

Public Document Pack

Becky Shaw
Chief Executive

If calling please ask for:

Natalie Jones-Punch on 033 022 25098
Email: natalie.jones-punch@westsussex.gov.uk

www.westsussex.gov.uk

County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RQ
Switchboard
Tel no (01243) 777100



12 October 2020

Cabinet

A virtual meeting of the Cabinet will be held at **10.30 am** on **Tuesday, 20 October 2020**.

Note: In accordance with regulations in response to the current public health emergency, this meeting will be held virtually with members in remote attendance. Public access is via webcasting.

The meeting will be available to watch live via the Internet at this address:

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Agenda

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|----------|----|--|
| 10.30 am | 1. | <p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.</p> |
| 10.35 am | 2. | <p>Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)</p> <p>Cabinet Members are asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 (attached, cream paper).</p> |
| 10.40 am | 3. | <p>Urgent Matters</p> <p>Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances.</p> |
| 10.45 am | 4. | <p>For Decision: Scope of services for a proposed Children's Trust (Pages 9 - 20)</p> <p>The Cabinet is asked to approve the proposals set out in the attached key decision report.</p> |

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will introduce the report.

The Chairman of the specially established Task and Finish Group will be invited to summarise the Group's deliberations on the proposals.

Each of the main Opposition Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes each on the report.

The Cabinet will then discuss the report and the proposals prior to taking any decision.

11.15 am 5. **For debate and discussion: Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance and Annual Report** (Pages 21 - 74)

The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities will introduce the reports.

The Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee will be invited to speak for up to three minutes to provide the views of their Committee on the content of the reports.

Each of the main Opposition Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes each on the reports.

Cabinet Members will be asked to review and note the Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance and Annual Report 2019/20.

11.45 am 6. **For debate and discussion: West Sussex County Council Response to Covid-19** (Pages 75 - 86)

The Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the Council's response to the Covid-19 emergency as set out in the report.

Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and each of the main Opposition Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes on the Council's response to the Covid-19 emergency.

Cabinet Members may respond to comments made and the Leader may sum up the discussion.

12.25 pm 7. **Emerging Issues**

Cabinet Members are invited to provide any verbal updates on current significant issues for their respective portfolios which may benefit from discussion.

12.35 pm 8. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on 24 November 2020.

To all members of the Cabinet

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Cabinet

15 September 2020 – At a virtual meeting of the Cabinet held at 10.30 am with restricted public access.

Present: Cllr Marshall (Chairman)

Cllr Crow, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Russell and Cllr Urquhart

Apologies were received from

Also in attendance: Cllr Barrett-Miles, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr M Jones, Cllr Turner, Cllr Waight and Cllr Walsh

29. Declarations of Interest

29.1 In accordance with the code of conduct the following personal interest was declared:

- Cllr Nigel Jupp as a member of Horsham District Council in relation to item 4, Horsham Fire Station and Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre.

30. Minutes of the last meeting

30.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

31. Horsham Fire Station and Fire & Rescue Service Training Centre (CAB07_20/21)

31.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director Place Services and Chief Fire Officer.

31.2 The report was introduced by Cllr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities who outlined the need for the proposal in the context of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and recent HMIC Inspection and the service and community benefits of the proposal.

31.3 Cllr Joy Dennis, Chairman of the Horsham Fire Station Task and Finish Group Committee welcomed the decision and felt that it should proceed at pace.

31.4 Cllr Steve Waight, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee noted that the operational need for the station and training facility had been required for some time and referred to the financial implications of a do nothing option, and the increase in training requirements.

31.5 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group welcomed the decision and asked about the impact on response times for the second appliance at Horsham and about access to the technical and

rescue assets currently contained at Horley. The Chief Fire Officer responded to the questions.

31.6 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour group asked whether this was the right priority at the current time and whether all effects been successfully mitigated. He noted the annual interest payments required and questioned whether this money could be spent on on-call firefighter crews.

31.7 The Leader thanked the TFG for their deliberations on the proposal and the support for the service investment plans and noted it as a critical decision for the safety of West Sussex residents. He highlighted the commitment to improved resources and training facilities for firefighters, effectively equipping the service and providing resilience into the future.

