed through an Equality Impact Assessment which will be conducted by West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

10. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

10.1 Supporting an acceleration in remediation of buildings within West Yorkshire will have a positive impact on individuals within our communities who are impacted personally by the complexities associated with living in a building requiring remediation.

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

12. Conclusions

12.1 In West Yorkshire we share the concerns about the pace of remediation and the need for this to be accelerated. It is not right that residents within the county are still living in buildings that require remediation. However, we also understand that the barriers to fixing these buildings are multiple and complex. The work we are doing with the Local Authorities and the Combined Authority seeks to provide opportunities where we can work together to minimise those barriers and expedite remediation where possible.

12.2 This is a significant task which has been allocated to the Combined Authority, in an area where they have very little expertise. Without additional resources, there is a risk that this work will need to be prioritised over other tasks. The Combined Authority will need to consider their role carefully, and further resources will need to be brought in, however at present they are dependent on the depth of responsibility the Combined Authority takes.



West
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Mayor of
West Yorkshire



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West Yorkshire

Remediation Acceleration Plan

Katie Kavanagh / November 2024

1 Introduction

Following publication of the Phase Two Grenfell Tower Inquiry report in September 2024, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner wrote to all mayoral combined authorities, requesting that they work with regulators and key partners to prepare a local remediation acceleration plan. The purpose of this is to identify how the pace of remediation can be increased at a local level and what help is needed to support this.

Scope of Work

The Local Remediation Acceleration Plan is to consider the remediation of all residential buildings with unsafe cladding over 11m in height. To date remediations efforts have focused on buildings above 18m.

Under Building Regulations, combustible materials have been banned for use in external facades of buildings higher than 18m since 2018. Since June 2020 this ban has also applied to residential buildings between 11-18m in height.

Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue services have previously worked intensively to identify buildings over 18m with cladding systems that require remediation. It is estimated there were around 500 buildings across West Yorkshire that required assessment. Following work carried out to date, a list of 59 buildings was provided by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in West Yorkshire with unsafe cladding where remediation work has not yet started.

There remains a significant task to identify residential buildings 11-18m that may require remediation.

Of the initial 59 buildings identified by MHCLG, WYFRS have already focused resources on the 29 High Rise buildings identified within that list. The work they have undertaken includes a full audit of each premises, resulting in the following outcomes which directly relate to the remediation of EWS issues:

- Two Buildings planned for demolition
- Three Buildings have been served an Enforcement Notice
- 18 Building have, or are in the process of being issued Action Plans
- Six Buildings are currently being reviewed

Existing Responsibilities

It is important to note that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority have no statutory responsibilities regarding the safety of buildings.

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, building owners and landlords are responsible for making buildings safe.

All multi-occupied higher risk residential buildings now need the Fire Risk Assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to include an assessment of their external walls. If the assessment identifies risk of unsafe cladding, then a Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEW) is required to be carried out by a chartered fire engineer.

The West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, using powers under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are able to undertake audits and issue statutory and non-statutory notices to manage enforcement. These can be Action Plans, Fire Safety Matters Letters, Enforcement Notices and Prohibition Notices. Data relating to remediation progress and enforcement action against non-progress is reported to both the BSR and MHCLG.

Local authorities have a duty to keep housing conditions in their area under review. The Housing Act (2004) requires an assessment of hazards and the risk they pose to the health and safety of occupants and visitors. In addition, it is the function of local authorities to enforce building regulations and to check that building regulations are being complied with.

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) is the Building Control Authority for higher-risk buildings of at least 18m in height. The BSR in England is part of the Health and Safety Executive and was set up under the Building Safety Act 2022. The BSR sets out rules to protect the design and construction of higher-risk buildings, working with other co regulators as a Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach to ensure the management of building safety risk.

The Regulator of Social Housing requires that Private registered providers (PRPs) and local authority registered providers (LARPs) submit data on the fire safety remediation of 11m plus buildings. The data relates to landlords' obligations under the Fire Safety (Regulatory) Order 2005 for assessing fire safety risks associated with the relevant parts of those buildings; risks landlords have identified, particularly in relation to external wall systems (EWS) and whether landlords have plans in place to remediate buildings they have identified as having life critical fire safety risks in a timely manner.

The Cladding Safety Scheme CSS is managed by Homes England and provides funding for remediation works on residential buildings over 11m in height. Only the person or organisation legally responsible for a building's external repair and maintenance can seek funding from the CSS.

In 2022 some leading developers signed a pledge to remediate life critical fire safety works in buildings over 11m that they have played a role in developing or refurbishing over the last 30 years. Buildings where this applies are not eligible for the above CSS funding as costs will be met by the developers themselves.

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1. Activities

Driving and monitoring the progress of remediation (for example, by setting expectations and metrics)

The combined authority is expected to play a convening role, bringing together the key stakeholders in West Yorkshire with responsibilities relating to the safety of buildings with dangerous cladding identified above. To date, the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) have led on driving and monitoring the progress of remediation alongside support from local authorities. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 has been the primary vehicle for supporting this work, with the principle of risk assessment used to guide the action taken. It also provides the quickest route to enforcement action, when necessary, to ensure the safety of buildings. WYFRS hold data on premises they have inspected, and action taken, and they periodically receive data on regional progress from MHCLG.

To deliver these activities more effectively, this plan proposes to enhance the data gathered from the WYFRS, local authorities and other regulators, to be collated and actively shared so that further actions to speed up remediation can be identified.

From the information gathered so far, there are many different reasons why work on unsafe buildings may stall. The same approach to drive remediation work may not be appropriate for each building, however consistency in monitoring will support more effective working.

On this basis, this plan proposes establishing a series of 'pathways' whereby the approach can be tailored to the circumstances of the buildings in question. This will reduce the risk of unrealistic expectations being set and will support effective monitoring.

Whilst these pathways could be identified locally within the next six months, in the long term, it is recommended that this be aligned nationally to allow for consistent monitoring and reporting across the country.

It is important to ensure that processes are not introduced for regulators that become burdensome and remove or direct focus away from activities that would normally be directed towards remediation. This would have an impact on the regulators ability to support and push building owners towards that end goal and would therefore be counterproductive.

Without additional funding to support dedicated resource, there will not be sufficient capacity to address the activities suggested within this plan alongside existing responsibilities and activities. Resources and funding are discussed in section 3.

Assuring the safety of buildings awaiting or undergoing remediation (for example, by communicating with local regulators to coordinate action)

Given the scale of the issue in Leeds comparative to the rest of West Yorkshire, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service currently hold regular monthly meetings with Leeds City council and MHCLG, whereas meetings with other local authorities happen on an ad-hoc basis for buildings during their inspection phase.

It is anticipated that these meetings will be expanded to include the combined authority and other local authorities as required, to encourage the sharing of information that may support more effective working across all areas of West Yorkshire. It is important that the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service are fully integrated in all updates as they are central to the progression of work on this issue.

As this is not an issue that the Combined Authority have been involved with previously, further resource will be needed to staff these meetings and carry out the background preparation required to fully contribute.

Identifying additional buildings in need of remediation alongside government schemes

WYFRS are currently conducting a second round of inspections, after an initial round several years ago, however the scope of these inspections was not anticipated to cover buildings between 11-18m. Local authorities were also involved in work to identify high rise residential buildings with dangerous cladding in the

aftermath of Grenfell, however they too focused on buildings over 18m tall, and the scope of work involved in identifying buildings 11-18m will far exceed the capacity of both the fire service and local authorities.

An approach involving the identification of buildings using data from ordnance survey and other sources, supported by local verification and inspection would be supported, and could be carried out centrally. Initial estimates of the number of buildings within each local authority area would allow the fire service and local authorities to estimate resource requirements and timescales for inspections.

It is understood that Leeds City Council have been asked to participate in a manual checking exercise to verify the methodology being used by MHCLG to identify buildings between 11-18m. The outcomes of this exercise should be shared with MCA's. Once the total number of buildings affected are known, and the responsibilities of each organisation are clear, partners will be able to advise of the necessary resource requirements.

Taking action, including enforcement action, where voluntary remediation is not happening at a reasonable pace

WYFRS support the use of a risk assessment-based protocol for enforcement action. All buildings are required to have a fire risk assessment, and this should then identify where a building requires a Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEW). Action plans are being used to support the findings of the FRAEW and this provides the basis for enforcement action where necessary.

It is difficult to take enforcement action where responsible parties are engaging, even if progress is slow.

It is not proposed to alter this approach currently, unless further intelligence suggests an alternative course of action as this plan is implemented.

2. Delivering objectives

2.1. Driving and monitoring progress

How will you track buildings' progress and how will you define 'sufficient' vs 'insufficient' progress toward remediation?

It is recommended that the definition of what is sufficient or insufficient is defined nationally, so that each region is adopting the same principles. Many of the responsible or accountable persons have buildings that span the whole of the UK so there should be a consistent approach with other areas.

A list of buildings 'in scope' will be maintained by the Combined Authority, and a series of 'pathways' will be established to identify what 'sufficient' or 'insufficient' may look like, depending on the circumstances for each pathway. These will need to be defined and agreed with Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Service, and the Building Safety Regulator as appropriate. Buildings in scope will need to be assigned to a pathway and can then be monitored against the timescales identified. Each pathway will need a series of milestones against which progress can be measured. These will be defined in due course and responsibility for monitoring progress will be agreed alongside allocation of suitable resources subject to funding.

How will you track which interventions/actions increase progress and which don't.

A tracker for each pathway and its associated milestones will be prepared. It is anticipated that it will be possible to monitor progress on each pathway and milestone and identify where particular pathways are not progressing in accordance with expected timescales.

How will you identify additional buildings that require remediation

Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue services have previously worked intensively to identify buildings over 18m that require remediation. It is estimated there were around 500 buildings across West Yorkshire that required assessment. There are approximately 12,000 buildings between 11-18m tall across West Yorkshire. It would take 10-12 years to assess this number of buildings to the same level of detail and considerably more resource.

It is understood that MHCLG are working to identify buildings between 11-18m tall that may require remediating through remote data analysis of ordnance survey information and other sources. Where MHCLG are unable to verify whether a building includes cladding, or they are unable to contact a freeholder, this would then be referred on to regional teams. This additional burden may be significant, and it is not yet clear on the experience, skills and qualifications necessary to carry out this task. It will be important to ensure that resources are not diverted away from inspecting higher risk buildings, so specific resource will be necessary to pick up this additional work. Following clarification of the requirements, it will be determined where responsibilities of these inspections will lie.

How will you monitor regulators' enforcement activity to ensure they are able to use their legal powers to increase the pace of remediation?

The Combined Authority propose establishing regular monitoring cycles, aligned with update meetings, where regulators will be able to share any challenges relating to enforcement activity.

Would it be possible and/or beneficial for Combined Authorities to set timescales for regulators to complete different strands of activity?

As part of the pathways proposal, timescales will be identified to meet certain milestones, however it is not considered appropriate for these to be set by the Combined Authority, and rather led by the regulators in collaboration with the combined authority. There are circumstances where the setting of timescales maybe be unrealistic or even counterproductive and this will need to be explored as the pathways are defined.

2.2. Coordinating intervention activity

What toolkit of interventions will be used?

Interventions are currently managed mainly through the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, using powers under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These include issuing statutory and non-statutory notices such as Action Plans / Fire Safety Matters Letter / Enforcement Notice and Prohibition Notice. The principle around the FSO is Risk Assessment. Therefore, any action taken should be in line with the principles of the FSO and risk assessment. WYFRS have developed set process internally to deal with those premises not progressing. This links in with the requirement for buildings to have a Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEW) carried out by a chartered fire engineer.

How will building or entity action plans be used?

Action plans are put in place to align with the recommendations within a building's FRAEW and they provide a basis upon which enforcement action can be taken, if required.

How would you like to work with other parties, including regulators (and including the Building Safety Regulator (BSR)) – to assure the safety of buildings awaiting or undergoing remediation?

The Combined Authority holds no statutory powers and is therefore reliant on the cooperation and capacity of the regulators to take a role in assuring the safety of buildings. Regulators will need to provide a regional point of contact for West Yorkshire, regularly share relevant information with the combined authority, and participate in coordination meetings to ensure information is shared effectively and actions are carried out.

WYFRS have developed (as have all FRS's) a BSR team. This incorporates a BSR Regional Manager who covers West/North/South Yorkshire and Humberside. This role supports the regional FRS's in working with the BSR.

How will you support local regulators to coordinate and maximise their activity?

Much of the focus of current work is on Leeds city centre, as the area with the highest concentration of buildings over 18m. However, as more buildings between 11-18m are identified, more work may be required in other local authority areas, with a greater role for local authority building control and Environmental Health as these do not come under the remit of the Building Safety Regulator. The following options will be explored and tested with partners:

- Meetings with the Fire and Rescue Service and MHCLG should be expanded to include the Combined Authority, and all local authorities as required. This will provide an opportunity for shared intelligence and learning.
- Opportunities to share specialist resource across the region will be explored, dependent on capacity and expertise.
- Information sharing will be encouraged to enable coordinated responses where, for example, there are building owners or contractors working across multiple areas.

How will you monitor to ensure it is working well?

The Combined Authority propose establishing regular monitoring cycles, aligned with update meetings, where regulators will be able to share any challenges relating to coordinating intervention activity.

2.3. Working with the Department

How will you raise to the department buildings that are not progressing to remediation quickly enough?

Regular meetings will be held with MHCLG, the Fire and Rescue Service and local authorities. These will provide a forum to raise specific issues around buildings that are not progressing in line with the pathways and milestones identified.

How and how often will you share data with the department? (This should be every 3 months at a minimum)

Subject to bringing in suitable resource, data will be shared with MHCLG every three months, with informal updates monthly. This is intended to ensure a balance is struck between regular updates and officer time expended, whilst ensuring that any urgent or high priority issues can be raised quickly.

2.4. Working with regulators

How and how often will you engage with regulators?

Working group meetings including local authorities and the fire and rescue service are anticipated to happen monthly, with a strategic update quarterly. Other regulators, including the BSR and Regulator of Social Housing will also be invited to attend these meetings.

How will you use the levers available to you to support regulators to increase the pace of their remediation work?

The main role of the combined authority is to use its convening powers to bring regulators together, share learning and intelligence and provide support through bringing insight from other areas, and relieving some of the burden in relation to data sharing and monitoring.

2.5. Receiving, recording and sharing data

How will you facilitate data sharing between regulators?

The Combined Authority, each local authority and the WYFRS are all signatories of the inter-agency information sharing protocol and have agreed to keep any information shared confidential and secure. No personal information is to be shared, and the information relates to the safety of buildings with authorities who have a responsibility to support the safety of those identified premises. The Combined Authority are exploring the option of establishing a SharePoint site for the purpose of receiving and sharing data. Any data supplied to the Combined Authority will be collated and cross-checked to ensure consistency and avoid missing or duplicated information.

How will you use data to assess whether the pace of remediation is increasing as a result of regulators' activities?

To assess whether the pace of remediation is increasing, it will be necessary to establish a baseline for the pace of remediation, monitoring how quickly buildings are passing through identified milestones and the reasons why progress may have been fast or slow. It may take some time to establish those baselines, depending on what existing data is available.

Once the pathways are defined and established, it is hoped it will be possible to identify trends in timescales, however this will also depend on the number of buildings included on each pathway.

How will you record and keep track of building progress?

A tracker will be established to monitor building progress, and regulators will be asked to provide regular updates so the data can be kept up to date.

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3. Resources and Support

This section describes the resources and funding needed to deliver the local remediation acceleration plan, and the governance that will be established.

3.1. Staffing and Resourcing

Describe the resources, including staffing, you will require to deliver the activities and objectives set out in your plan

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority does not currently have any resource to deliver the activities set out in this plan. It is anticipated that one additional full time data analyst and one policy coordinator would be needed with part-time support from a manager.

The West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue service also have an immediate need for an administrator or data analyst to extract the information held within their systems to be able to address the needs of this plan. In the longer term, there is a need for further inspection resources, depending on the scale of the task in relation to buildings between 11-18m. Training for inspectors takes three years, and so it will be necessary to provide support now to allow the fire service to scale up its inspection team over time.

Local authorities will play a greater role in buildings 11-18m high, should large numbers of these buildings be identified for remediation. Until the scale of this issue is known it is difficult to say what additional resourcing will be required. Verification of data on buildings 11-18m high is an additional new burden and further information is needed on the scope of this task to be able to define the resource required. This will be updated once further information is available.

3.2. Governance

Describe the governance plans you will put in place to ensure this plan is being delivered effectively.

As the Mayor of West Yorkshire does not hold responsibility for the Fire and Rescue Service, there are currently no committees or boards that include the Fire Service along with the Local Authorities and the Combined Authority. It is expected that a task force will be established with membership of the task force included representatives at director level or above from each organisation. This will provide the senior leadership and strategic oversight of the delivery of the plan.

