ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

Meeting	Performance & Resources Board	Agenda Item	13
Meeting Date	**31 March 2022**		
Report Author:	Laura Taylor, Project Manager		
Presented By	Moira Bruin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer		
Subject	**On-Call Conversion Project – Station Update**		
Type of Report:	Information		
Action Point No.	N/A	For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper is for information purposes only, there are no recommendations being made at this stage. Previously converted station, Dovercourt has been included in this report as part of the on-going station action plan.
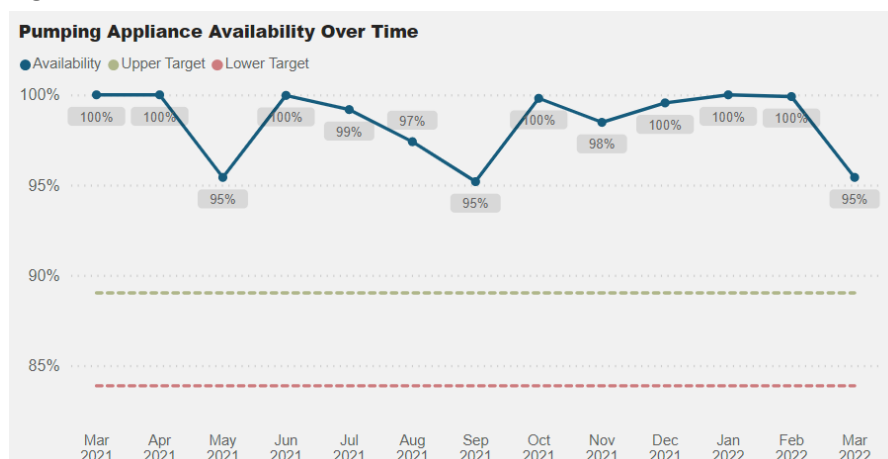
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

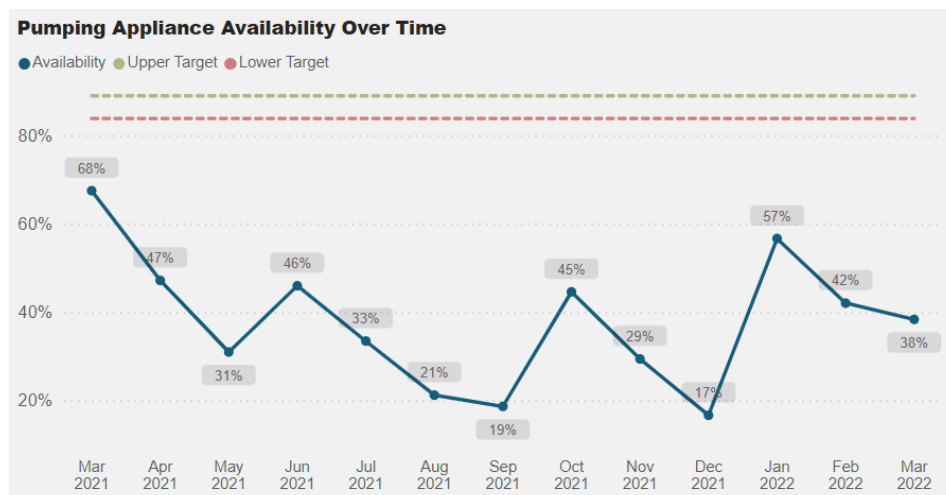The report provides an update on progress with the four stations within the conversion project.

Station	Status	Conversion Date
Dovercourt	*Converted*	31st March 2020
Waltham Abbey	*Converted*	31 July 2021
Great Baddow	*Converted*	31 January 2022
South Woodham Ferrers	In Progress	31 July 2022

BACKGROUND – STATION UPADTES

DOVERCOURT
PUMP 1

PUMP 2

Pumping Appliance Availability Over Time

● Availability ● Upper Target ● Lower Target

Mar 2021: 68%, Apr 2021: 47%, May 2021: 31%, Jun 2021: 46%, Jul 2021: 33%, Aug 2021: 21%, Sep 2021: 19%, Oct 2021: 45%, Nov 2021: 29%, Dec 2021: 17%, Jan 2022: 57%, Feb 2022: 42%, Mar 2022: 38%