32.8 Resolved – that Cabinet:

1. Endorses the delivery of Horsham Fire Station and FRS Training Centre at Highwood in Horsham with the allocation of £20.85m and additional design fees of £461,000 from the capital programme to fund the completion of the project
2. Authorises the submission of applications for full planning permission for the project;
3. subject to receipt of planning permission to enter into a construction contract with Willmott Dixon through the Southern Construction Framework and
4. Confirms that the Fire and Rescue assets at Horley and Hurst Road Horsham and part of the site at Worthing, as detailed in the report, are declared surplus to all operational use.

32. Q1 Total Performance Monitor (CAB08_20/21)

32.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services.

32.2 The report was introduced by Cllr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance who highlighted the stark financial reality of the impact of Covid-19 and the significant impact on the economy. The Director of Finance and Support Services, Katharine Eberhart, outlined the effect of Covid-19 on performance targets, and the suspensions or changes to those targets to recognise the impact of the pandemic on performance.

32.3 Cllr Joy Dennis, Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee noted the financial position in the first quarter TPM and recognised the requirement to suspend some performance measures in this context. She highlighted the care market pressures and increase in demand in the Children and Young People's Services portfolio in particular. The Committee recommended that the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee review audit planning to highlight at the earliest opportunity issues in operational control processes.

32.4 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group noted the impact of Covid-19 on sickness figures due to stress and anxiety and felt the welfare and mental health of Council employees should be a priority for Cabinet.

He noted the impact of Covid-19 on health visits and asked if these were being undertaken virtually, the availability of respite care and mentioned the local concern at the scale of tree-felling due to Ash Dieback.

32.5 Resolved – that Cabinet approves the proposed amendments to the performance indicators set out on pages 40 to 43 to reflect the suspension of a number of performance measures resulting from Covid-19 and new and amended targets for Children, Young People and Learning.

33. Appointments to Outside Bodies (CAB09_20/21)

33.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Law and Assurance.

33.2 Resolved – that Cabinet approves:

1. The addition of the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group to the County Council's Outside Bodies list.
2. The appointment of Cllr Roger Elkins to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group for the remainder of the County Council term (May 2021).

34. West Sussex County Council Response to Covid-19

34.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive. The report was introduced by Becky Shaw, Chief Executive who highlighted the growing concern caused by the limited laboratory capacity in the South East region for testing. She highlighted the fundamental for testing to enable the effective management of any local outbreak.

34.2 Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health advised that the number of cases in West Sussex had increased, however rates per 100 thousand were low. She added that outbreak management was well organised and that essential guidance regarding hygiene and social distancing should continue to be strictly followed. She hoped the availability of testing would increase in the next five to six weeks but that currently demand was outstripping supply.

34.3 The Director of Education and Skills, Paul Wagstaff, outlined that the return to school had been managed safely and effectively with high levels of pupils attending which were above the national average in West Sussex.

34.4 Cllr Joy Dennis, Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee said that the level of testing was a concern and required in order to keep schools and businesses open. She welcomed the good work undertaken by the Education and Skills directorate to enable a safe environment for children to return to school.

34.5 Cllr Andrew Barrett-Miles, Chairman of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee welcomed the update and congratulated the efforts of the Highways directorate for their work now and into the future.

34.6 Cllr Bryan Turner, Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee noted the TFG underway considering the varying responses to the pandemic. He highlighted the commitment to staff in the health and care sectors and thanked them for their hard work. He raised the national pressures on testing capacity, and finally noted the importance of clear and factual messaging regarding and local outbreaks.

34.7 Cllr Steve Waight, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee noted the better response times in the service due to an increased number of available retained firefighters and the impact on some inspection work.

34.8 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group suggested a more up to date picture of cases would have been useful and said that West Sussex residents were being put at risk due to capacity issues, and asked whether this encouraged more movement and increased public health risks. He commented on the vulnerability of teaching staff.

34.9 The Leader summarised that laboratory testing capacity was the biggest challenge for the Council at the current time, and that this made it difficult to properly grasp the extent of local cases. He advised the issue had been raised with Members of Parliament and in other appropriate public health forums to lobby for West Sussex.

34.10 Resolved – that Cabinet note the update and discussion, including comments from scrutiny chairman and minority group leaders in the council's response to the covid-19 pandemic.

