



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

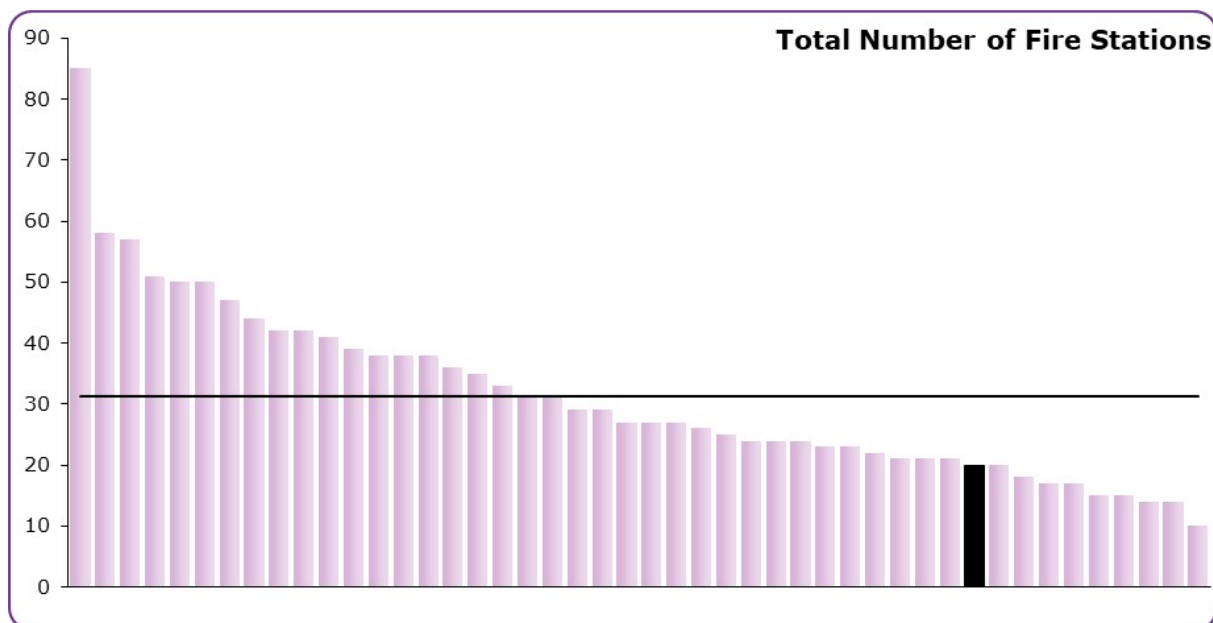
MEETING	Overview and Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	13 March 2019
OFFICER	Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor David Watson
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	CIPFA Benchmarking Report
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The purpose of this report is to highlight the performance of the Service relative to other fire services. The key points to note are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Service is one of the most efficient services in England and Wales when measured on net expenditure per 1,000 population. • Each of our fire stations serves a slightly higher number of the population than average, but covers a slightly smaller land area. This indicates that the number of stations currently held is within a reasonable range. • The number of appliances (including specialist appliances and officer cars) is slightly higher than average both in terms of the population and land area covered. • The number of wholetime operational staff per million population is significantly below the national average. This is because the bank system allows appliances to be made available with fewer staff. This is also one of the primary reasons BFRS is one of the most efficient services. • The number of on-call staff per million population is significantly below the national average, while the number of support staff is almost exactly on the national average. • The number of incidents and our average response time are all broadly in line with the national averages. • The amount of home fire risk checks undertaken per 1,000 dwellings is significantly lower than the national average. Despite this the prevention outcomes for the Service are still positive. • The number of fire safety audits undertaken is below the national average. However, the effectiveness of the audits undertaken is

	significantly greater than the national average. The Service is also increasing the establishment of protection officers to further strengthen this area.
ACTION	Noting
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the report be noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	No direct impact.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	No direct impact.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	No direct impact.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	No direct impact.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	No direct impact.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	No direct impact.
USE OF RESOURCES	No direct impact.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	None
APPENDICES	Annex A – Analysis of CIPFA Benchmarking Report Annex B – CIPFA Benchmarking Report
TIME REQUIRED	15 minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Mark Hemming mhemming@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744687

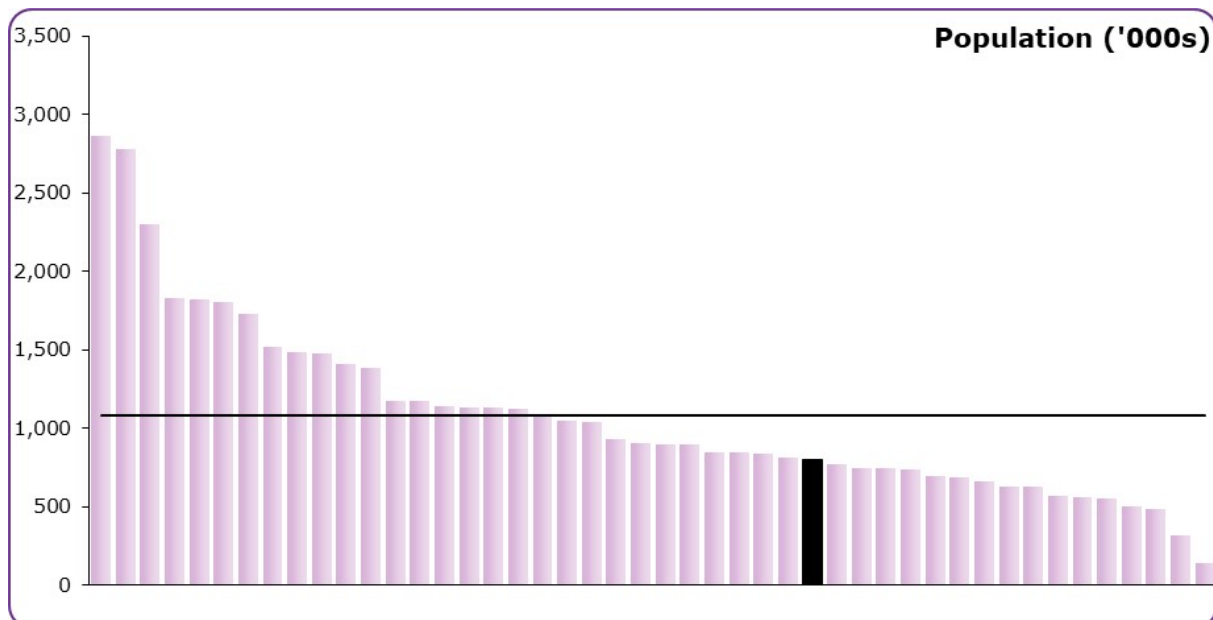
Annex A – Analysis of CIPFA Benchmarking Report