Establishment:
- The station currently has:
  - Phase 1 = 10
  - Phase 2 = 3
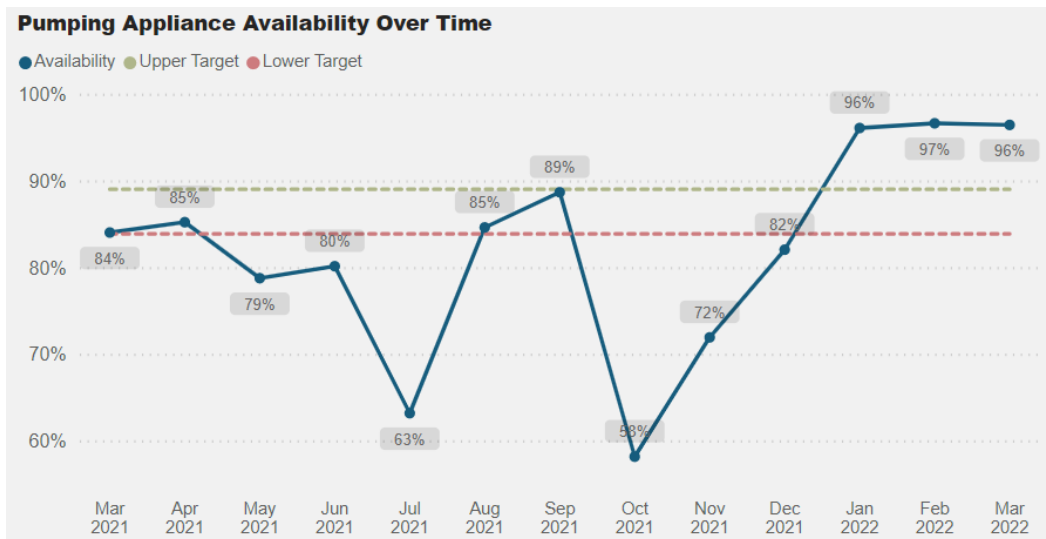 - Phase 3 = 6
    Totalling a headcount of 19

Concerns:
- 2 x firefighters are retiring – one already departed in February and the next one is due to leave at the end of March. Adverts are due out immediately to fill those positions.
- Availability has dropped over the last month due to the recent retirement leaver.
- Officers and driver positions remain the challenge at the station primarily because of the high volume of phase 1 firefighters.

Action Plan/ Progress:
- The current Station Manager (SM) has taken the SM post at Clacton and is due to move in April. A replacement has been appointed, starting on 1st April and will be in place for a full handover before the current SM departs.
- OC WM position has been successfully appointed and will be in post from 15/03/22.
- 6 new candidates are progressing through the system and a further 3 are already booked onto the May Basic Training course.
- The SM has balanced the wholetime embedded Officer drivers to cover days and nights which should improve availability. Effectively they are working a two-day, two-night rota which will improve the officer/driver cover.
- January's basic training course was held at Dovercourt, to raise the profile in the local community. This was a positive move, and a further course is being planned for Dovercourt before August 22.
- The Training Department has given Dovercourt priority status for driving courses and identified candidates will be placed on LGV courses during the latter stages of their phase 2 development in order that they can complete the emergency driving element as soon as they pass into phase 3.
- Support from the OCLOs continue. They attended the station this month engaging with the current O/C staff.

WALTHAM ABBEY

Pumping Appliance Availability Over Time
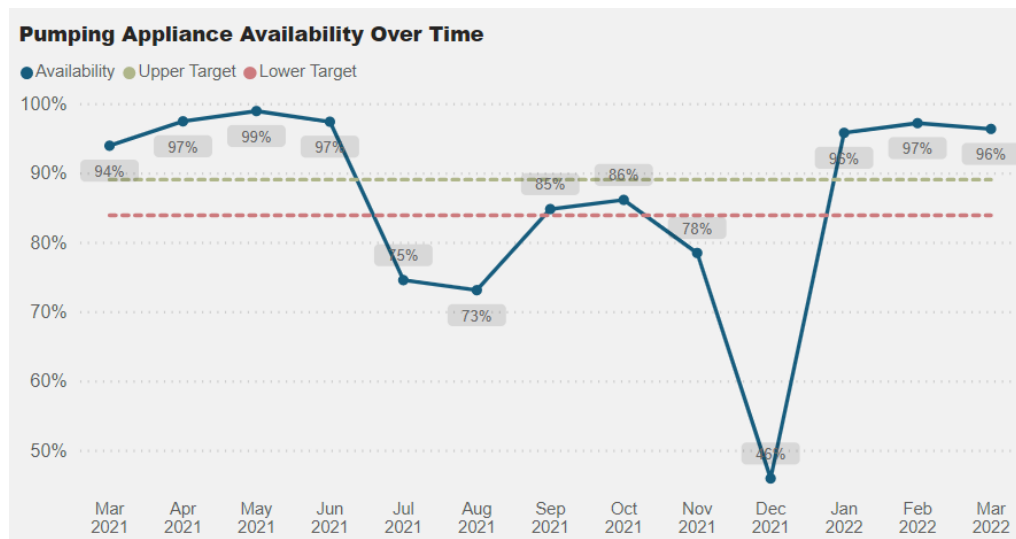● Availability ● Upper Target ● Lower Target