35. Date of Next Meeting

35.1 The next meeting of Cabinet would be held on 20 October 2020.

The meeting ended at 1.07 pm

Chairman

Key decision: Yes
Unrestricted
Ref: CAB10 (20/21)

Cabinet

20 October 2020

Scope of services for a proposed Children's Trust

Report by Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

Following the Ofsted judgement of Children's Services in May 2019, a Commissioner was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education. His report (October 2019) concluded that the Council did not have the capacity or capability to deliver improved children's services and recommended that an Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) should be created in the form of a Children's Trust removing the direct control of the service from the County Council. The Secretary of State subsequently directed the County Council to establish a Children's Trust.

This report sets out the plans and processes for the setting up of the Trust. It covers the areas over which the County Council has discretion for the form and content of the Trust, recommends particular options for these and explains the implications of the Trust for the Council's responsibilities for Children's Services and the role of elected members.

The plans for the Trust and how it will operate will be captured in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department for Education (DfE) which will be finalised in due course. Some aspects are either prescribed by the DfE or may need to meet certain expectations raised by the DfE which requires assurance the Trust will have operational independence. Whilst the details will remain open for review and revision as the project develops the MoU will set the preferred direction or travel for the Trust and the approach the Council invites the DfE to agree.

The DfE will meet the costs of the set-up of a Children's Trust. These must be set out in a document for submission to the DfE which shows how they have been incurred.

Once the proposals in this report have been agreed they will be captured in a final draft MoU for agreement with the DfE. The work for the establishment of the Trust will then be carried through to the proposed implementation date.

The MoU needs to be signed off by the Secretary of State and so many of the proposals set out in the report and which will be included in the draft MoU have been prepared as part of close working with the DfE.

Recommendations

- (1) The Cabinet is invited to approve the proposals for the principal provisions for the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education as the basis for the establishment of a Children's Trust in accordance with the Direction given to the Council by the Secretary of State for Education.
 - (2) That authority is given to the Chief Executive to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education based on the proposals for inclusion as approved by the Cabinet.
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Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 Following the Ofsted inspection report on services in May 2019, the Secretary of State for Education issued the County Council with a Direction under section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996 and appointed a Commissioner, John Coughlan CBE, to prepare a report on how best to secure improvement in these services. The Commissioner subsequently reported on various shortcomings in the Council and in the delivery of children's services, which the County Council fully accepted and committed to address.
- 1.2 The Commissioner identified a number of areas of deficit in the Council's arrangements for and the standards of its Children's Services. His report also raised concerns about the constitutional position of the role of Director of Children's Services and about specific aspects of the Council's governance and culture which were considered to impede the Council's capability and capacity to achieve improvement to its Children's Services within a reasonable timescale. In the light of his findings, the Commissioner recommended that an Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) should be established to achieve sustainable improvement in the delivery of children's services in West Sussex. In considering options for an ADM, the Commissioner recommended that it take the form of a Children's Trust a model used in a number of other Councils across the country placed in a similar situation.
- 1.3 This is consistent with the DfE presumption that, in cases of persistent or systemic failure, children's social care service provision will be taken out of direct local authority control. The County Council accepted the Commissioner's findings, and the Secretary of State subsequently (November 2019) issued a second Direction to the Council to make preparations for the establishment of a Trust, working with the then reappointed Commissioner, John Coughlan. The Commissioner will also have a critical role in advising on and supporting the proposals for the Trust as set out in this report and so he has been engaged in the oversight of that work as a member of a Project Board chaired by the Chief Executive.

The County Council's response

- 1.4 The County Council was directed to work closely with the Commissioner and made a strong commitment to respond purposefully to the Ofsted verdict, and later to the Commissioner's report, politically, culturally and operationally. This is reflected in four key areas of activity since May 2019:

- i) To address the concern about the constitutional position of the Director of Children's Services in September 2019 the County Council brought all its Children's Social Care, Early Help and Education functions together within a new Executive Directorate of Children, Young People and Learning, with the Executive Director reporting directly to the Chief Executive. The Executive Director also holds the statutory function of the Director of Children's Services (DCS). The effect of this is to give children's services the correct profile and status at a strategic level within the Council and to ensure that the needs of children and young people receive comprehensive and holistic accountability across the Council within a single department.
- ii) The Commissioner was charged with overseeing the process of service improvement within Children's Services and this was reflected in the establishment in November 2019 of a statutory service Improvement Board, chaired by the Commissioner to replace the voluntary board that previously operated from June 2019. Hampshire County Council was appointed to be West Sussex's partner-in-practice, and a comprehensive programme of service improvement commenced, based on the twelve areas identified in the Ofsted report and overseen by the Improvement Board. The Council's Leader and lead member for Children and Young People have played an active role as members of the Board and the lead member has reported service improvement progress to each meeting of the County Council since the establishment of the Board.
- iii) At the same time, the County Council has laid plans for the comprehensive review of Children's Services, including a clear statement of the professional standards to be expected within the service; the creation of a new 'social work offer' to achieve resilience and continuity in the workforce; and the adoption of a new Service Model based on best practice. These changes are being led by a newly constituted, permanent senior management team, under Lucy Butler, the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning who was appointed from April 2020.
- iv) A number of initiatives were taken to address the identified failings in corporate culture and governance. Concerns over collective responsibility and transparency at Cabinet level were dealt with by the implementation from December 2019 of monthly public cabinet meeting at which key corporate decisions and plans are debated and determined. A review of the scrutiny function and the operation and role of the Corporate Parenting Panel were also undertaken and implemented. An externally led review of the Council's culture and governance (the 'good governance review') commenced in February 2020 and, after wide engagement with officers and across elected members, has led to a range of commitments to change which will support sustained improvement through openly addressing the areas of concern the Council has acknowledged.

- 1.5 In complying with the Secretary of State's Direction, the County Council has made initial preparations for the establishment of a Children's Trust, the subject of this report. To support this undertaking a specialist external consultancy was engaged to advise the Council and support the detailed work to set up a Trust. Specialist external lawyers have also been engaged. This has led to the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding with the DfE which is based on the principal elements outlined within this report. Work on the proposals has been overseen by a project Board chaired by the Chief Executive and including the

Commissioner. A project working group has managed the development of the work required to bring the proposals forward.

- 1.6 In a presentation to all members of the Council on 3 September 2020, the Commissioner confirmed that he has formed a favourable view of the Council's commitment to change and the energy that has been shown in taking the Children's Services improvement agenda forward so far, and he endorses the Council's direction of travel.

2 The role and status of the Trust and its relationship with the Council

- 2.1 The Children's Trust will be a separate legal entity for the delivery of children's services in West Sussex, being a wholly owned subsidiary of the County Council, but having operational independence from the Council. The Trust will be set up in a form which allows the Council to award a service contract directly and without open competition. This means that a special relationship would be maintained between the Trust and the County Council, whereby the Council would obtain defined services exclusively from the Trust through the service contract. Its governance would be through a Trust Board, comprising executive and non-executive directors, with the Board Chair requiring to be a DfE appointment. The Trust's Chief Executive would be its executive lead.
- 2.2 The Trust would be operationally independent of the Council, with its performance being overseen by its Board. Nonetheless the County Council would retain statutory accountability for the delivery of children's services in West Sussex holding the Trust to account through a robust service level agreement and performance framework. The Council's Cabinet and lead member would retain leadership for that accountability and the Council's scrutiny function would continue to support that democratic accountability.
- 2.3 The Trust would function as an arm's length company under Council control. Through this arrangement the Council would be allowed to commission services through defined service agreements exclusively from the Trust. The same commercial arrangements would provide for the funding of the Trust and set out the checks and balances for budgetary planning and decisions by the Trust within the arrangements required to ensure Council oversight and value for money in commissioning the services.
- 2.4 It is intended that the Council will ensure that it receives value for money in these commissioning arrangements. The service contract would outline a series of key performance indicators and mechanisms for holding the company to account for the quality of delivery. This would include performance monitoring, escalation processes and termination procedures in the event of underperformance. The detail of this would be agreed during the implementation process. Whilst the contractual relationship would be between the Council and the Trust, the DfE requires rights around some critical decisions related to the contract while the Statutory Direction remains in place, for example around termination of the contract and any major service changes.