1. Demographics

- 1.1. BFRS has one of the lowest numbers of fire stations within the group, giving an indication of the scale of the service.

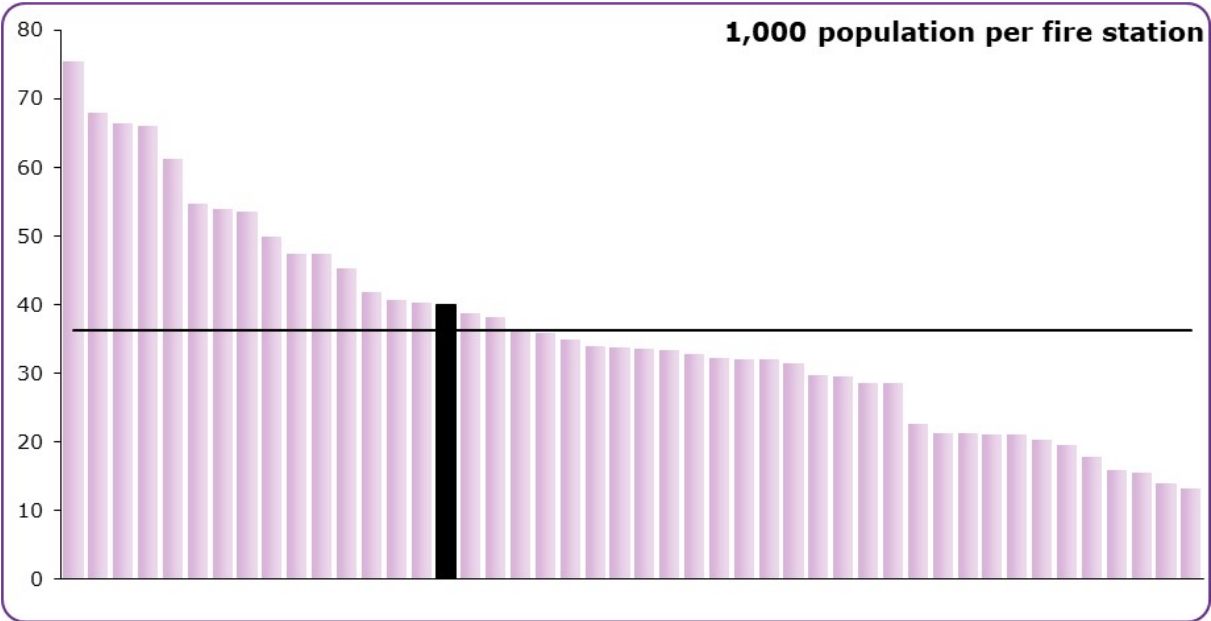


- 1.2. BFRS is the 17th smallest of the 46 authorities in terms of population

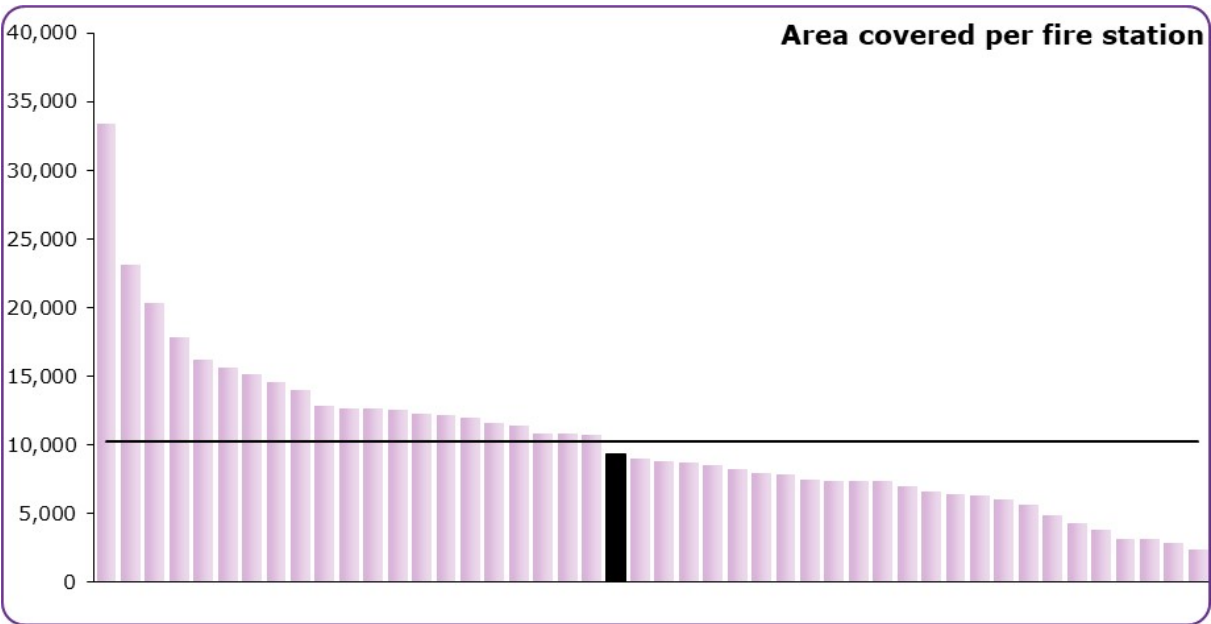


2. Fire Stations and Appliances

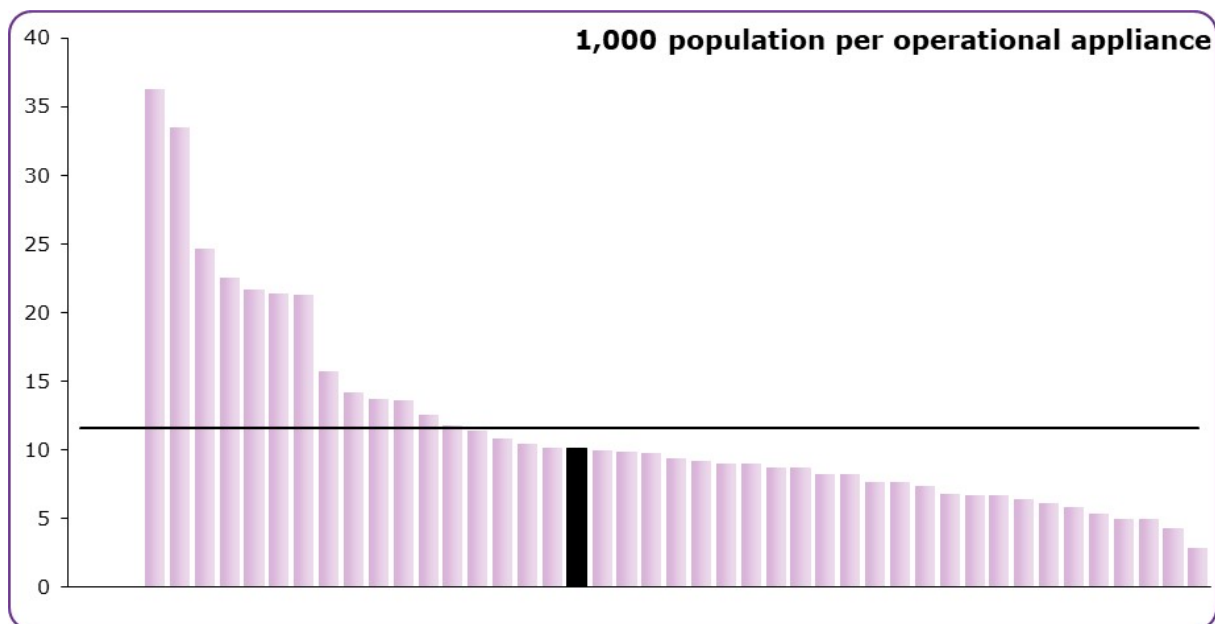
2.1. Each station within BFRS serves a slightly higher number of the population than on average. If Bletchley and