- Since the station converted in July 2021, the availability has increased (apart for the month of October which was due to Covid). Over the last three months, the station has maintained 96% availability and above.
- The station currently has:
  - Phase 3 = 9
  - Phase 1 = 5
    Totalling a headcount of 14
- The culture and morale at station is generally very positive and is improving through the ownership our O/C employees are taking of the station
- Two workshops were held last month to identify and prioritise key KPI's that will get Waltham Abbey to a sustainable On-Call station without the need for embedded officers.
- Training sessions are being facilitated by the embedded officers at Waltham Abbey (who are trained RTCi's) once a month to support the learning and development needs of the station.

GREAT BADDOW

Pumping Appliance Availability Over Time
● Availability ● Upper Target ● Lower Target
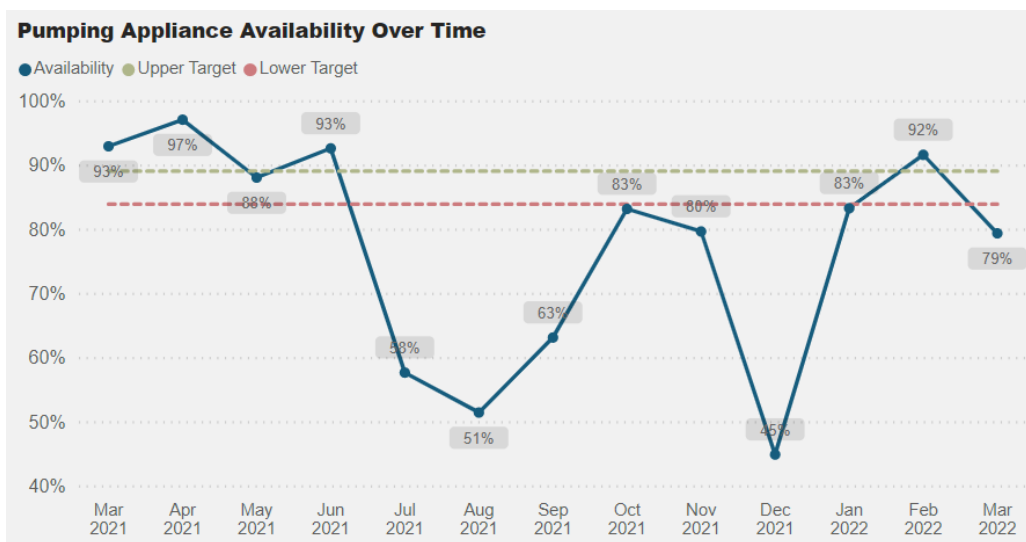
- The station recently converted in January 2022. Since the conversion, the station's availability has risen more so than when it was Day-Crewed. January and February were seen as the highest availability points reaching 92% in February.
- The station currently has
    - Phase 1 = 8
    - Phase 2 = 2
    - Phase 3 = 4
      Totalling a headcount of 14
- There are currently three embedded personnel supporting the transition to maintain the officer and driver cover that is lacking. This is due to most of the O/C not being within the applicable phase for those training capabilities.
- A lessons learned workshop has been carried out post conversion and learning has been captured and included in the wider project log. See the attached log.
- There has been a good transition with all at the station positively engaging with the process.

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS

Pumping Appliance Availability Over Time

● Availability ● Upper Target ● Lower Target

	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022
Availability	94%	97%	99%	97%	75%	73%	85%	86%	78%	46%	96%	97%	96%

Establishment:
- Two recent leavers from the On-Call has reduced our establishment to 5.
- The station currently has:
    - Phase 1 = 3
    - Phase 2 = 1
    - Phase 3 = 1
    - Totalling a headcount of 5

Engagement:
- Regular engagement meetings are continuing for both D/C and O/C employees. We see very positive attendance and feedback from the O/C sessions therefore we are looking at increasing the engagement sessions to monthly, as per their request.

Recruitment:

- Recruitment plans are underway for the next campaign which will include drop-in dates that coincide with the basic training course which is being held at South Woodham station this month. This will raise the profile of the Station in the area, whilst allowing for potential candidates to come and view the course throughout the week.
- There are five planned drop-in sessions scheduled throughout the 2-week basic training course period.
- Targeted leaflets to the surrounding area and social media coverage went live before the course started.
- There is a second course being planned to run at the station for the June squad.
- We've recently had a candidate join who works in the local Asda, who have agreed to release this person when needed. The Station Manager is now going to look at business engagement to explore further opportunities with the supermarket.