Proposals for the Scope of Services for the Children's Trust, start date and operating period - matters for decision by Cabinet

- 2.5 The DfE's Direction requires the Trust to have operational control of all of the Council's social care services for children. It is for the Council to determine whether other services for children, including early help and services within the

field of education and schools should be added so as to establish a comprehensive service model. The benefits of bringing together children's social care, early help and education services under the reforms mentioned in section 1.4 above, are already being felt in terms of developing an integrated focus on the needs of children and young people through closer partnership cooperation; the opportunity to join up services more closely to benefit children and families; streamlining the associated processes; and reframing the service model and identity. From this perspective it is therefore proposed that a Children's Trust be established to include the full range of services for children into its portfolio to reflect the current structure within the Council and to enable a focus on outcomes for children. This approach should be included in the Memorandum of Understanding. To transfer only children's social care to the Trust and retain education services and school support in the Council would place at risk the significant benefits of their integration and compromise the changes implemented in response to the Commissioner's report. The range of associated and support services to enable the effective working of the Trust's operations would remain within the Council and deliver services through service level agreements with the Trust.

Length of Trust operation and commencement

- 2.6 It is for the Council to agree how long the Trust should initially be planned to operate. The primary aim of the Trust is to secure and maintain improved children's services. The Direction from the DfE for a Trust to remain in place will only be reviewed once those improvements can be seen to be sustained. This is likely to take a period of around three to five years. In light of the need to reflect this realistic time frame for sustained improvement and to enable the Trust to have a reasonable timeframe for service planning and implementation it is proposed that the service contract would run for an initial period of five years, thereby defining the proposed lifetime of the Trust, although this timeframe could be reviewed at any point and further discussed with the DfE as service performance and its sustainability is monitored.
- 2.7 It is further proposed that the Trust becomes operational from 1st October 2021. This is sufficiently soon to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the model and its value in achieving service improvements whilst providing a realistic time frame within which to carry out the extensive consultation, engagement and implementation activity the establishment of the Trust requires. These include the staff transfers, the establishment of service level agreements and budget arrangements and the setting up of the company and its board, initially in shadow form, before the transfer of operational service control.

Trust Board, leadership, articles of association and relationship to the Council

- 2.8 The DfE sets a number of requirements to ensure the Trust has operational independence from the Council whilst recognising the overall control the Council will need to maintain to enable it properly to procure services exclusively from the company. The Board Chair will be appointed by the DfE but the Council will be involved closely in that recruitment, focusing on the skills and experience required and, as far as is possible, a local connection. The make-up of the board will include a number of executive officers to provide technical expertise and knowledge and non-executive members to ensure corporate oversight. It is however proposed that the size of the board be kept to between seven and ten to ensure optimum efficiency. It is not proposed that elected members be

appointed to the Board so as to ensure that political accountability, both executive through the lead member and scrutiny remains within the Council and to avoid any blurring of lines for operational independence. The appointment of elected members to the Board could encroach upon the executive lead and scrutiny roles which should fall within the body with statutory accountability which is the Council. It will however be important to ensure political oversight is clear and robust.

- 2.9 It is for the Council to propose the leadership of the Trust's executive and for this to be endorsed by the Commissioner and to have the DfE's support. The proposal is for the Council's Executive Director of Children's Services be appointed as Chief Executive. This reflects the proper place for operational direction and control whilst providing a direct line of accountability back to the Council's political leadership. The Executive Director would continue to act as a member of the Council's Executive Leadership Team so as to ensure the continued integration of Council business and financial planning and the collective accountability to Cabinet, scrutiny and the wider Council.
- 2.10 As the Trust will be a wholly owned company, the Council would have powers in relation to the Trust defined in the corporate Articles of Association. These would include rights in relation to strategic decisions, such as board appointments and approving the annual company business plan. For the period in which the Statutory Direction remains in force, The DfE would also have rights in relation to strategic decisions. Most significantly, these would include the appointment of the Chair of the Board and Chief Executive, and any decisions around termination or change to the services contract.