Great Holm were to be counted as one station (as they will be upon completion of the Blue Light Hub) then this figure would increase to approximately 42. This gives reassurance that we have the right number of stations compared to the population.



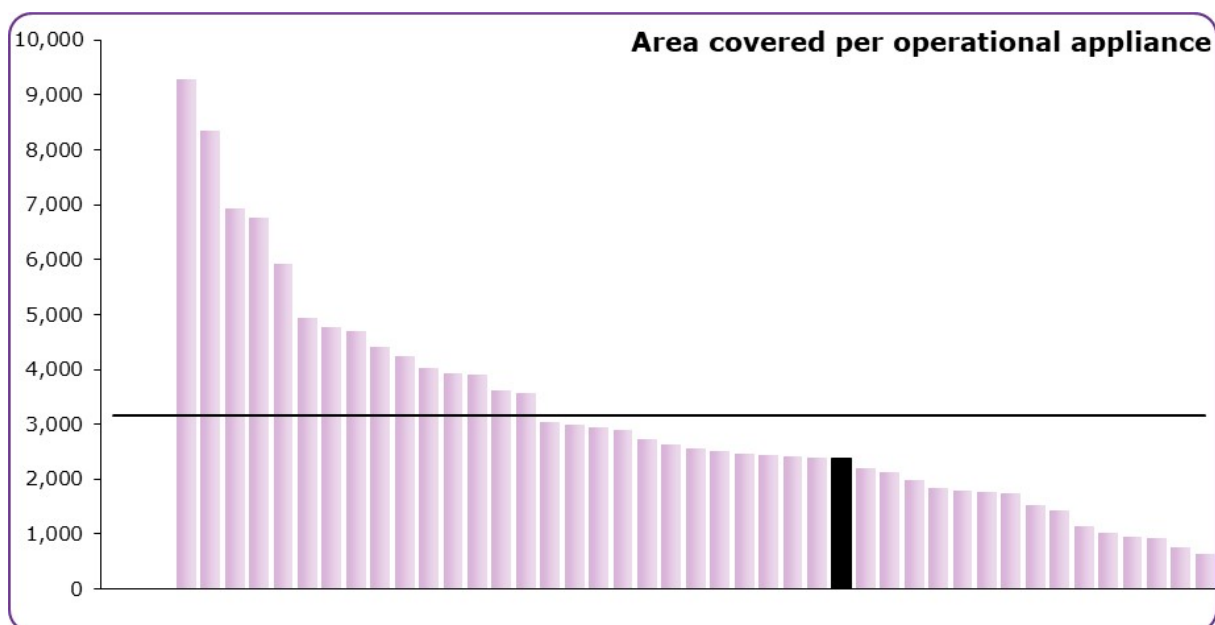
2.2. Each station within BFRS covers a slightly lower area than the national average. In order for each station to cover the same area as the average, BFRS would need to reduce the number of stations to 18.