The fire service has led on this work in West Yorkshire, using their statutory powers to ensure building safety, track progress and, when required use their enforcement powers. The purpose of the task force would be to ensure that the fire service receives the necessary support and information from local authorities and other regulators to operate effectively.

Working groups may be established to address specific tasks to ensure all parties are supported in delivering against the aims of the task force.

3.3. Funding

Please set out in detail the funding required to deliver the activities and objectives set out in this plan

Until further information is available as outlined earlier in this plan, it is not possible to set out the full funding needs to deliver the remediation acceleration plan. However, for the initial work that has been identified, the following staffing roles and costs have been identified

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1 x Data Analyst - £ 61,373

1 x Policy Coordinator - £54,545

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

1 x Support role - £45,000

5 Local Authorities:

1 no or more Registered Building Inspectors per LA ' Level 2 F or Level 3 H

1 no or more Senior Environmental Health Officer per LA – competent in housing the HHSRS & Housing Act 2004

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Appendix 1

Summary of Buildings Identified

Scheme	In Programme		Underway		Complete		Grand Total	Buildings of Interest (ACM/BSF only)	Escalated Buildings (BSF only)	Buildings in Interim Measures
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
Bradford										
Grand total	13	76.5%	0	0.0%	4	23.5%	17	0	0	6
ACM	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	0	0	0
BSF	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	0	0	0
CSS	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0	0	2
Social	11	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	0	0	4
Calderdale										
Grand total	1	14.3%	0	0.0%	6	85.7%	7	0	0	0
ACM	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	0	0	0
BSF	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	0	0	0
CSS	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0	0
Social	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	0	0	0
Kirklees										
Grand total	14	77.8%	1	5.6%	3	16.7%	18	0	0	3
ACM	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	0	0	0
Social	14	93.3%	1	6.7%	0	0.0%	15	0	0	3
Leeds										
Grand total	25	39.1%	16	25.0%	23	35.9%	64	12	2	28
ACM	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	100.0%	10	0	0	1
BSF	4	14.3%	13	46.4%	11	39.3%	28	12	1	18
CSS	10	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	0	1	1
Developer	10	66.7%	3	20.0%	2	13.3%	15	0	0	8
Social	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0	0
Wakefield										
Grand total	6	85.7%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	7	0	0	4
BSF	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	0	0	0
CSS	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0	0
Developer	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	0	0
Social	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0	0	4
West Yorkshire Total	59	52.2%	17	15.0%	37	32.7%	113	12	2	41
England total		50.2%		20.7%		29.1%				



Find out more
westyorks-ca.gov.uk

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

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Leeds
LS1 2DE



**West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority**

**Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire**

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Agenda item: 17

Vehicle Donations - Ukraine

Full Authority

Date: 27 February 2025

Submitted by: Director Service Support

Purpose: To highlight to members the donation of appliances to Ukraine and UK charities as part of our disposal strategy.

Recommendations: That members approve the donation of six fire appliances to the Ukraine State Emergency Service and two appliances to UK based charity organisations.

Summary: The ongoing collaboration between NFCC, FireAid, and FIA has identified a renewed need for fire appliances and emergency rescue equipment by the Ukraine State Emergency Service. Donations by UK FRS continue to make a fundamental difference to emergency relief efforts in the regions of Ukraine.

In addition, two requests have been made by UK based charity organisations to assist with their important work supporting UK Veterans through the Armed Forces Network.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Glynn Richardson, Head of Transport & Logistics
glynn.richardson@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Ukraine State Emergency Service (SES) has been under significant pressure since the current conflict began in February 2022. Ukraine SES continues to sustain heavy casualties from their work to provide support to their local communities. To date, 396 fire stations and 1676 fire vehicles have been destroyed, with 91 firefighters killed and a further 349 injured.
- 1.2 In the same period, the work of Ukrainian firefighters has grown significantly in response to the ongoing destruction of property, with approximately 217,000 buildings destroyed or damaged and 5,000 people rescued from fires and collapsed buildings.
- 1.3 Since the beginning of the conflict, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), FireAid, and the Fire Industry Association (FIA) have arranged six road convoys, delivering 109 fire & rescue vehicles and 190,000 items of equipment. WYFRS has contributed to donations of equipment but has not previously been able to supply fire appliances.

2. Information

- 2.1 In December 2023 WYFRS began the build phase of the appliance replacement programme, which delivers 58 new Scania appliances over an 18-month period, with final vehicles due in service in May 2025. This enables a wider project to reduce firefighter exposure to contaminants with the implementation of 'clean cab' spaces.
- 2.2 As a result of this extensive fleet replacement, WYFRS will be disposing of 48 appliances from March 2025, retaining 10 vehicles for recruit training and driver training courses.
- 2.3 Vehicles will be sold through a combination of direct sales to UK FRS who have expressed an interest, sales through auction, and with the approval of members, donations to Ukraine SES and two UK charities (Brooklands Museum Volunteer Fire Service and South East Fire and Rescue).
- 2.4 Brooklands Museum Volunteer Fire Service is, as it sounds, a volunteer group supporting the local Air Ambulance, and the Local Resilience Forum.
- 2.5 South East Fire and Rescue are a volunteer group made up of military veterans, former, and serving emergency service personnel. The group supports local events, assisting ex-military and fire service personnel transitioning to civilian life in direct support of the Armed Forces Network.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Transport department have tested the used appliance market, disposing of five appliances at auction in 2024. This generated an average income of £21,781 per appliance, however these vehicles were between 8 and 9 years old and had been selected for disposal because of premature engine wear. This provided a reasonable

revenue return, but the one vehicle disposed of at a similar age (13 yrs old) to the remainder of the fleet sold for £8,186 (after fees).

- 3.2 Most of the remaining appliances awaiting disposal were brought into service between 2010 and 2013, being between 13 and 15 years old. These vehicles have a corresponding auction value estimate (after fees) of £8,126 each.

	2024		2025		Total
FRS Sales	£	-	£	400,000	£ 400,000
Auction Sales	£	133,000	£	402,000	£ 535,000
Gross Income	£	133,000	£	802,000	£ 935,000
Auction Fees	-£	24,096	-£	93,212	-£ 117,308
UK Charities	£	-	-£	16,252	-£ 16,252
Ukraine	£	-	-£	48,756	-£ 48,756
Net Income	£	108,904	£	643,780	£ 752,684

Table 3.1: Revenue Income Estimate

- 3.3 The combination of sales to UK FRS and auction has the potential to deliver revenue income of £752,684 - including the donation vehicles (table 3.1).
- 3.4 The donation of six vehicles to Ukraine SES and two vehicles to UK charities will result in a potential reduction in revenue income of £65,008.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 No human resource or diversity implications have been identified.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 FRS is unlikely to complete a fleet replacement project of this magnitude again and the social value which these donations represent is tremendous, having the potential to deliver tangible benefits for all recipients, in Ukraine where the need is desperate, and the UK in support of the Armed Forces Covenant to which WYFRS is a signatory, having earned a silver award under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

7.2 Requests for vehicle from the Ukraine will have a profound and immediate impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the members of Ukraine SES and the communities they serve.

7.3 Requests from UK charities will provide longer term support, having the potential to directly assist Forces Veterans struggling with the transition to life after their period of service. The work of the Armed Forces Network makes an important contribution to the mental health and wellbeing of its members in providing peer support and access to other agencies.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 This process will see assets being given a useful second life, extending their overall lifespan and reducing waste.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.

10. Conclusions

10.1 This exercise presents WYFRS with a unique opportunity to directly contribute to the health, safety and wellbeing of firefighters and volunteers outside our organisation.

10.2 That members approve the donation of six vehicles to Ukraine SES, and two vehicles to UK organisations.

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Agenda item: 18

Performance Management Report

Full Authority

Date: 27/02/2025

Submitted by: Director of Corporate Services

Purpose: To inform Members of the Authority's performance against key performance indicators.

Recommendations: That Members note the report.

Summary: This report provides Members with information regarding the performance of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service against targets to enable the Authority to measure, monitor and evaluate performance.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Alison Davey – Head of Corporate Services

01274 682311, alison.davey@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: 2024-25 Performance Management Report from 1 April 2024 to 16 February 2025.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The attached Performance Management Report outlines the Authority's performance against key performance indicators thereby enabling the Authority to measure, monitor and evaluate performance.

2. Information

- 2.1 The report shows a summary of the cumulative performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 16 February 2025 against each of the indicators.
- 2.2 The Performance Management Report is monitored at each Full Authority meeting.
- 2.3 An abridged version of the Performance Management Report is presented quarterly to the Audit Committee highlighting where targets are not being achieved.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no Human Resource and Diversity implications arising from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 There are no health, safety and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Improve the safety and effectiveness of our firefighters.
- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.
- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Provide ethical governance and value for money.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Achieve a more inclusive workforce, which reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Continuously improve using digital and data platforms to innovate and work smarter.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

10. Conclusions

10.1 That Members note the report.



Performance Management Report Fire Authority

Period Covered:

01 April 2024

16 February 2025





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Non-fires
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Fire Related Injuries
Attacks on Firefighters
Response Times
Safe and Wells
SSRI



This report provides a summary of our progress across the Service based on the date ranges below.

Period Covered:

Financial Year	2024-25	
Date Range	01 April 2024	16 February 2025

IMPORTANT: The data provided is based on incident reports that have been completed and/or checked but will not include data from incident reports which have not been completed. Data may change due to incident reports that have been updated due to amendment. The data is accurate at time of creation of the report.

This report is comparing the date range above against:

Previous Year Comparison Date Range	01 April 2023	16 February 2024
3 Year Average Comparison Period	01 April 2023 01 April 2022 01 April 2021	16 February 2024 16 February 2023 16 February 2022
Colour Key	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 2px 5px;">Positive Arrows</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ff0000; padding: 2px 5px;">Negative Arrows</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #0000ff; padding: 2px 5px;">Positive Charts</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ff0000; padding: 2px 5px;">Negative Charts</div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">*When doing a comparison the key above is used. In all other cases graphs, charts and visuals are using contrasting colours to support accessibility.</p>	

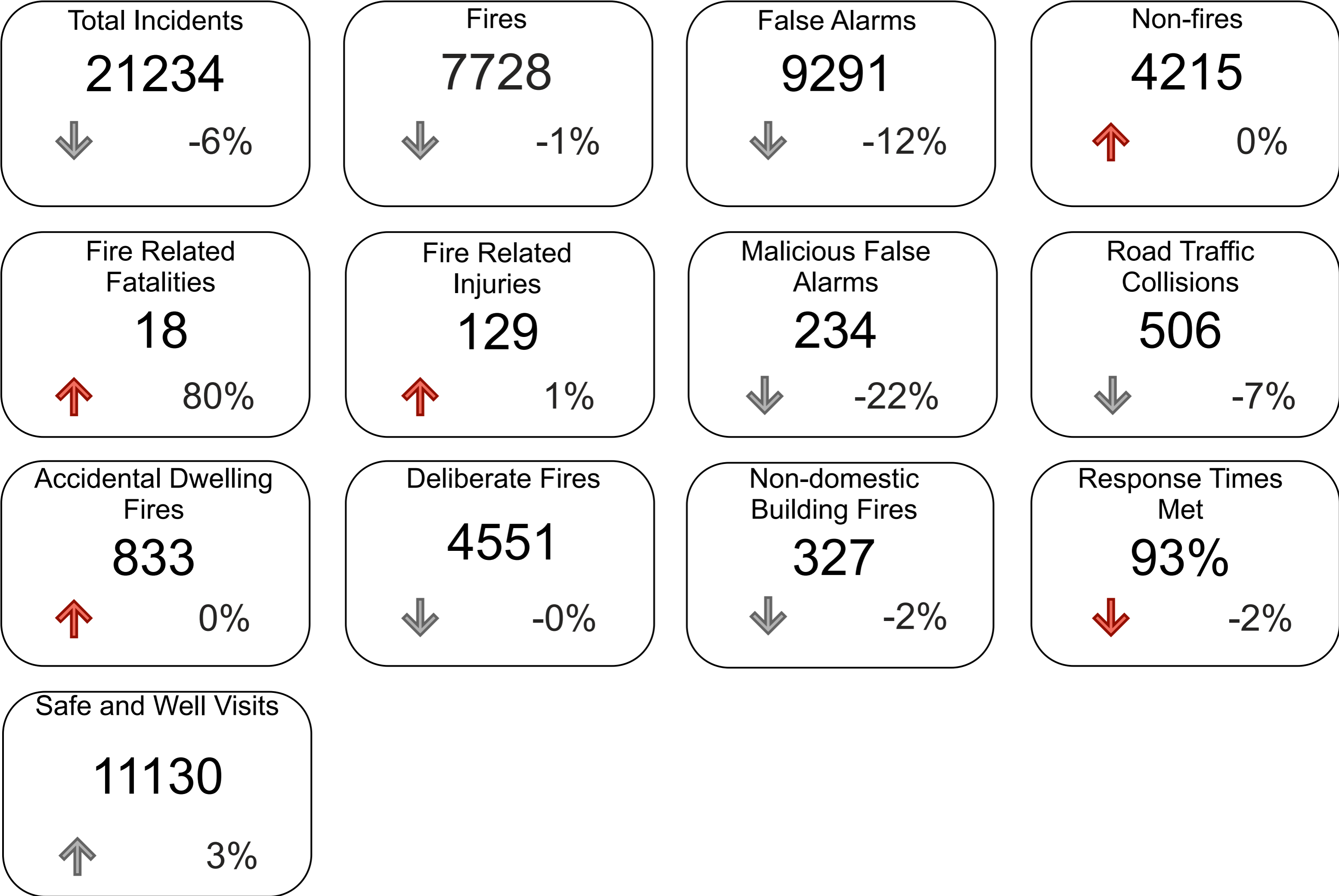
Due to seasonality **Previous Year** and **3 Year Average** comparison are based on selected range and not the whole of the previous year.

Performance Summary

Arrows display percentage(%) increase/decrease on previous year to current financial year.
The comparison range is based on selected date range.

This report is comparing: **01 April 2024**
Against: 01 April 2023

16 February 2025
16 February 2024



Incident Demand by Time of Day

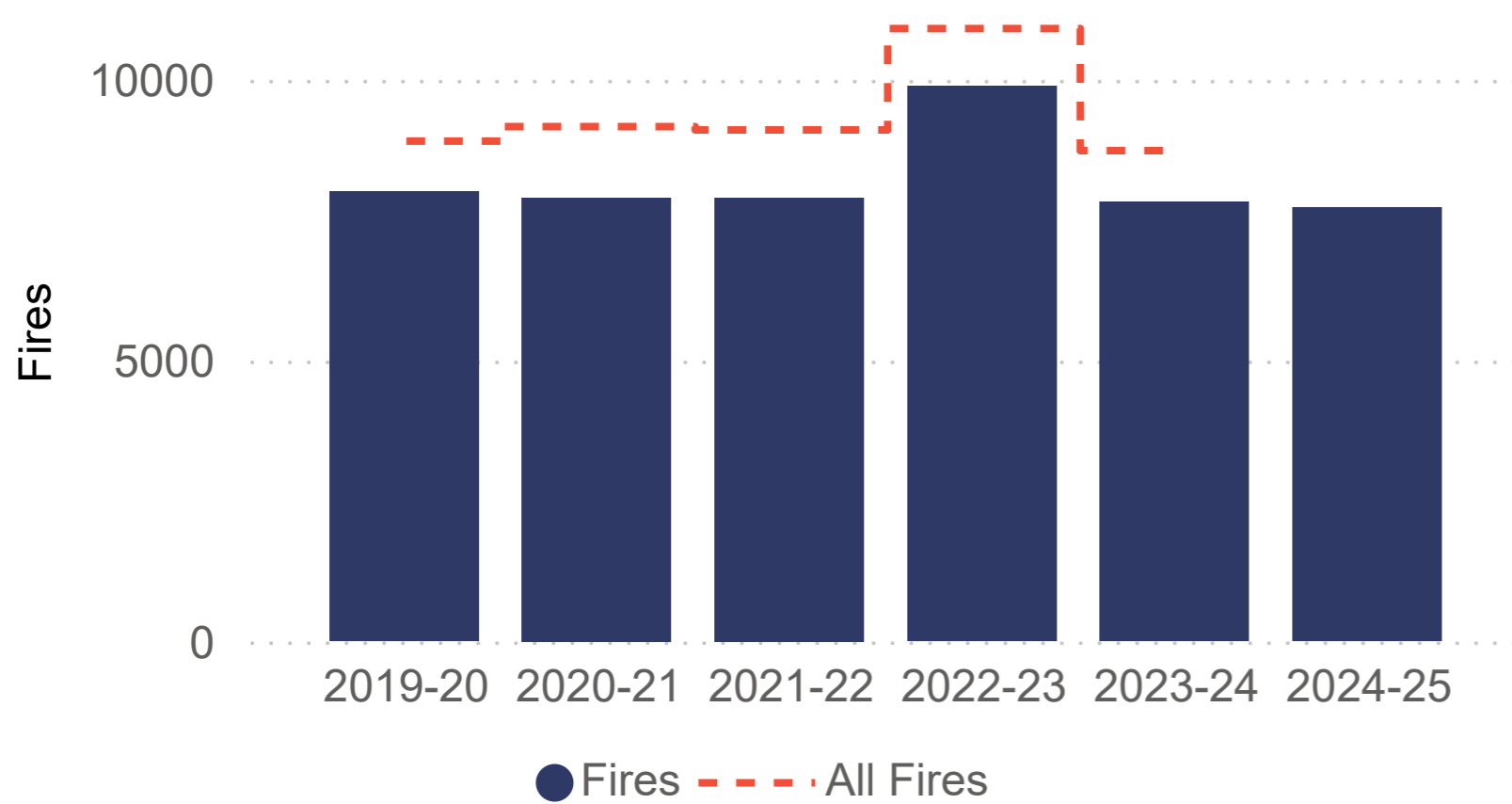
Day	08:00-08:59	09:00-09:59	10:00-10:59	11:00-11:59	12:00-12:59	13:00-13:59	14:00-14:59	15:00-15:59	16:00-16:59	17:00-17:59	18:00-18:59	19:00-19:59	20:00-20:59	21:00-21:59	22:00-22:59	23:00-23:59	00:00-00:59	01:00-01:59	02:00-02:59	03:00-03:59	04:00-04:59	05:00-05:59	06:00-06:59	07:00-07:59
Mon	93	103	102	112	112	158	183	170	197	190	244	215	200	176	129	125	72	85	67	51	50	42	51	81
Tue	87	91	121	102	124	115	147	167	191	234	212	228	216	169	164	112	85	88	52	47	65	56	46	72
Wed	81	111	116	99	137	158	167	152	178	204	216	219	193	158	140	96	109	88	77	46	54	49	70	93
Thu	83	83	114	118	149	125	138	189	229	217	189	221	208	171	133	104	92	70	58	49	50	37	46	62
Fri	94	96	132	136	133	127	138	159	176	206	230	224	229	197	146	118	90	80	59	54	52	45	49	57
Sat	77	92	92	116	143	147	166	180	179	262	239	237	228	184	164	130	110	93	83	68	65	59	55	75
Sun	70	101	107	113	129	136	158	157	204	225	215	205	197	185	136	113	125	95	69	76	67	45	43	47