Transition Period:

- Adverts for the embedded support positions closed at the end of February, we are extending one advert for the firefighter driver position.
- We've received applications for the WM position and 1 x FF Driver position. The SM is very hopeful with the applicants received for those positions. We will look to move forward with the next stage of that process.

Station Progress Summary – Table 1.1.

This table is up to date as of 16 March 2022.

Station	On-Call Crewing No. This Period		Confidence RAG	Target FTE Crewing No.	
Great Baddow	Headcount	14		Headcount	14
	FTE %	10.5		FTE %	12
	FF on the Run	13		FF on the Run	14
	Officers	2		Officers	4
	Drivers	4		Drivers	6
South Woodham Ferrers	Headcount	5		Headcount	14
	FTE %	6		FTE %	12
	FF on the Run	5		FF on the Run	14
	Officers	0		Officers	4
	Drivers	1		Drivers	6
Waltham Abbey	Headcount	14		Headcount	18
	FTE %	10.5		FTE %	13.5
	FF on the Run	14		FF on the Run	18
	Officers	3		Officers	4
	Drivers	4		Drivers	6
Dovercourt	Headcount	20		Headcount	23
	FTE %	15.5		FTE %	12
	FF on the Run	17		FF on the Run	23
	Officers	3		Officers	6
	Drivers	6		Drivers	14

Wider Project Update

Rep Body Engagement

- We met with our FRSA colleagues in January to engage on the On-Call Conversion Project. We have the next meeting set for March.
- We met our FBU colleagues at the end of January. We have six-weekly meetings scheduled with the FBU until July 2022.

Localised Training

- The Service continues offering more localised training courses for recruits (including basic/initial course). This also reassures the public that their local fire stations being used to train Firefighters who support their local communities. In January our Basic Training Couse was held at Dovercourt, which was a part of the action plan to build the profile in the local community. February saw the course being held at Great Baddow which has converted, and the March course is currently at South Woodham Ferrers. We will utilise our locations to best support the converting station for this year.

Below is the current Risk Register for the OCCP, this is up to date as of 16 March 2022, with all risk and control measure reviews up to date. We continue to have project risk workshops and plan to work with our risk and action owners to ensure effective risk management is taking place.

JCAD

Risk Register (current-target) v4

Service Unit: Change

Risk Ref	Risk Event/Description	Category	Nature of Risk	Current Risk Rating	Controlled Risk Rating	Risk Owner	Risk Status	Review Date	Date Last Reviewd	Days Overdue
ONCON0014	There is a risk that the organisation will not be able to train required number of recruits.	Unassigned	Unassigned	12	9	Colette Black	Treat	31/12/2022	11/01/2022	0
ONCON0025	There is a risk that current tolerance levels for allowing members of staff to be available over the working time directive which could have legal implications for the organisations.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	3	Neil Fenwick	Treat	02/05/2022	02/02/2022	0
ONCON0013	There is a risk that the Service are unable to attract and recruit sufficient number of On-Call employees within the required time frames to enable a full conversion from day crew to On-Call.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	9	Colette Black	Issue	16/04/2022	16/03/2022	0
ONCON0020	There is a risk that changes in organisational/strategic direction and policies might impact the project.	Unassigned	Unassigned	8	8	Moira Bruin	Tolerate	16/04/2022	16/01/2022	0
ONCON0018	There is a risk that changes in funding will impact project delivery.	Unassigned	Emergency Response	6	6	Neil Cross	Treat	16/04/2022	16/03/2022	0
ONCON0015	There is a risk that the project will not be achieved as a phased approach due to insufficient number of employees and appropriate experience to support transition.	Unassigned	Unassigned	6	6	Neil Fenwick	Treat	16/04/2022	16/03/2022	0
ONCON0021	There is a risk that there will be insufficient internal resources to deliver the project without overly impacting BAU activity	Unassigned	Unassigned	6	6	Neil Fenwick	Treat	11/04/2022	11/02/2022	0

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

These are the following links to the FRP:

- ***Prevention, Protection & Response*** – The recruitment of O/C to the converting stations, directly supports our station availability and meeting our response standards as detailed in our Response Strategy. We need to maintain the prevention, protection, and response that the day crewed stations have held and carry this through to the new duty system.
- ***Be transparent, Open, and Accessible*** – the project team undertakes numerous steps to engage and consult with all affected personnel within scope of the project. This includes current day crew and O/C employees existing and new. We continue to be accessible throughout this project journey.
- ***Promote a positive culture in the workplace*** – We remain true to this undertaken the recruitment of new O/C colleagues into the service and working with our day crewed employees.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Case law has demonstrated that there is a legal imperative to move from our current Day crewed systems.