- 2.3. Each operational appliance (this includes pumping appliances, specialist appliances and officer cars) within BFRS covers a slightly smaller population than the national average. In order to bring BFRS in line with the national average, the number of appliances would need to decrease from 79 to 67.

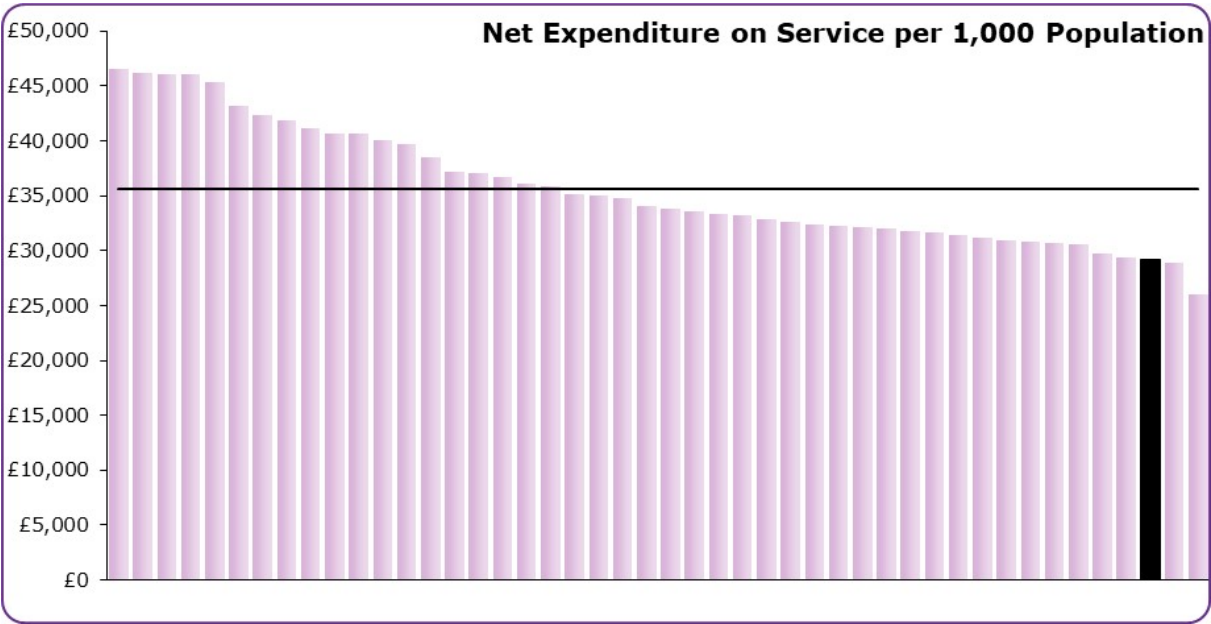


- 2.4. Each operational appliance also covers a smaller area than the national average. In order to bring BFRS in line with the national average on this indicator, the number of operational appliances would need to decrease to 59.