Fires

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Fires by Financial Year



All Fires (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

Fires Previous Year To Date Comparison

District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-5%	↓
Calderdale	-7%	↓
Kirklees	-1%	↓
Leeds	3%	↓
Wakefield	1%	↓

3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Fires this financial year is an increase/decrease of fires against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Fires by Property Type

Outdoor	5087
Building	1632
Road Vehicle	1004
Other transport vehicle	3

Fires by Category

Fire Classification	Accidental	Deliberate
Chimney Fire	0.41%	
Primary Fire	20.05%	12.94%
Secondary Fire	20.63%	45.96%

Fires by Building Property Type

Dwelling	956
Non Residential	643
Other Residential	33

Fires by Outdoor Property Type

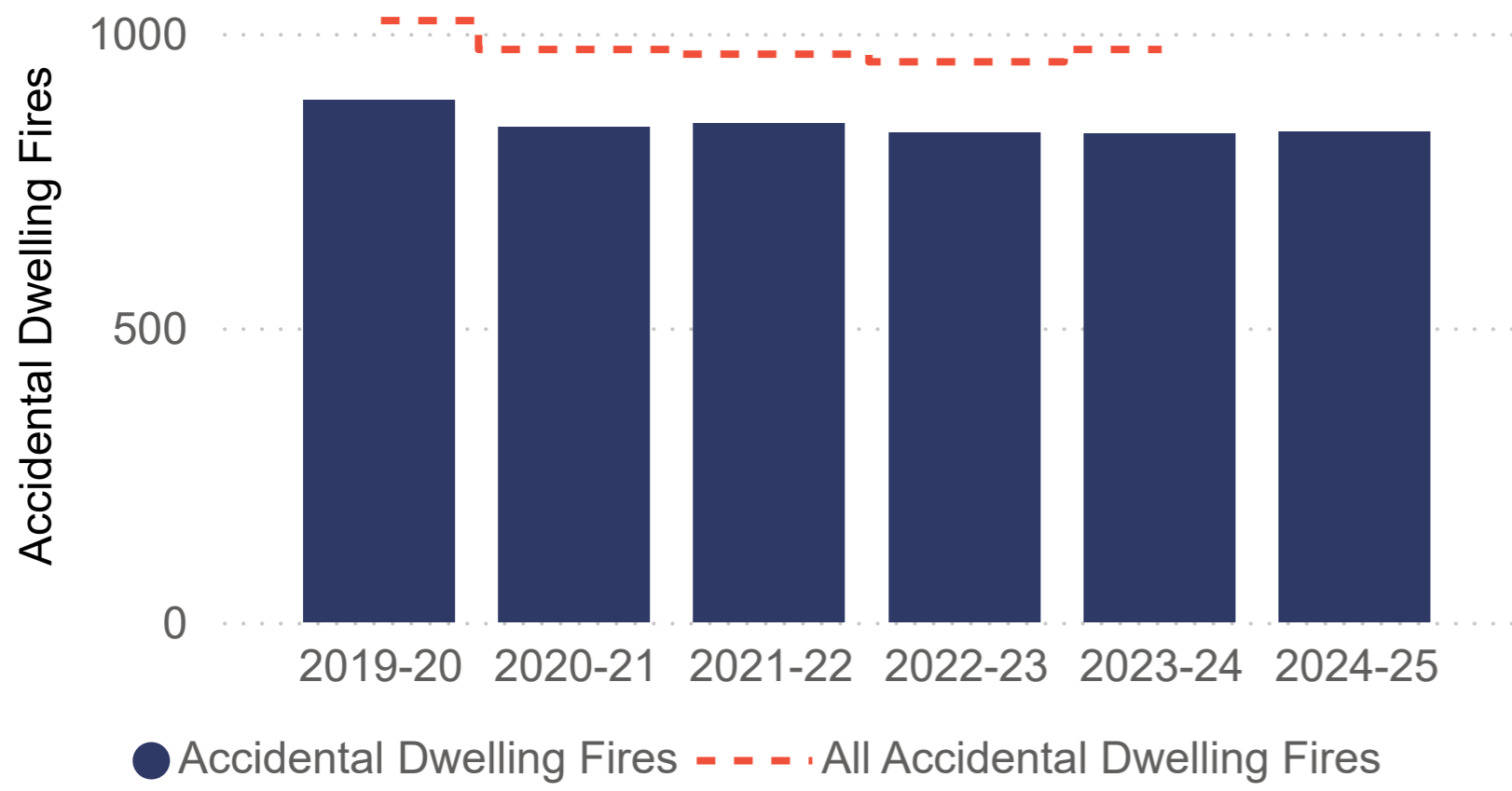
Other outdoors (including land)	2338
Outdoor structures	1525
Grassland, woodland and crops	1167
Outdoor equipment and machinery	57

Accidental Dwelling Fires

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Accidental Dwelling Fires by Financial Year



All ADF (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year.
The bars show the value for selected date range.

Accidental Dwelling Fires Previous Year To Date Comparison

District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-7%	↓
Calderdale	-15%	↓
Kirklees	-7%	↓
Leeds	12%	↑
Wakefield	13%	↑

3 Year average indicator shows if current number of ADF this financial year is an increase/decrease of ADF against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Accidental Dwelling Fires by Property Type

House - single occupancy	515
Purpose Built Flat/Maisonette - multiple occupancy	156
Converted Flat/Maisonette - multiple occupancy	62
Self contained Sheltered Housing	43
Bungalow - single occupancy	40
Unknown if licensed HMO	8
Licensed HMO	6
caravan/mobile home (permanent dwelling)	2
Houseboat (permanent dwelling)	1

Top Fire Cause

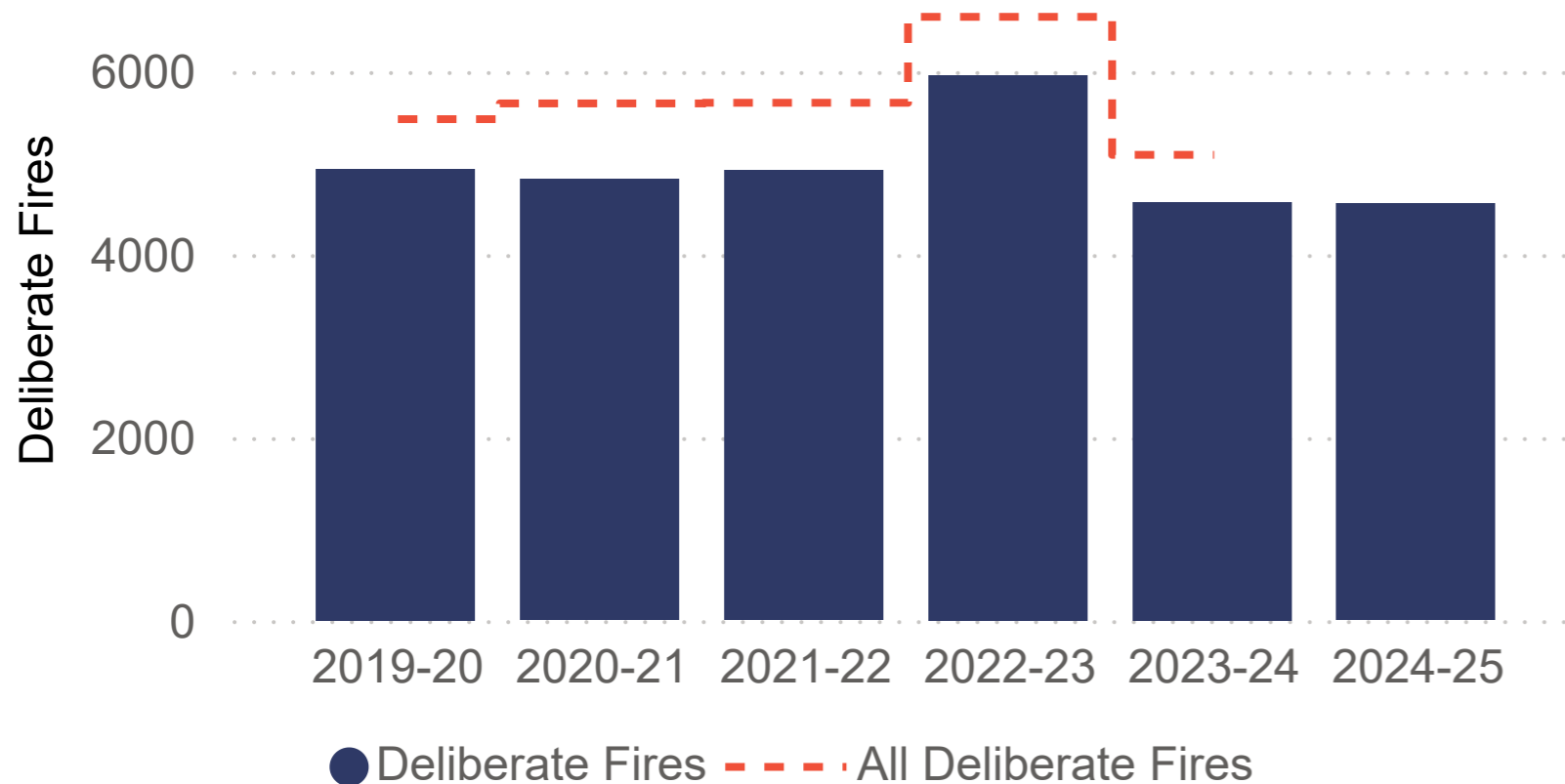
Accidental - Cooking - other cooking

Deliberate Fires

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Deliberate Fires by Financial Year



All Deliberate Fires (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

Deliberate Fires Previous Year To Date Comparison

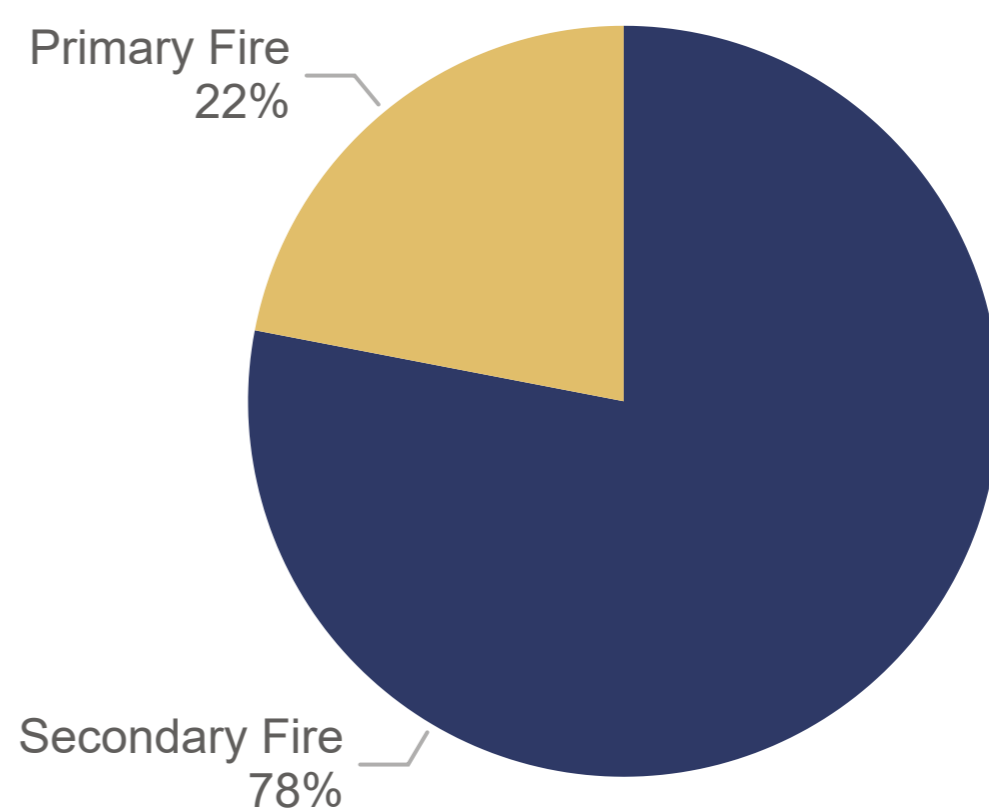
District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	2%	↓
Calderdale	7%	↓
Kirklees	-5%	↓
Leeds	0%	↓
Wakefield	-8%	↓

3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Deliberate Fires this financial year is an increase/decrease of Deliberate Fires against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Top 10 Property Types

Property Type	Deliberate Fires
Other outdoors (including land)	1752
Outdoor structures	1010
Grassland, woodland and crops	674
Car	400
Non Residential	356
Dwelling	123
Motorcycle	82
Van	50
Multiple Vehicles	35
Outdoor equipment and machinery	16

Deliberate Fires by Primary or Secondary



Top 5 Fire Causes

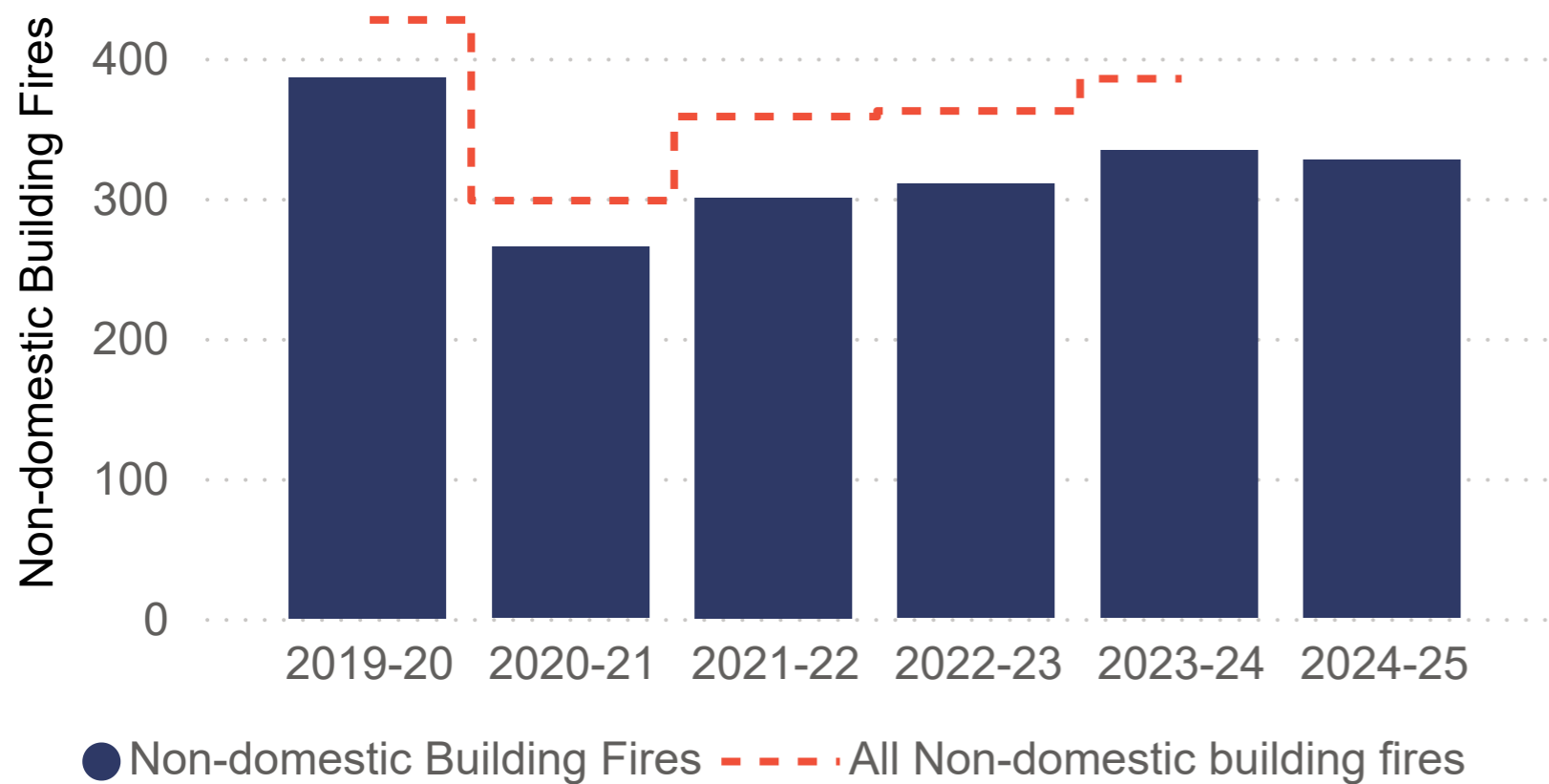
Fire Cause	Deliberate Fires
Deliberate - unknown owner	1701
Deliberate - others property	1477
Deliberate - others property - Heat source and combustibles brought together deliberately	577
Deliberate - own property	373
Deliberate - unknown owner - Heat source and combustibles brought together deliberately	287

Non-domestic Fires

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Non-domestic Building Fires by Financial Year



All Non-domestic Building Fires (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year.
The bars show the value for selected date range.

