

FBU question.

Agenda item 4, SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE, Page 9, 2.4

Is the authority aware that 10 out of the 16 stations have shown a reduction in availability (As shown in appendix A), with greater responsibility being placed on firefighters that undertake this duty as a secondary employment what is being done to prevent this trend from continuing?

Authority reply.

The Service, along with the wider fire sector, continues to seek solutions to the challenges faced to maintain On-call availability. Over the past 12 months the Authority has invested in a Sustainability of On-call Team, whose sole focus is sustaining and improving On-call availability. The Sustainability Team have a clear objective on improving both the recruitment and retention of all On-call employees.

The On-call performance data contained within today's report covers reporting quarter 2, 1 July to the 30 September 2019. The summer period is always the most challenging time of the year to maintain On-call availability, mainly due to family and school holidays. The Service has done much work to improve On-call availability, the result being that this year's quarter 2 average availability is 1.36% greater than the same period in 2018, with 12 of the 16 stations having improved availability this year compared to the same period in 2018.

The Chief Fire Officer recognises that On-Call appliances provide the highest proportion of fire cover in the service, and the Sustainability team have been tasked to consider alternative On-call models to further improve availability and resilience. To support this, the Service always welcomes further dialogue with Trade Unions to work collectively on improving outcomes for communities, whilst maintaining positive working conditions for staff.