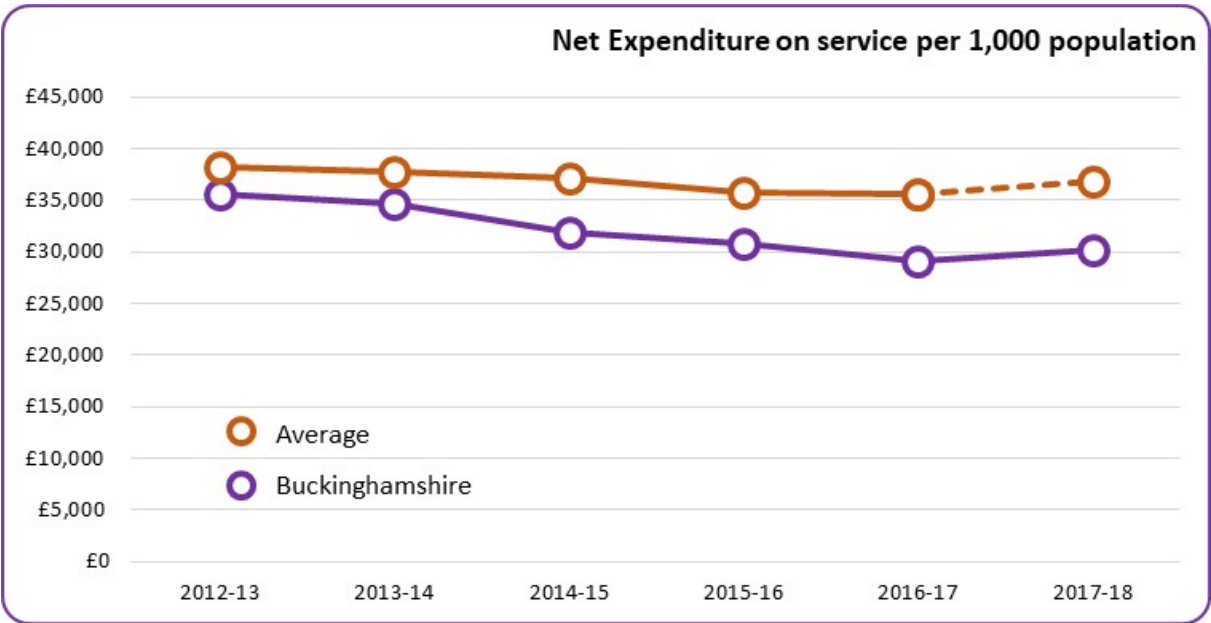


3. Financial Analysis

3.1. The net expenditure per 1,000 population shows that BFRS is one of the most efficient services.

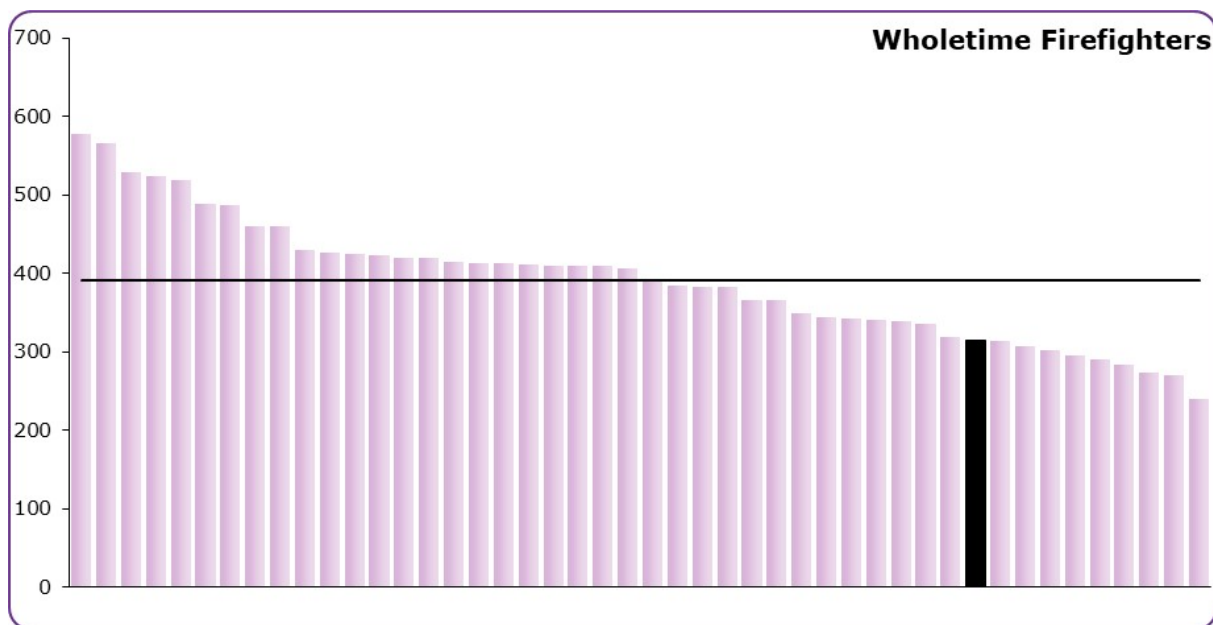


3.2. The time series chart below shows how this measure of cost efficiency has improved against the national average since 2012-13.