Non-domestic Building Fires Previous Year To Date Comparison

District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-16%	↓
Calderdale	4%	↓
Kirklees	-30%	↓
Leeds	18%	↑
Wakefield	-16%	↓

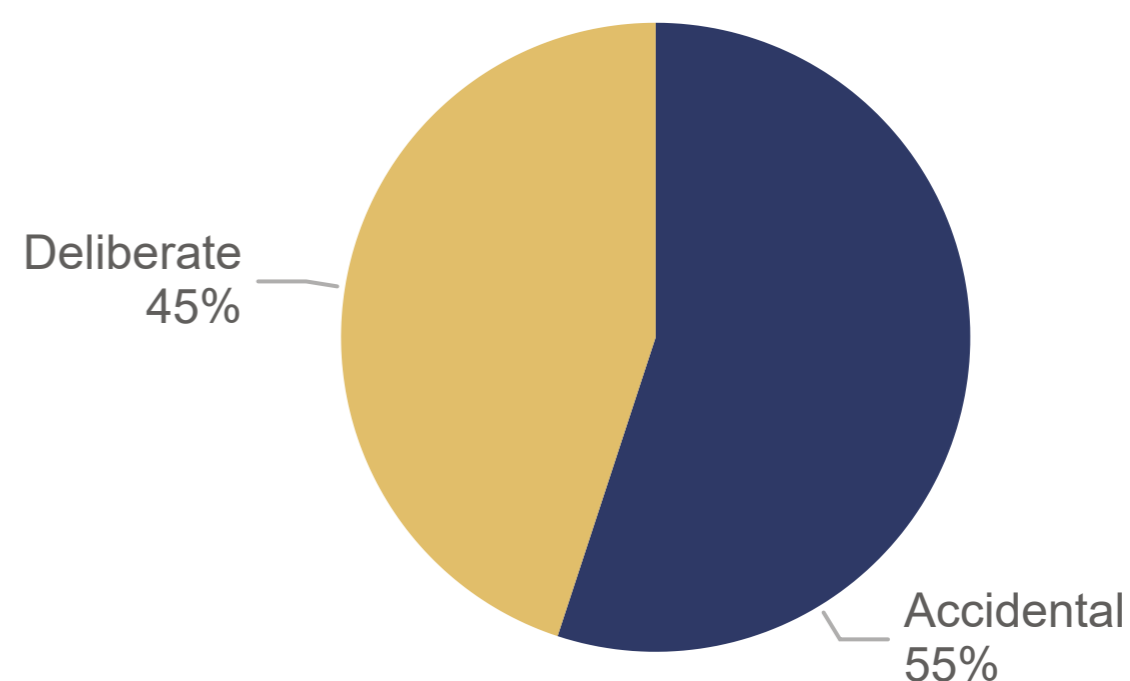
3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Non-domestic Building Fires this financial year is an increase/decrease of Non-domestic Building fires against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Top 5 Property Types

Non-domestic Building Fires

Public admin, security and safety	112
Food and Drink	55
Retail	24
Industrial Manufacturing	20
Hospitals and medical care	14

Non-domestic Building Fires by Accidental or Deliberate Fires



Top 5 Fire Causes

Non-domestic Building Fires

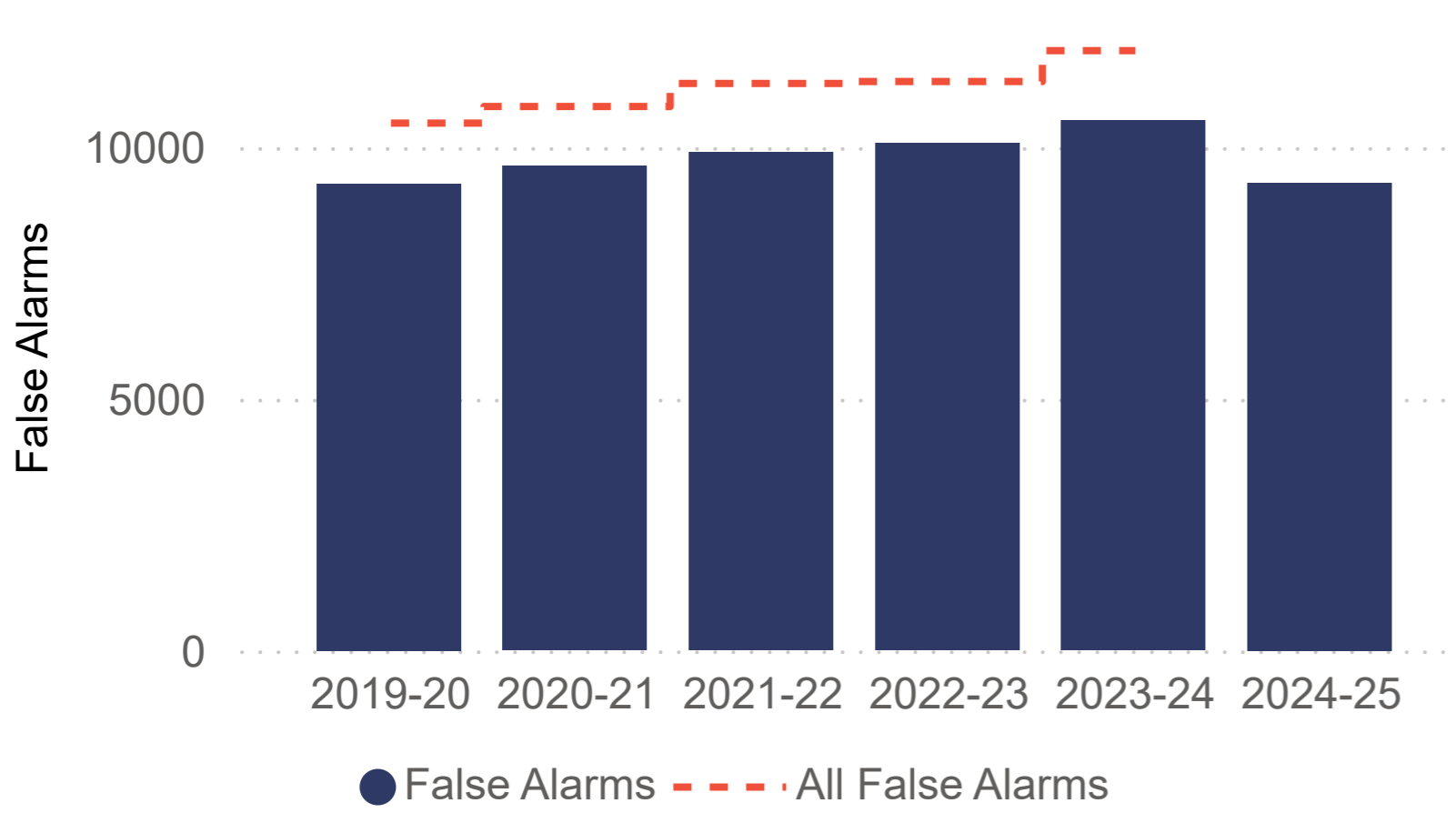
Deliberate - others property - Heat source and combustibles brought together deliberately	83
Deliberate - own property - Heat source and combustibles brought together deliberately	56
Accidental - Faulty fuel supply - electricity	32
Accidental - Fault in equipment or appliance	30
Accidental - Accumulation of flammable material	15

False Alarms

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

False Alarms by Financial Year



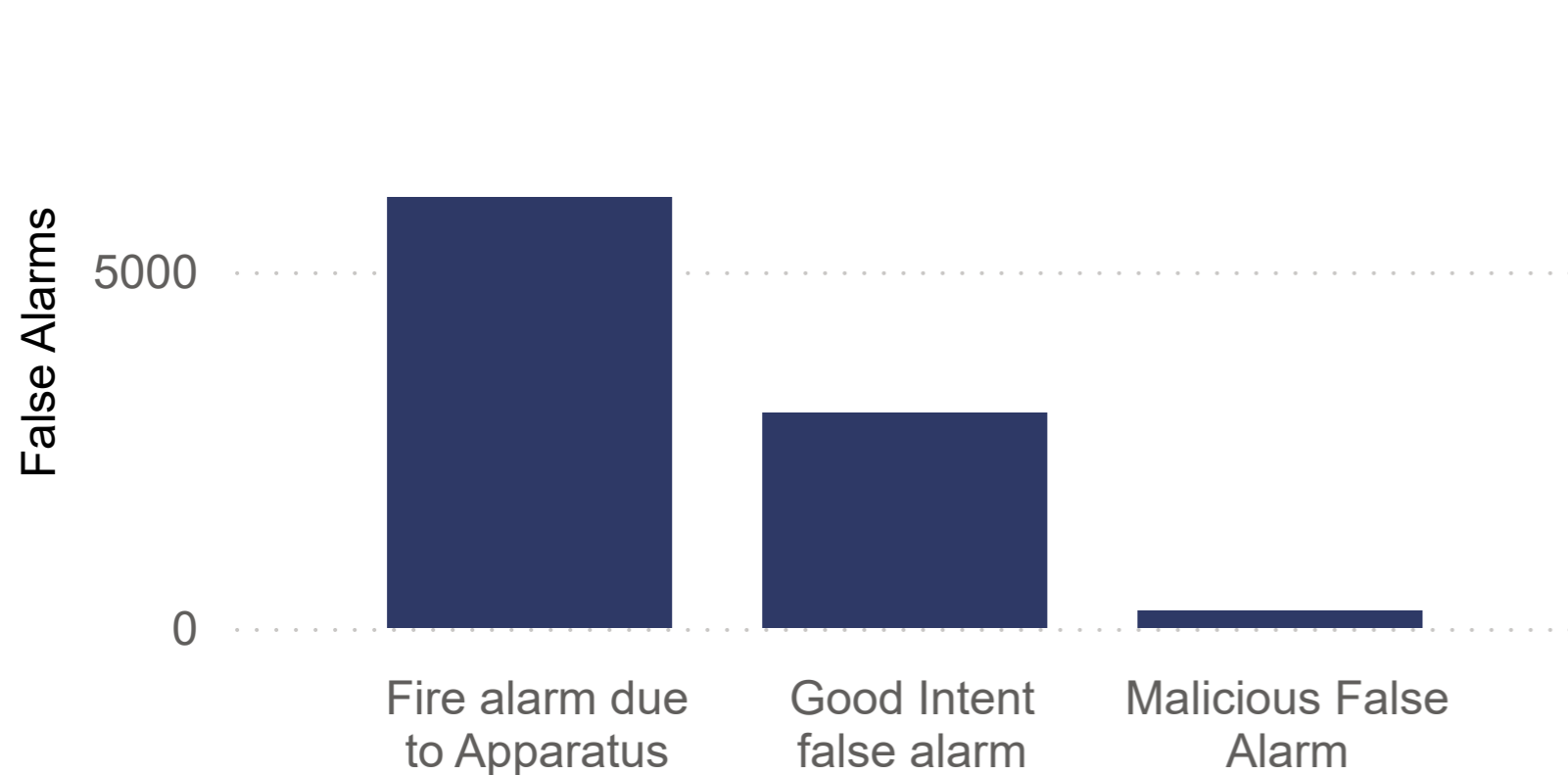
All False Alarms (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

False Alarms Previous Year To Date Comparison

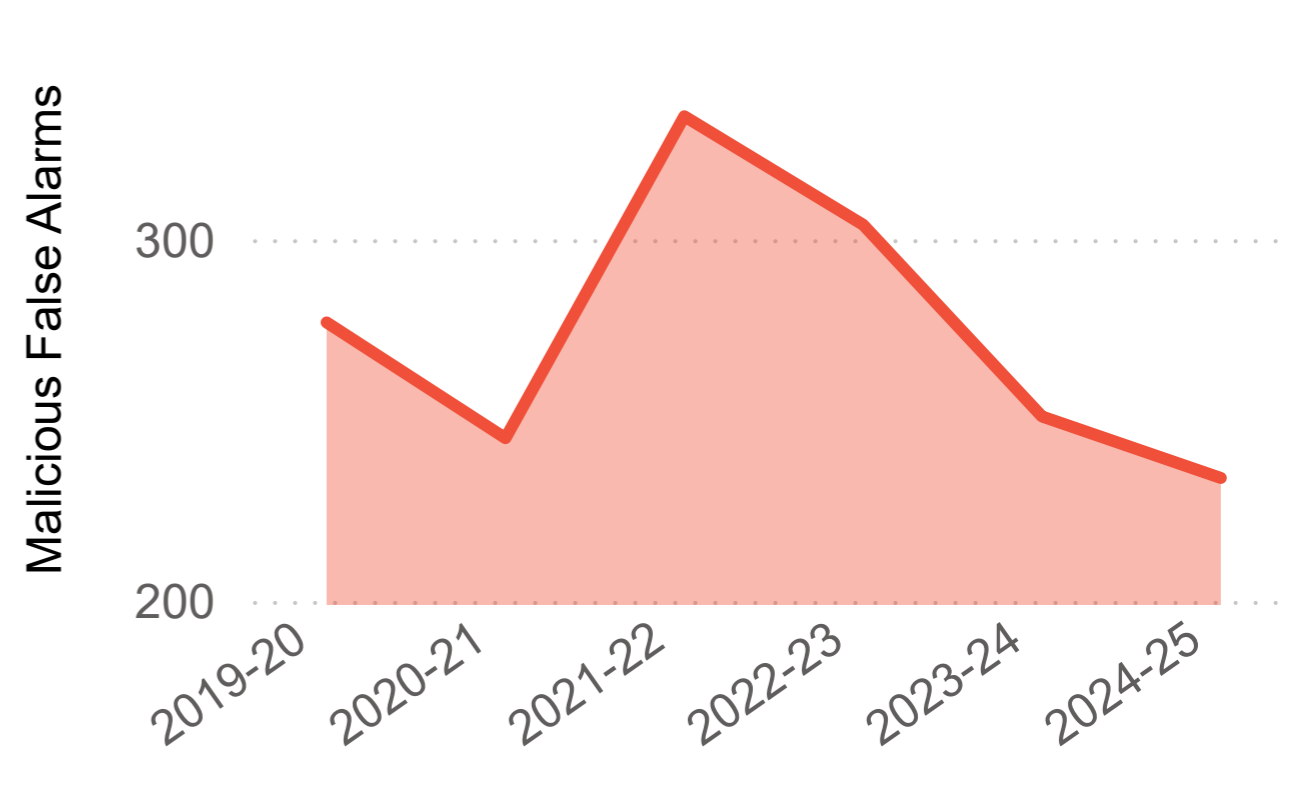
District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-1%	↑
Calderdale	-10%	↓
Kirklees	-16%	↓
Leeds	-13%	↓
Wakefield	-25%	↓