- Matzaks ruling on standby duty – this opens a challenge to employees providing O/C cover deemed to be in positive hours. One of the key defences to the Service on this matter is flexibility on being able to book off and on when fulfilling the O/C element of your contract. Largely this facility does not exist within the Day-crewed model.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

All our current agreed embedded transitional support positions are based on a period of 12 months with an evaluation point at 6 months.

Consideration should be included in whether there needs to be further extensions on the current embedded personnel at the stations. The project team have pulled together a funding paper for FY 22/23 that covers the length of time that stations will require the support.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

We have considered whether individuals with protected *characteristics will be* disadvantaged as a consequence of the actions being taken. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

Race	*No*	*Religion or belief*	*No*
Sex	*No*	*Gender reassignment*	*No*
Age	*No*	*Pregnancy & maternity*	*No*
Disability	*No*	*Marriage and Civil Partnership*	*No*
Sexual orientation	*No*		

However, in line with Service policy, action plans which impact on our people will be people impact assessed. All action taken following this paper will be in line with our Service policies and procedures around equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are none specific to this report.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Key stakeholders continue to be involved in the project.

Station Managers and Group Managers of converting stations are invited to attend monthly meetings to discuss plans, progress, and issues.

Face to face meetings with South Woodham Ferrers are taking place and are scheduled at a monthly and bi-monthly frequency with both On-Call and Day Crewed duty system.

On-Call Liaison Officers and Project Team continue to engage with key stakeholders, ensuring the appropriate information is provided in the right way, to the right people, at the right time.

We are focussing greater emphasis on communication with O/C members of the converting stations to ensure that they feel part of the conversion journey with regular face to face meetings held on training nights.

FUTURE PLANS

Future planning continues for the conversion of the remaining station, working closely with the station management team. We will continue to re-visit lessons learned from previous converting stations along the way.

Recruitment activity remains a key focus for all stations and understanding the availability that is required at each station.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

None to note.

1.2 Lessons Learned for Great Baddow 8 March 2022.

ID #	Lessons Learned/Feedback	Category
	Great Baddow - Converted 31 January 2022	
LLGB001	Regular communication and engagement are key.	Engagement
LLGB002	Need to have acceptance of change on the station with the individuals involved.	Culture
LLGB003	Embedded support needs to be placed in sooner than the conversion date - to be better prepared and understand the station better.	Project
LLGB004	Compensatory leave caused issues with availability.	Station Planning
LLGB005	Handover from Day Crewed to On-Call needs to be longer process. Needs to be factored in as part of the conversion process.	Station Planning
LLGB006	Culture needs to be positive at the station - acceptance plays a big part.	Culture
LLGB007	Don't over promise things - then they don't happen - this creates an effect at the station.	Engagement
LLGB008	Put the right embedded people in the station.	Station Planning
LLGB009	Be clear and honest with the station and local community.	Engagement
LLGB010	Timescales of the conversion project - don't move the dates - it has the potential to drag on.	Project
LLGB011	Decision to do all the stations separately - was the right decision. Too big to do more than one at the same time.	Project
LLGB012	Be honest about what is achievable for the project.	Project
LLGB013	Feedback to the people at station.	Engagement
LLGB014	More engagement there is with the station, the lesser the questions to the lead up to the conversion.	Engagement
LLGB015	Our ability to challenge one another as a project and station we take it all well.	Project
LLGB016	Openness as a team has really worked.	Project
LLGB017	Be clear on the intentions of the project and when it's going to happen.	Project
LLGB018	Keep the DC and OC engagement sessions separate as these are their own spaces to speak and ask questions.	Engagement
LLGB019	Overlap the embedded staff and the current station personnel.	Station Planning
LLGB020	Culture at the station represents the retention of the OC that are still there.	Culture
LLGB021	Regular contacts with potential candidates have been very effective for the recruitment at the station.	OCLO Support
LLGB022	Management of the station creates the culture, that makes people want to stay.	Culture
LLGB023	Consistent activity on social Media platform.	Media / Comms
LLGB024	Have a dedicated person at the station in charge of social media activity.	Media / Comms
LLGB025	We can't just leave the station once converted - we need to mature for a period of time.	Station Planning
LLGB026	Earning potential changes once the station is converted - make sure they are aware of this when it comes to conversion.	Station Planning
LLGB027	Training courses made priority for the converted stations - this needs to be for a longer period	Project