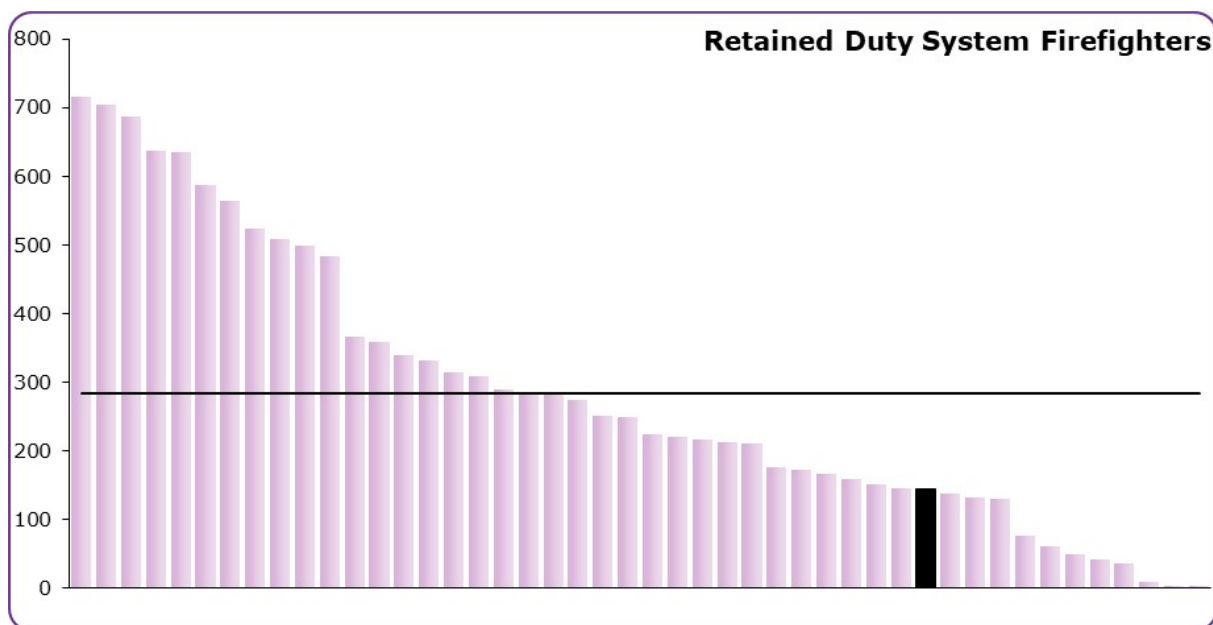


4. Personnel

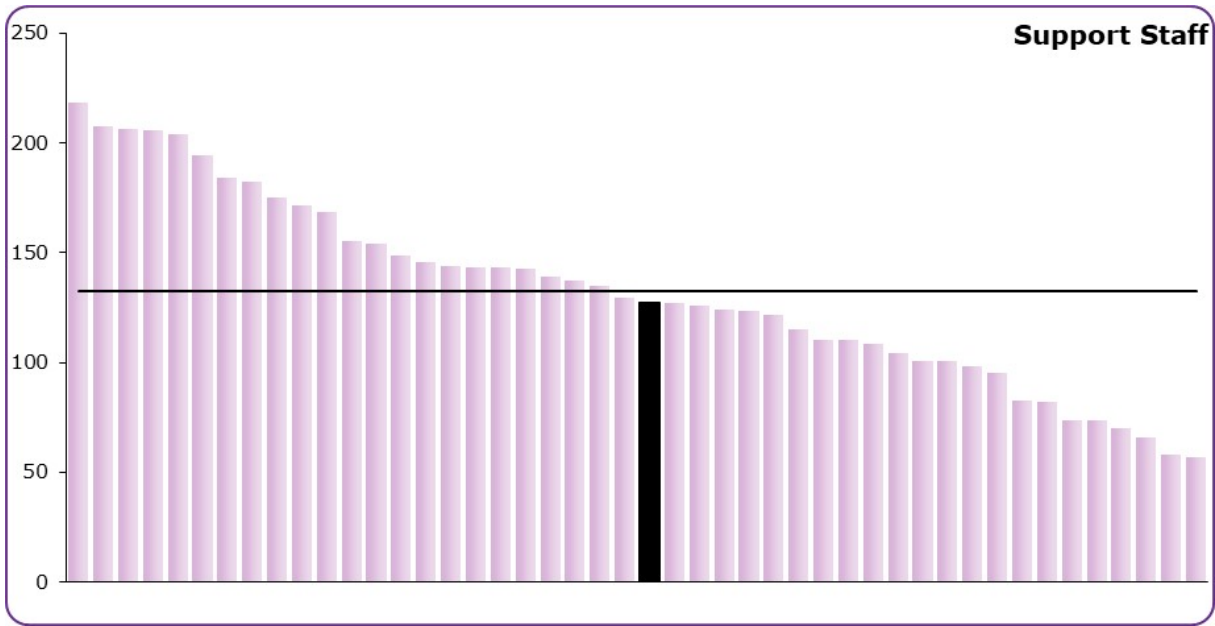
- 4.1. The chart below shows that BFRS has significantly fewer wholetime firefighters than the national average. If BFRS had the same number of wholetime fighters per million population as the national average, this would equate to a 312 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The actual figure was 252 FTEs. This lower number is as a result of the bank system, which ensures staff availability is optimised in line with our operational resourcing model and the requirements identified within the Public Safety Plan.



- 4.2. BFRS has significantly fewer on-call (retained duty system) firefighters than the national average. If BFRS had the same number of on-call fighters per million population as the national average, this would equate to a 227 FTEs. The actual number for BFRS was 116, although this was against a budgeted establishment of 190 FTEs, reflecting the difficult the Service has in recruiting and retaining on-call staff.