3 year average indicator shows if current number of False Alarms this financial year is an increase/decrease of False Alarms against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

False Alarm by Reason



Malicious False Alarms by Financial Year



Top Dwelling Properties

Purpose Built
Flat/Maisonette - multiple occupancy

Top Other Residential Buildings Properties

Residential Home

Top Non-Residential Building

Education

Top Dwelling Reason

Cooking/burnt toast

Top Other Residential Building Reason

Faulty

Top Non-Residential Reason

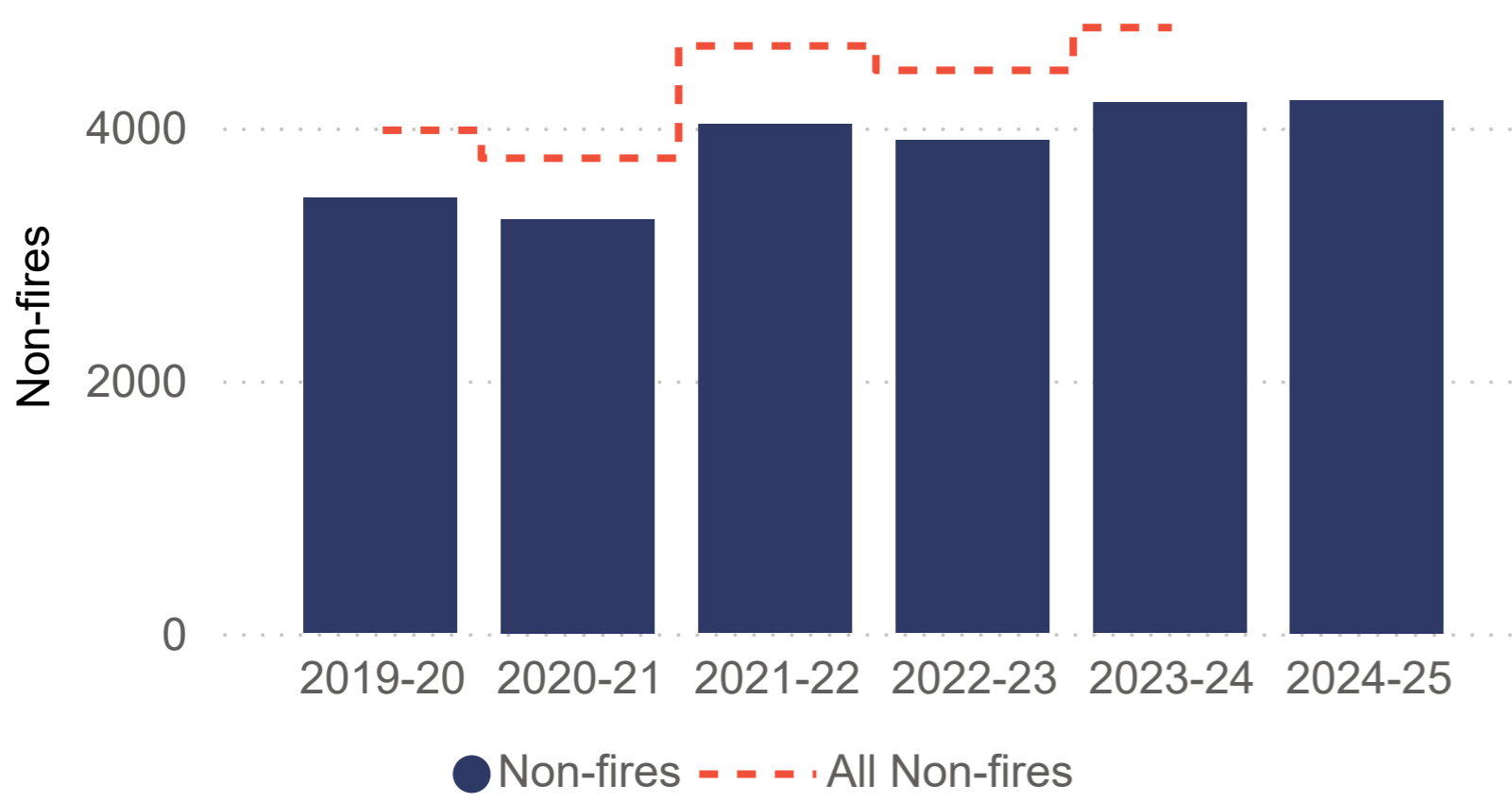
Faulty

Non-fires

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Non-fires by Financial Year



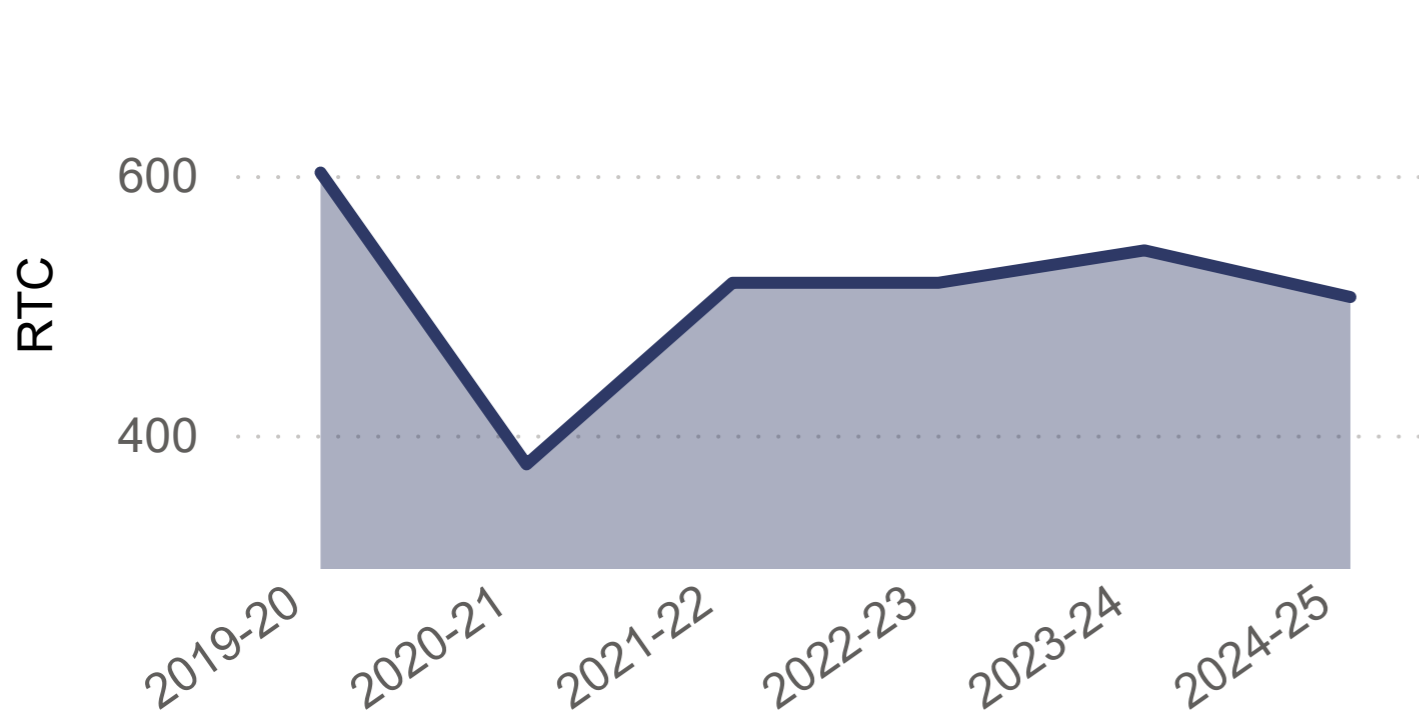
All Non-fires (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

Non-fires Previous Year To Date Comparison

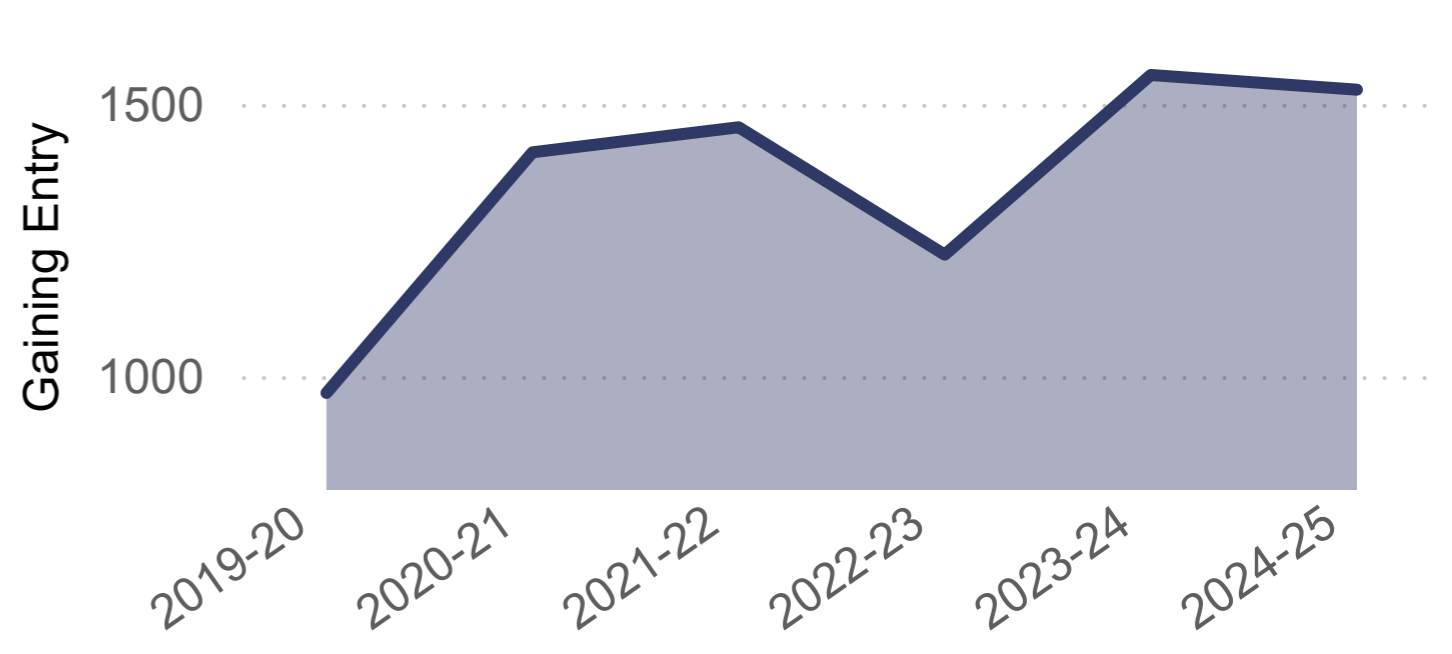
District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-6%	↑
Calderdale	9%	↑
Kirklees	-4%	↑
Leeds	4%	↑
Wakefield	3%	↑

3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Non-fires this financial year is an increase/decrease of Non-fires against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Road Traffic Collisions by Financial Year



Gaining Entry Cause for Concern by Financial Year



Top 5 Non-fire Types

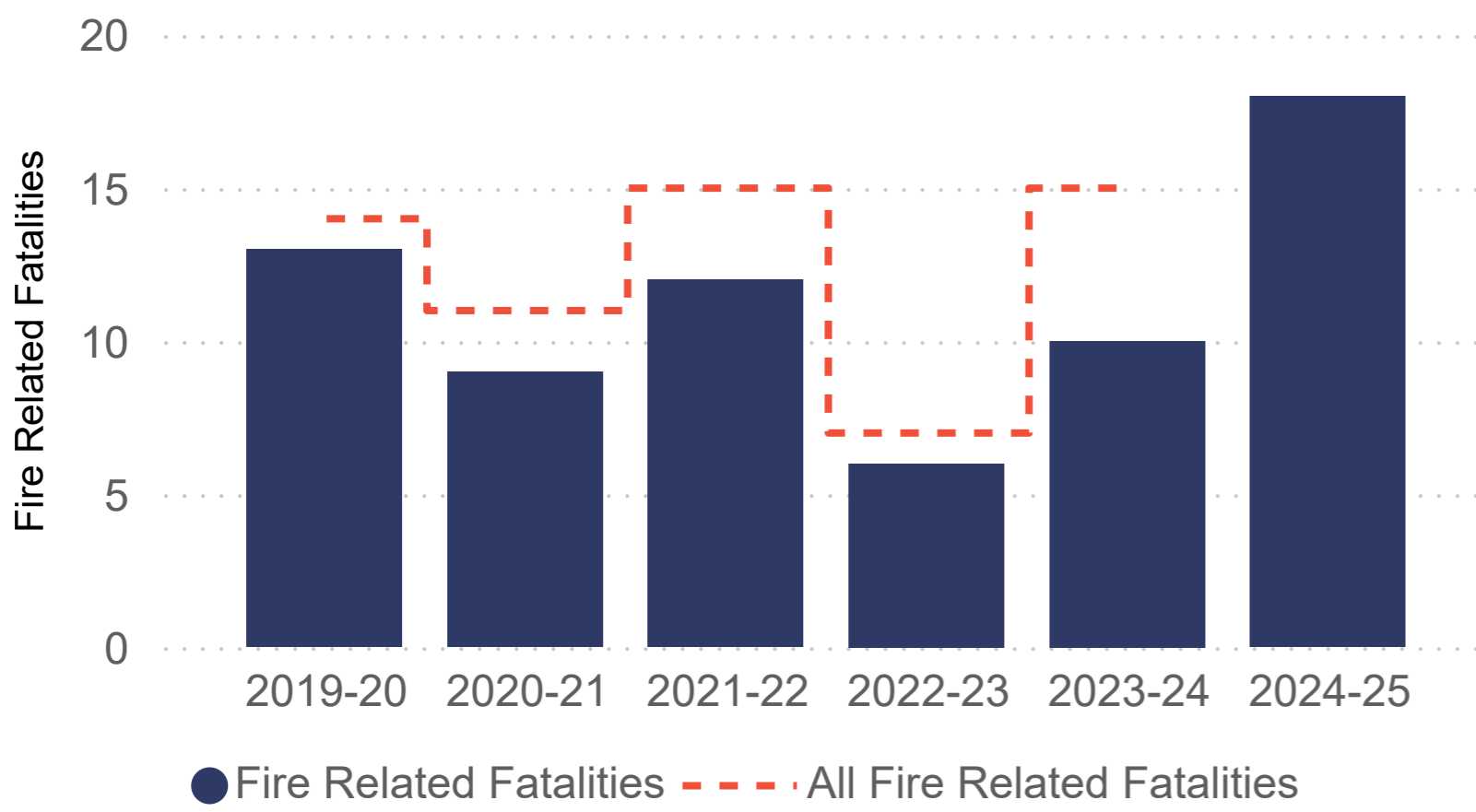
Non-fire Type	Count
Effecting entry/exit	1351
Assist other agencies	666
RTC	510
No action (not false alarm)	263
Lift Release	203

Fire Related Fatalities

01 April 2024

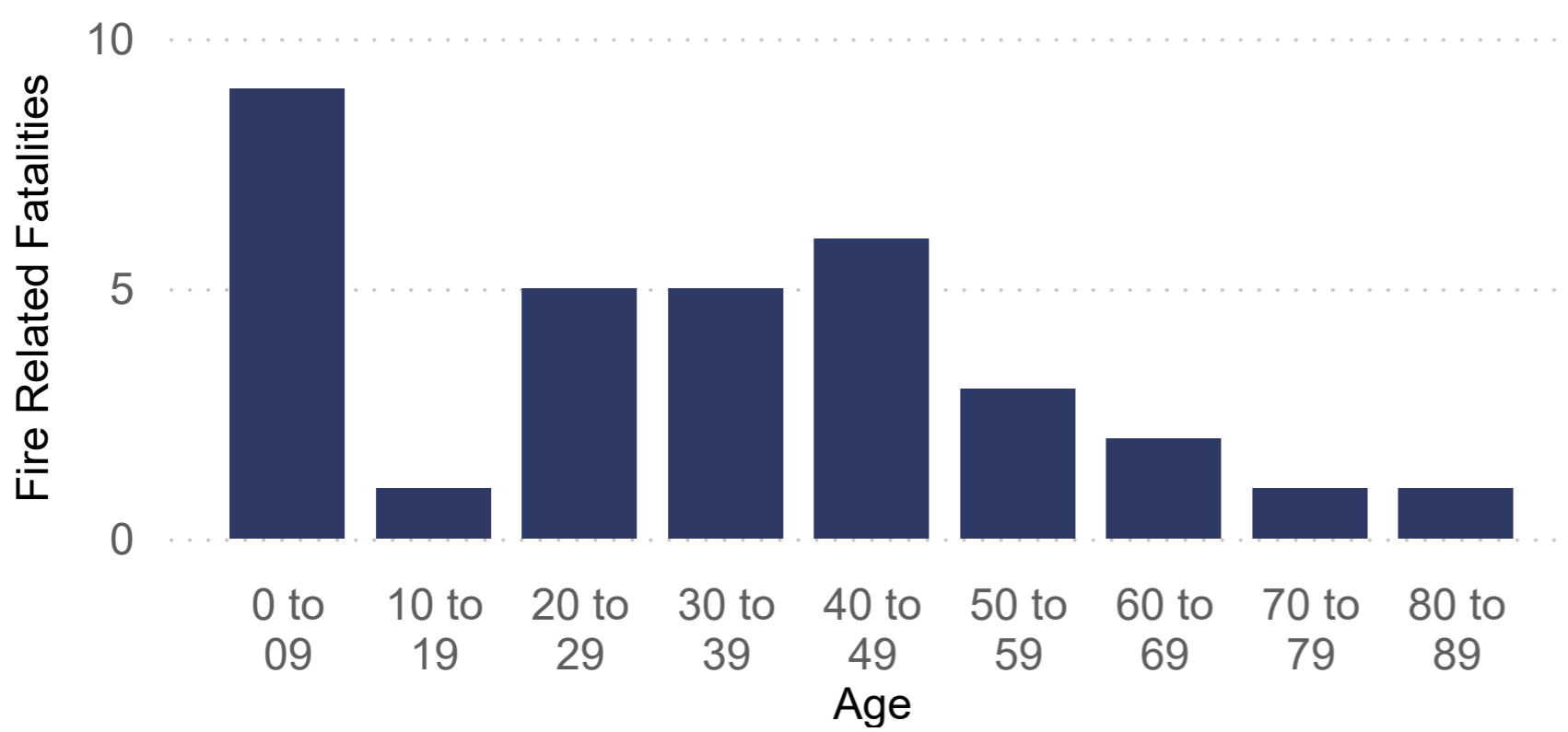
16 February 2025

Fire Related Fatalities by Financial Year

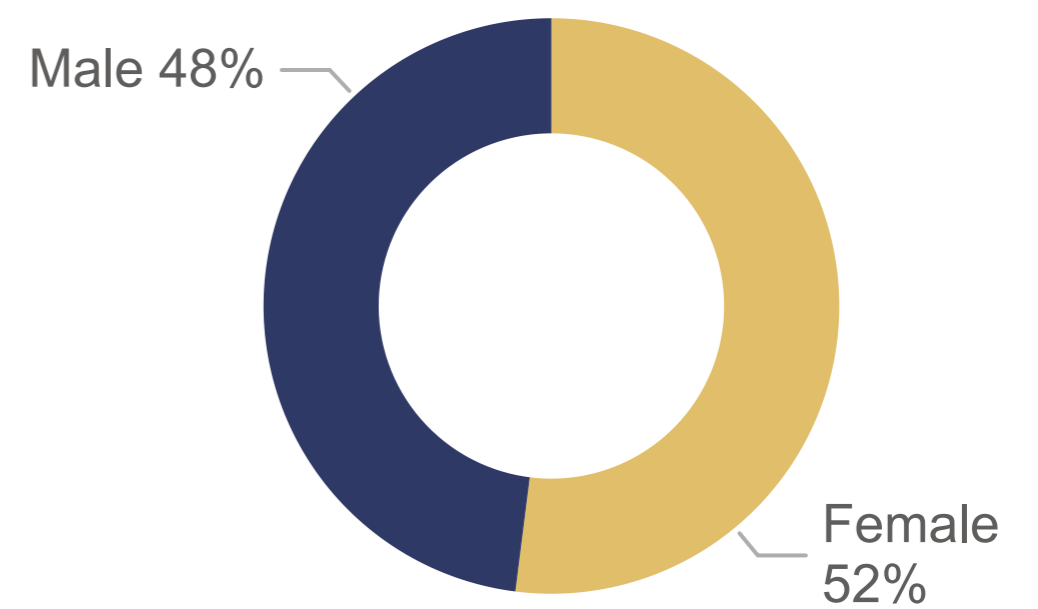


All Fire Related Fatalities (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

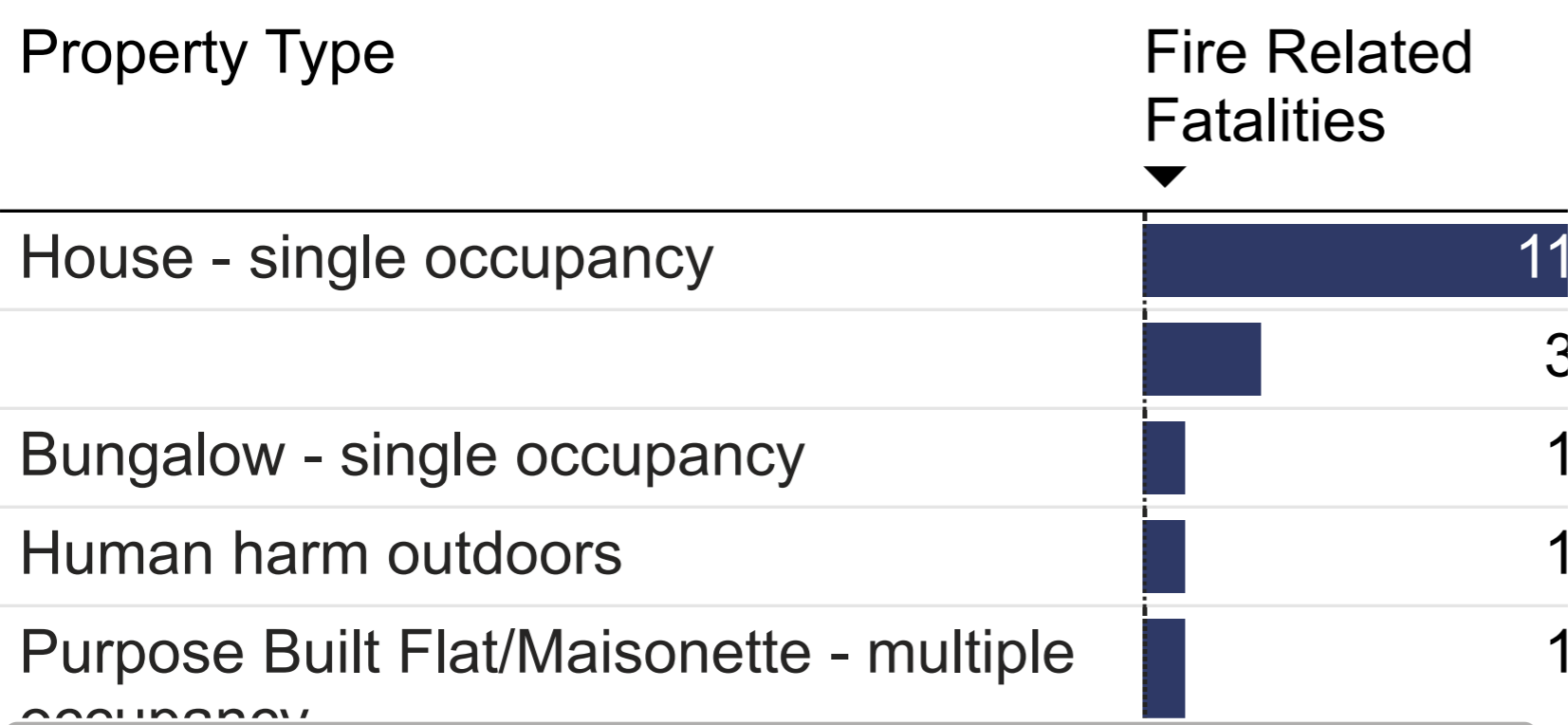
Fire Related Fatalities by Age



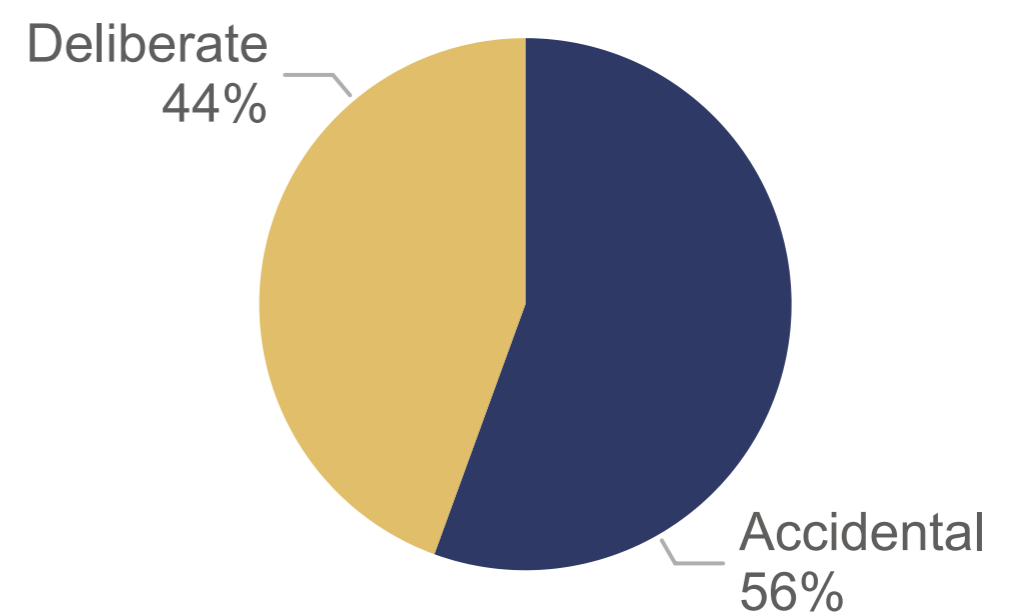
Fire Related Fatalities by Gender



Fire Related Fatalities by Property Type



Fire Related Fatalities by Accidental or Deliberate Fires

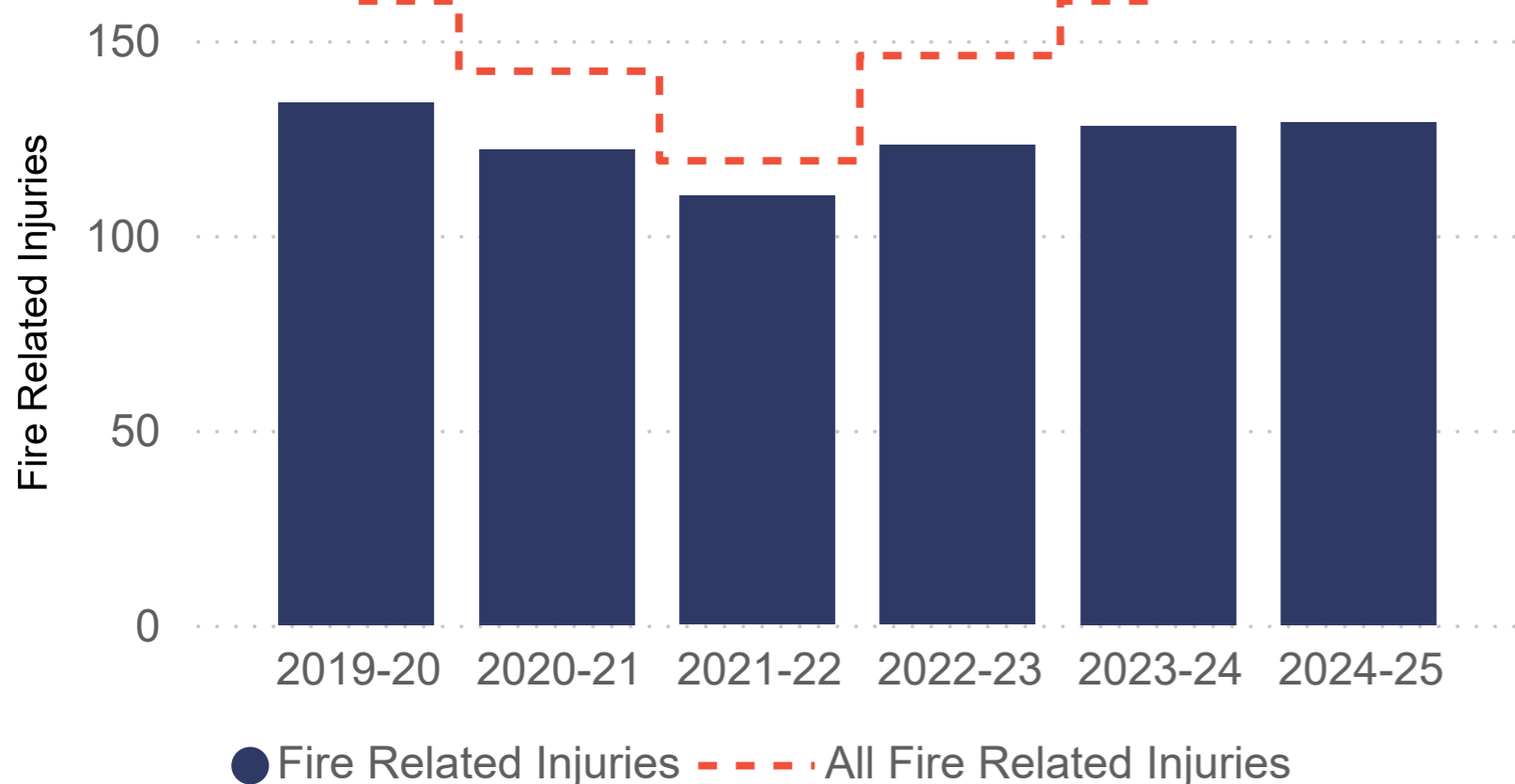


Fire Related Injuries

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Fire Related Injuries by Financial Year



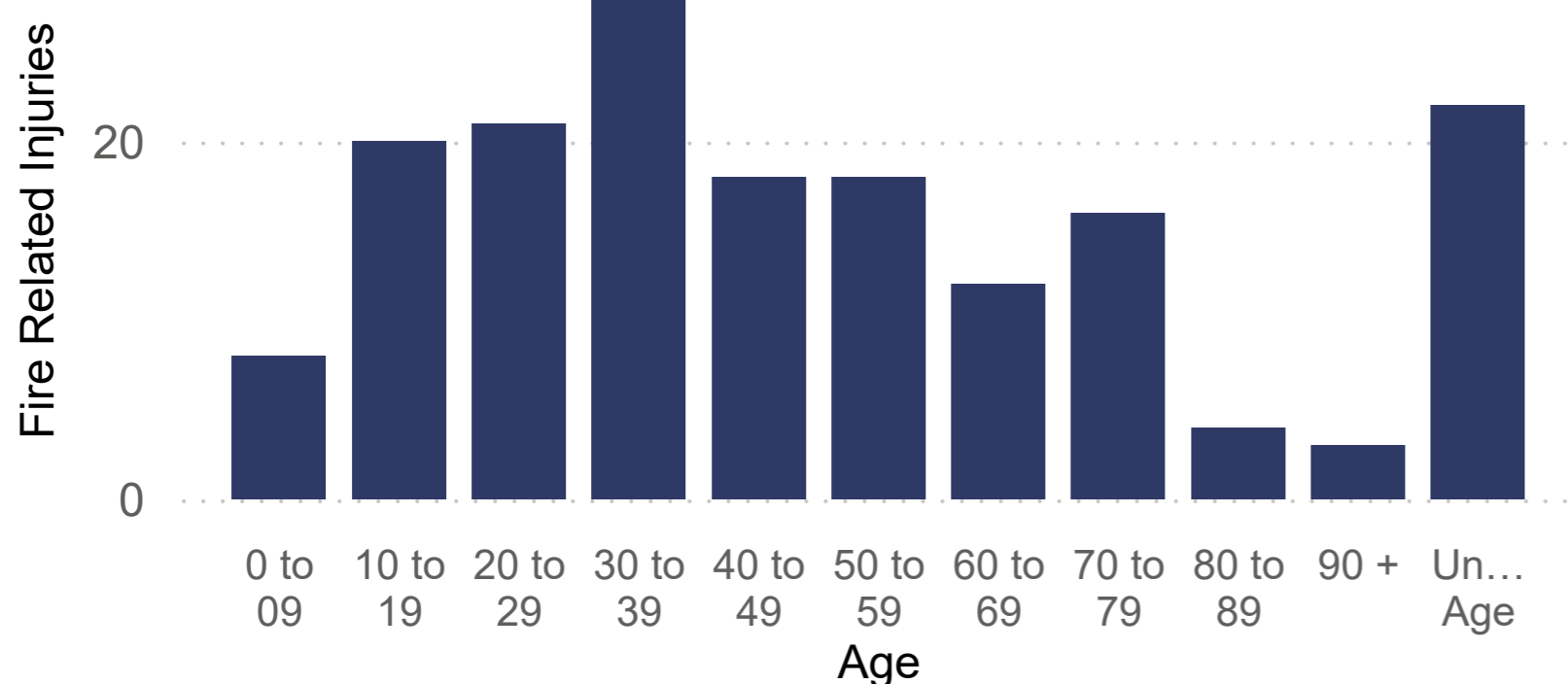
All Fire Related Injuries (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