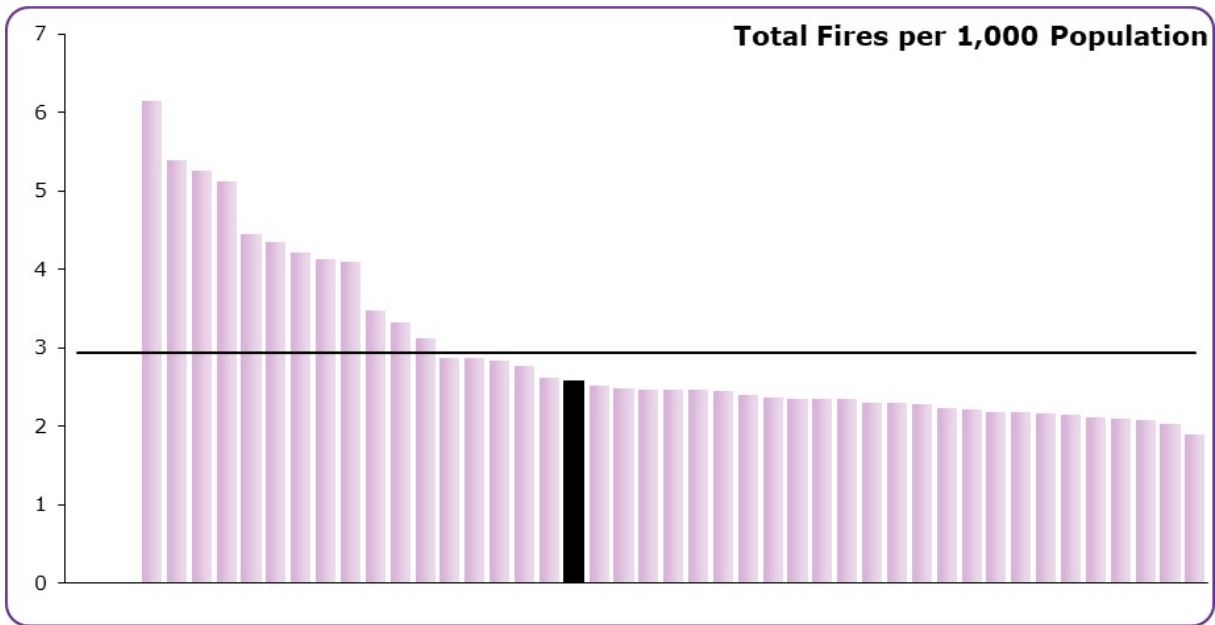


4.3. The chart below shows that BFRS has an average number of support staff per million population.

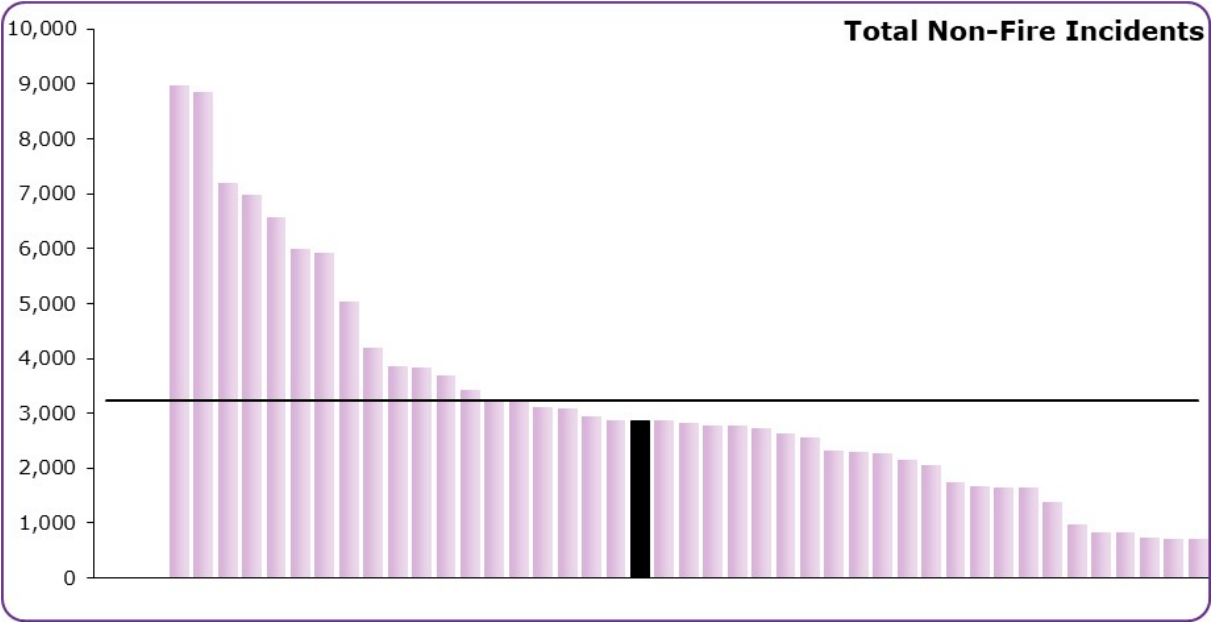


5. Incidents

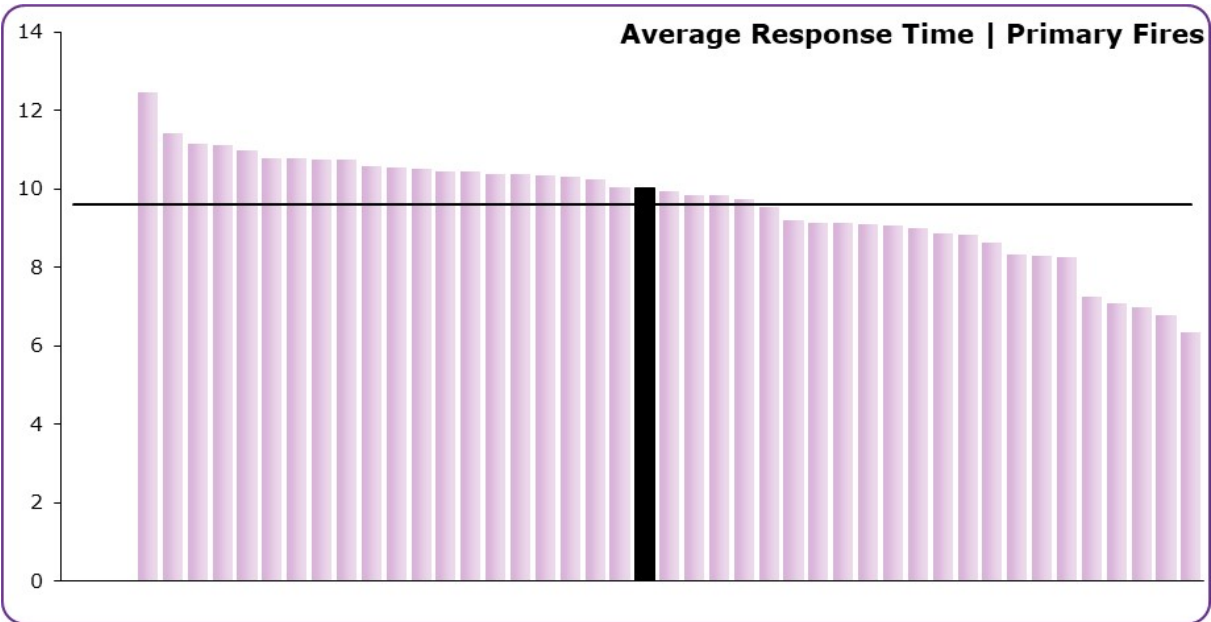
5.1. BFRS has a slightly lower than average number of fire per 1,000 population than the national average.