Fire Related Injuries Previous Year To Date Comparison

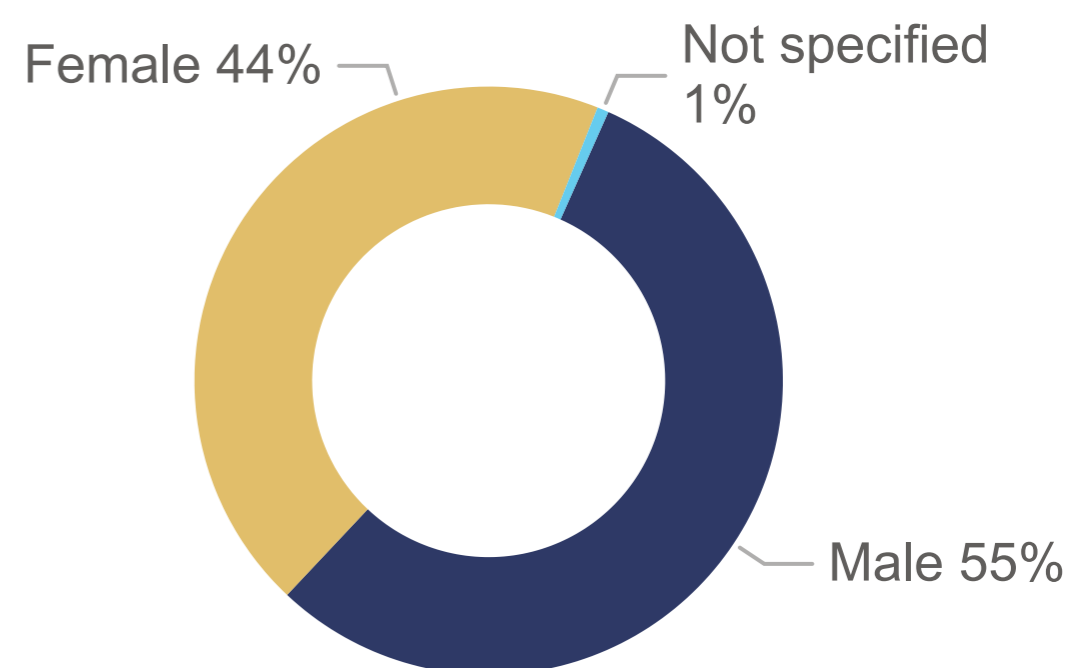
District	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	-9%	↑
Calderdale	-41%	↓
Kirklees	50%	↑
Leeds	-5%	↓
Wakefield	25%	↑

3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Fire Related Injuries this financial year is an increase/decrease of Fire Related Injuries against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Fire Related Injuries by Age



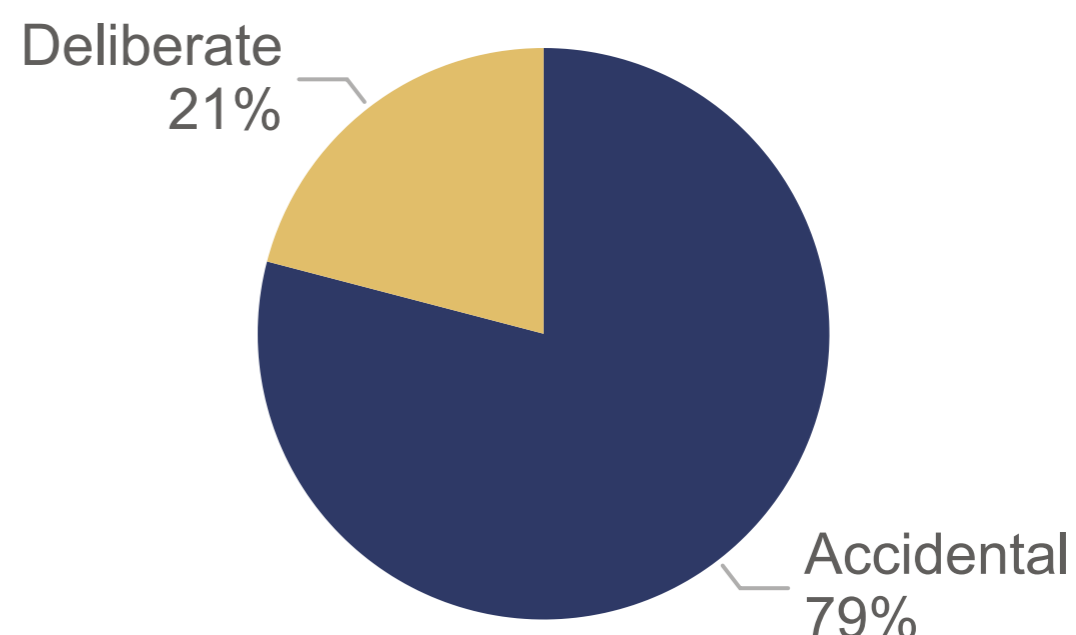
Fire Related Injuries by Gender



Fire Related Injuries by Severity

Severity of Injury	Fire Related Injuries
Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be Slight	113
Victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be Serious	24
Precautionary check recommended	11
First aid given at scene	2

Fire Related Injuries by Accidental or Deliberate Fires



Top Property Type

House - single occupancy

Top Fire Cause

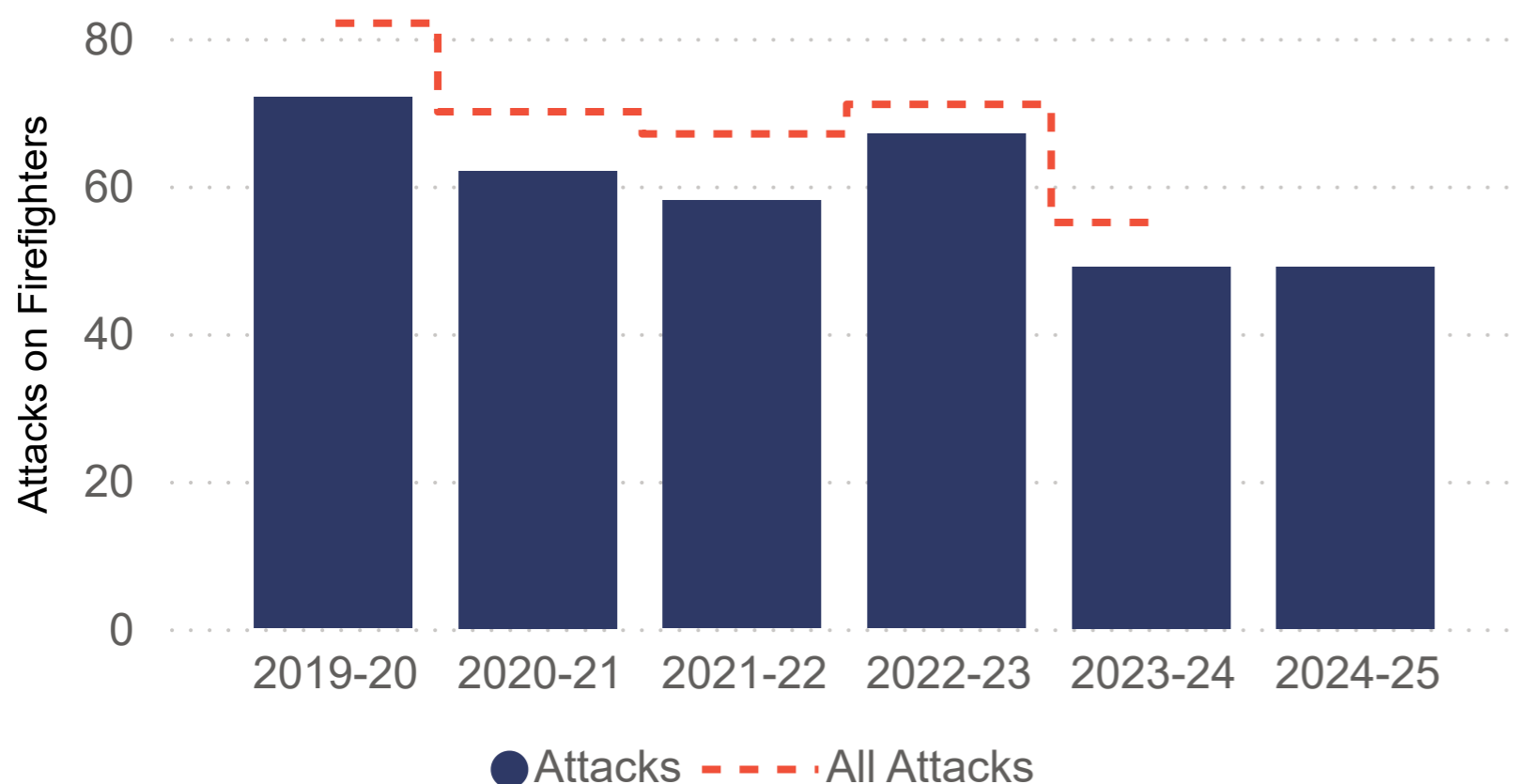
Accidental - Fault in equipment or appliance

Attacks on Firefighters

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Attacks on Firefighters by Financial Year



All Attacks on Firefighters (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year. The bars show the value for selected date range.

Attacks on Firefighters Previous Year To Date Comparison

District	Current period	Previous year	% increase/decrease on previous year	3 Year Average
Bradford	24	23	4%	↓
Calderdale	3	3	0%	↑
Kirklees	7	7	0%	↓
Leeds	11	9	22%	↓
Wakefield	4	7	-43%	↓

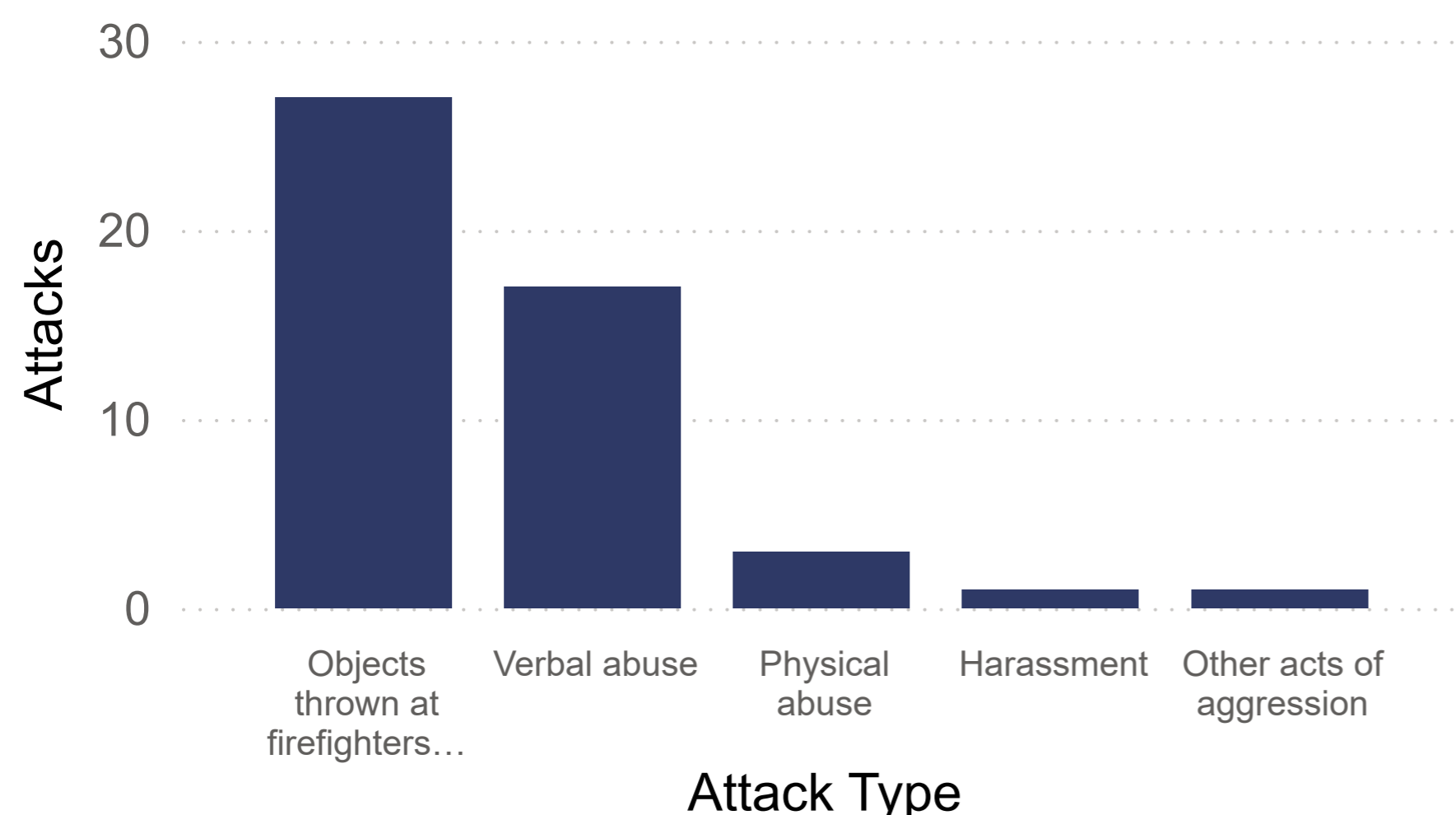
3 Year average indicator shows if current number of Attacks on Firefighters this financial year is an increase/decrease of Attacks on Firefighters against the 3 year average. Looking at only the comparison range.

Attacks on Firefighters by Severity



Visual may be blank if no slight and serious injuries are recorded for the date range.

Attacks on Firefighters by Attack Type



Percentage of incidents with an attack

District	% Attacks at district total incidents
Bradford	0.42%
Kirklees	0.22%
Calderdale	0.15%
Wakefield	0.15%
Leeds	0.14%

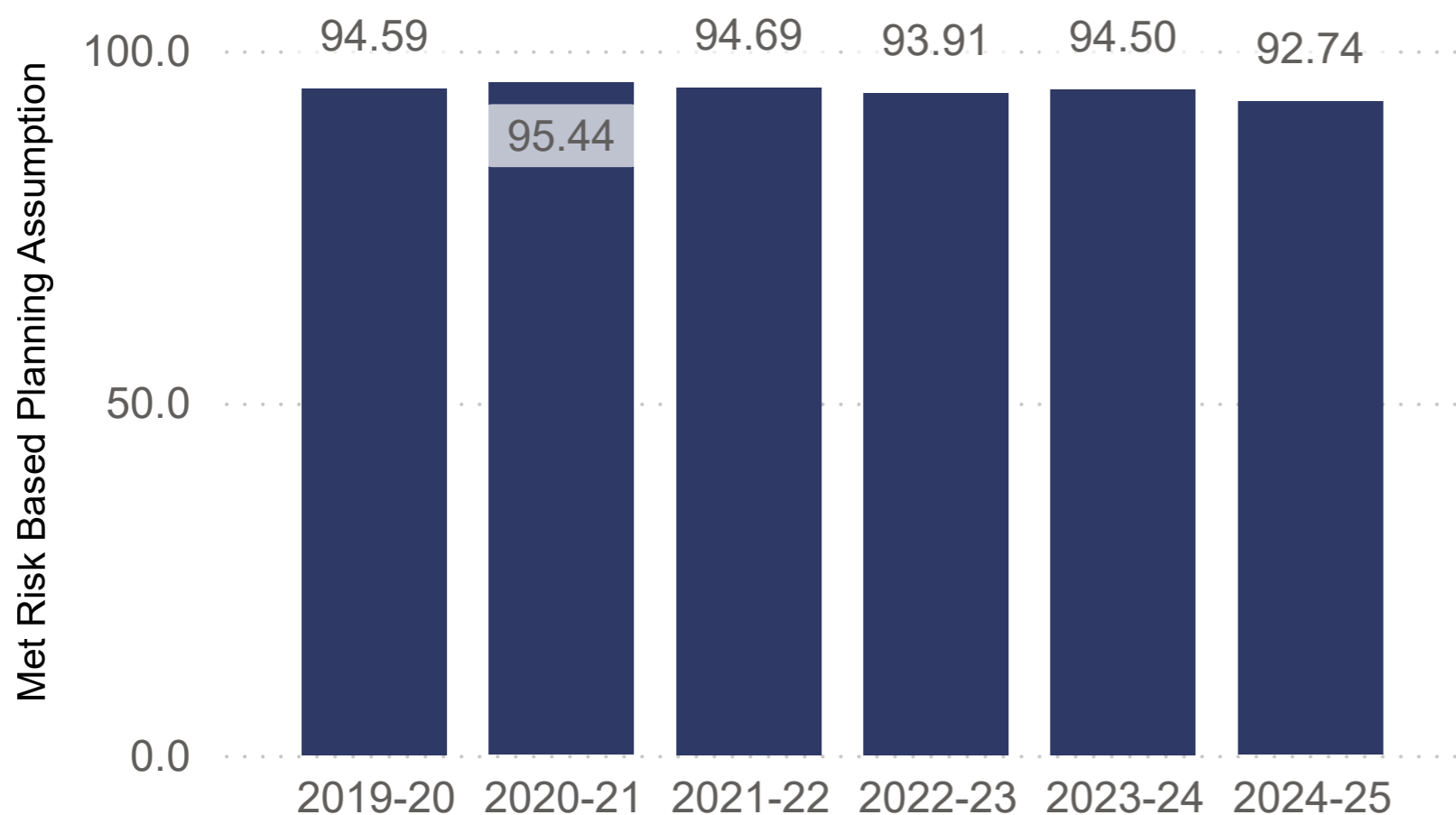
Percentage of attacks based on number of incidents per district.

Response Times

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Percentage of Met Risk Based Planning Assumption Response Times by Financial Year



Percentage of Met Risk Based Planning Assumption Response Time

District	% Met
Leeds	94.56
Bradford	93.62
Calderdale	90.77
Kirklees	90.49
Wakefield	89.82

Average Response Time by LSOA Risk Score and Severity

Risk Score	Life	Property	Other	Total
Very High	00:05:40	00:07:30	00:06:51	00:06:46
High	00:06:47	00:07:06	00:06:59	00:06:58
Medium	00:06:50	00:07:34	00:07:16	00:07:14
Low	00:07:11	00:07:59	00:07:35	00:07:34
Very Low	00:08:28	00:09:59	00:08:59	00:08:58
Total	00:07:21	00:08:14	00:07:42	00:07:41

Average Response Time Targets

Risk Score	Life	Property	Other
Very High	7.00	9.00	15.00
High	8.00	10.00	15.00
Medium	9.00	11.00	15.00
Low	10.00	12.00	15.00
Very Low	11.00	13.00	15.00

LSOA: Lower Super Output Area.

The Risk Based Planning Assumptions (RBPA) utilised by WYFRS place greatest emphasis on the likelihood of incidents occurring where there is a risk to people. Three different classifications of incidents are utilised, these being:

Life – Potential for incidents to involve rescues, injuries or fatalities including private dwellings, or other sleeping risks.

Property – Incidents occurring in properties other than those included within the Life risk.

Other – All other incidents not included within the descriptors for Life and Property risk including secondary fires, false alarms and non-fire related incidents where there is no risk to human life.

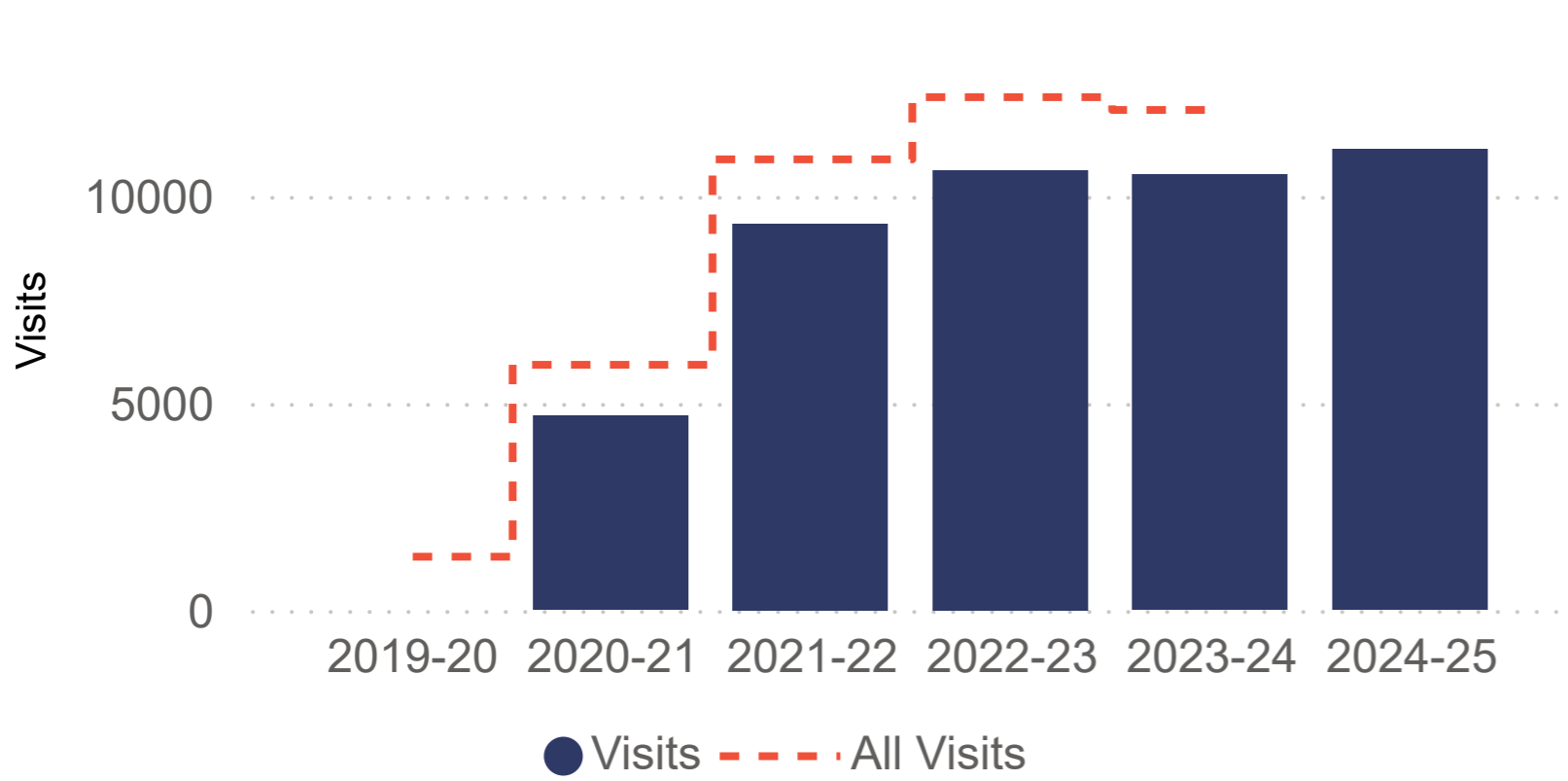
The RBPA's are underpinned by a comprehensive risk assessment for WYFRS.

Safe and Wells and High Risk Interventions

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

Completed Safe and Well and High Risk Intervention Visits by Financial Year



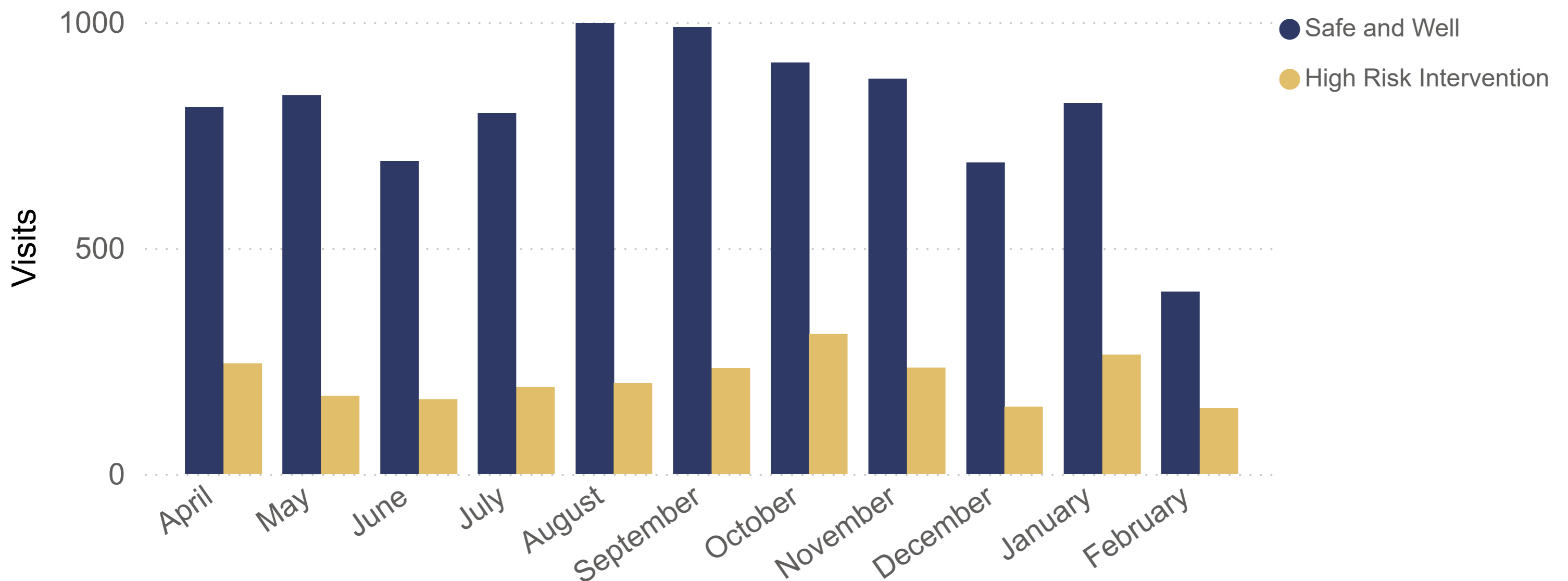
Completed Safe and Well Visits Previous Year To Date Comparison

District	% increase/decrease on previous year
Bradford	5%
Calderdale	-5%
Kirklees	3%
Leeds	10%
Wakefield	17%

All Visits (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year.

The bars show the value for selected date range.

Completed Visits by Month



The Safe and Well programme is the flagship prevention activity within WYFRS. We target vulnerability through a simple risk rating process and then visit people in their homes to offer information, advice and safety equipment. The risk rating process is to ensure that we are providing our resources to those who need it most.

People can be referred to WYFRS from partner organisations, self-refer or we can identify the need for a Safe and Well Check during operational incidents.

It also covers a broader assessment of vulnerability against a number of other elements, including:

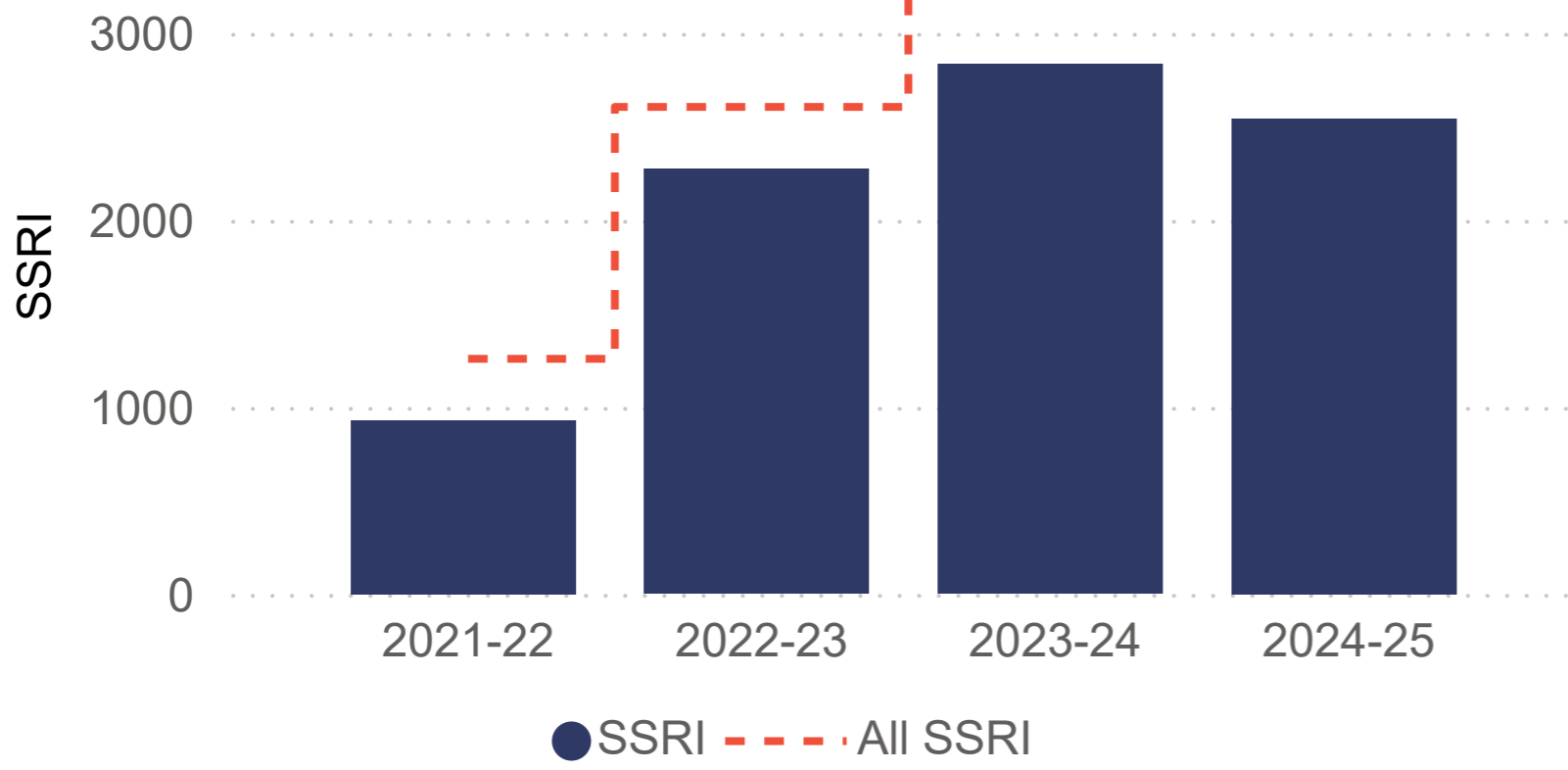
- Frailty and falls
- Social Isolation
- Winter Cold
- Crime
- Smoking

Site Specific Risk Inspections (SSRI)

01 April 2024

16 February 2025

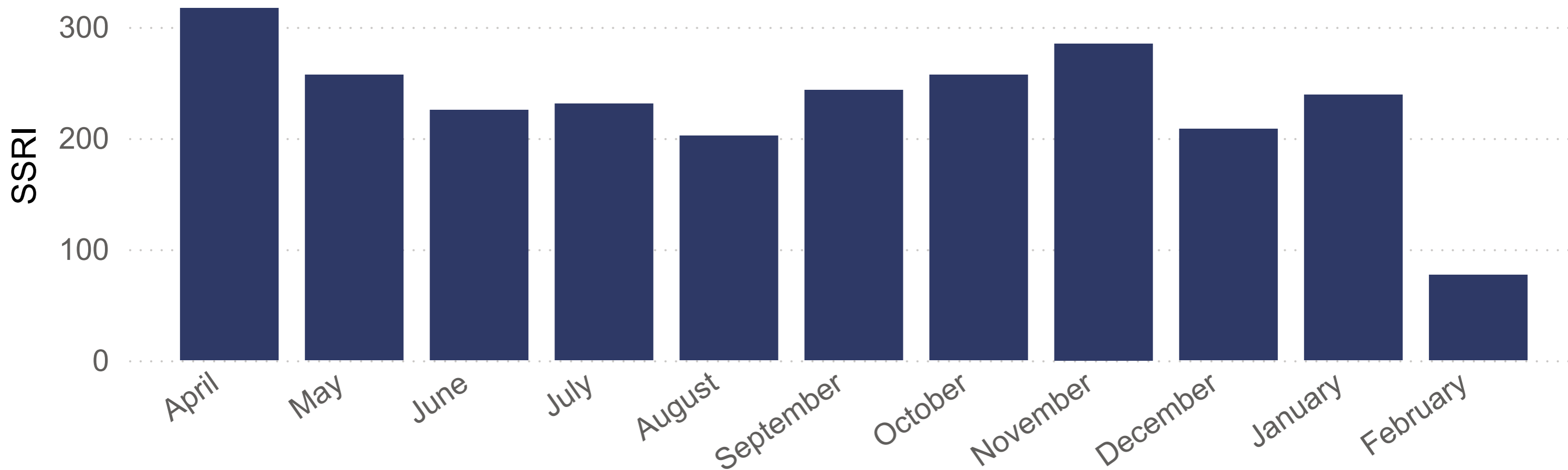
SSRI by Financial Year



All SSRI (red dotted line) shows the total figure for the financial year.

The bars show the value for selected date range.

SSRI by Month



SSRIs are generated from operational liaison referrals, post fire visits and what crews identified as perceived risks within their station area.

SSRIs are allocated to each District which are then allocated to stations/watches.

The Operational Risk Management Team centrally audit 100 percent of all SSRIs. This ensures a standard approach to the recording and understanding of risk which in turn underpins the safety of operational crews when responding to premises considered higher risk.