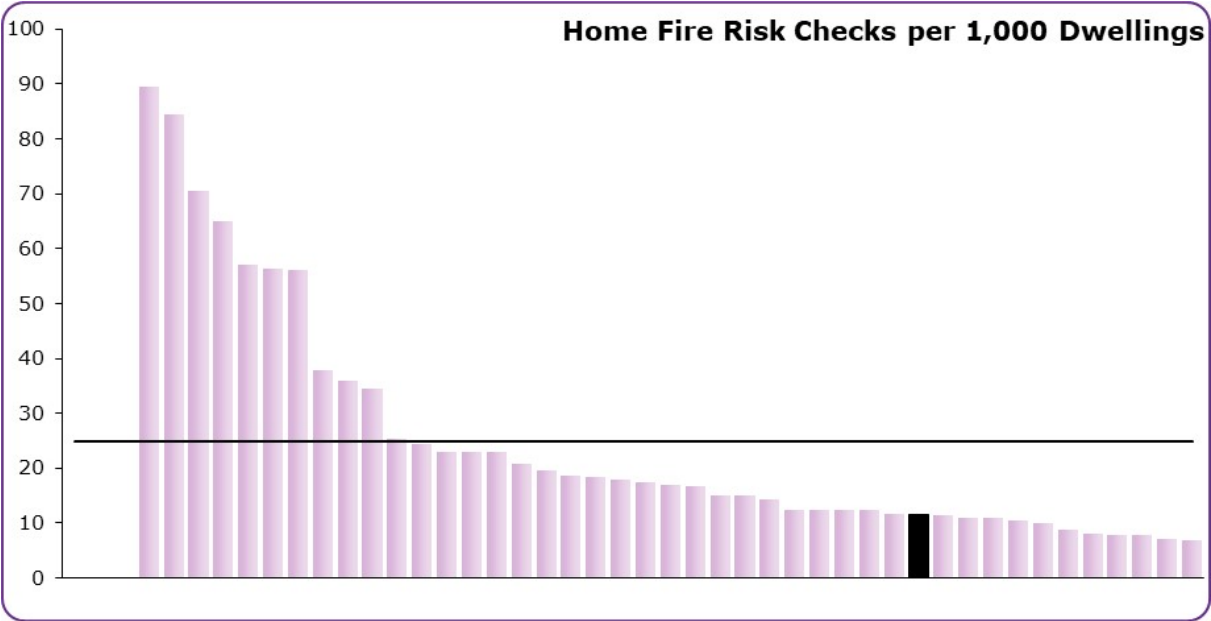
5.2. BFRS also has a slightly lower than average number of non-fire incidents per 1,000 population.



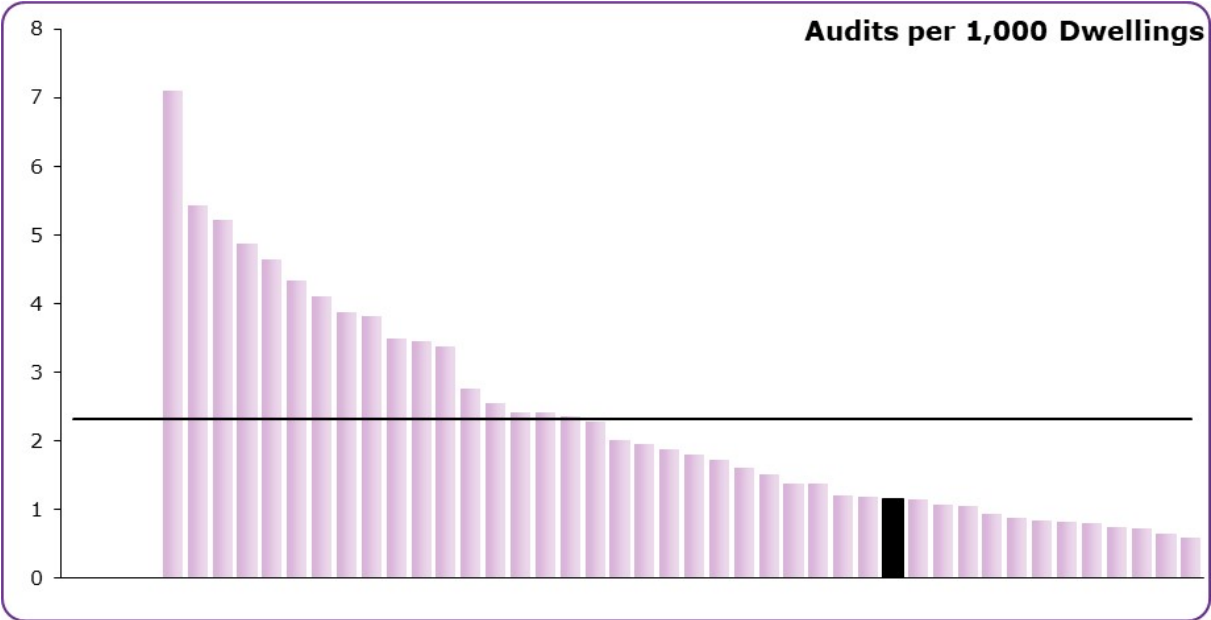
5.3. The chart below shows that BFRS has a slightly longer average response time for primary fires than the national average. There are a number of factors that influence response times outside of services control, such as local geography and road network.



5.4. BFRS undertook significantly fewer home fire risk checks (HFRCs) than the national average. Despite this the prevention outcomes for the Service are still positive.



5.5. The chart below shows that BFRS undertook significantly fewer protection audits than the national average.



- 5.6. Although the number of audits per 1,000 dwellings is much lower than average, the effectiveness of the audits is significantly better than the national average. The charts below show that of the audits undertaken by BFRS, almost two-thirds resulted in unsatisfactory opinions (i.e. the premises need to take action to achieve the required standard). Nationally only one-third of inspections produced this outcome. This demonstrates that BFRS is successfully targeting high-risk premises that are most in need of auditing, and therefore has a much greater beneficial impact on fire safety