The Workforce of a Children's Trust

- 2.11 Under these proposals, the entire staff of the services specified would transfer to the Children's Trust under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations) and become employees of the Trust. The MoU will make it clear that the Council will retain decision-making in relation to terms and conditions of service to ensure consistency and continuity. It would be envisaged that the Trust would either secure "admitted body status" or be a "designated body" in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This would allow transferring staff and new joiners access to the LGPS. This would be determined in the implementation process
- 2.12 The Children First improvement agenda would continue unabated and the plans now being finalised for a comprehensive service review would continue to be delivered whether or not the Trust were to take effect. It is hoped that a service rebranded as a Children's Trust would promote the recruitment of further high-quality social work staff

The Memorandum of Understanding

- 2.13 The County Council is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DfE for endorsement by the Secretary of State. The MoU, whilst not being a legally enforceable agreement, represents a formal understanding between the County Council and the DfE to establish a Children's Trust. It sets out a clear direction of travel. The MoU will set out the proposals for:
- the proposed legal form of the Trust;
 - the scope of the services to be included in it;

- the Trust's Board and other governance arrangements;
- the Service Contract under which the performance, financial and other operational relationships between the Trust, the County Council and other stakeholders will be conducted;
- the project timetable for creating the Trust, and the 'Shadow Period' leading up to its formal commencement proposed of 1st October 2021.

Assets and Support Services

- 2.14 The Council's support services to enable the continued effective operation of the Trust will be supplied to the Trust through service level agreements.
- 2.15 Arrangements for the use of Council buildings and other assets will be included in the project planning by reference to the need to ensure the Trust obtains a separate identity alongside operational independence and that the assets made available to the Trust are such as to enable it to deliver services to the optimum. The project will need to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the resource planning of the County Council and its asset management plans.

3 Other options considered

- 3.1 The Council has no option but to meet the requirements of the Direction of the Secretary of State for the establishment of the Trust and the Council has fully accepted the rationale for its establishment based on the findings in the Commissioner's report of October 2019. A number of options are available however relating to how the Trust is established, what legal form it takes, the scope of services it includes and the timelines for its implementation. These options must however be considered in the context of the principal aim of securing a vehicle through which critical service improvements can be achieved and the expectations of the Secretary of State that the Trust has operational independence.
- 3.2 The following options were therefore considered but ruled out as the proposals for the West Sussex Children's Trust were being developed by the project team managing the work. Explanations for the proposed preferred proposals for each of these areas are given above.
 - a. Scope of service – limiting the scope to children's social care. The Direction only requires the inclusion of children's social care. Early help and education services being separated and retained within the Council would create a disconnection with the aims of a fully integrated service focused on a wholistic approach to the needs of children and families. It would reverse the changes implemented in response to the clear recommendation in the Commissioner's report for a coherent single service for children.
 - b. Form of Trust model – the company could operate as limited by guarantee or as a community interest company. The former is a simpler model and given the very specific and limited scope of the business to be undertaken by the Trust it would appear to be best suited to that form.
 - c. Timetable – an earlier timeline for implementation or a slower timeline to accommodate the range of challenging tasks for setting up the company, the service agreements and preparing staff for the transition. The Council needs to demonstrate that it is both committed to the delivery of the

Trust at the earliest practical date whilst ensuring the timeline can realistically be delivered.

- d. Trust Board and Governance include options for a larger company board and with a range of political non-executives rather than limiting the board to those focusing on the operational management of the Trust. The proposal seeks to secure a board focused on operational delivery of an improved service rather than one which seeks to broaden its role or purpose or include provision for political oversight which can be better achieved within the Council's governance. The roles of elected members in being accountable for outcomes and in scrutinising the performance against those outcomes would not be compromised. Members would be holding to account and scrutinising the service quality of the service provider just as it would an in-house provider.
- e. Leadership - a chief executive dedicated to the role and appointed only to that position could be preferred over the proposed appointment of the DCS. This would be to take the DCS away from operational control and accountability for service performance and the associated partnership relationships critical to success.

4 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1 In advance of the decision by Cabinet, a group of members from the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee making up a Scrutiny Task and Finish has been invited to consider the proposals against the other options available, to consider and comment on the implications for the Council's governance and the role of scrutiny in the oversight of the Trust and to assist the Cabinet in understanding the implications of the proposals for the ambition of the improvement to children's services for the residents of the County. The report of the group will be passed to the Cabinet ahead of the Cabinet's deliberations – see Appendix.
- 4.2 A communications plan is being put together to address the arrangements for communicating the proposals for the Trust with the staff of the Council directly affected, with those indirectly affected and with partners, especially the school community and other partners directly working across the range of children's social care and early help services. Wider member engagement will also be included in the communications plan once the principal areas of the Trust plans are settled.
- 4.3 Due to the significance of the proposals requiring endorsement by elected members of the Council as a first step, given the very direct and significant impact on staff in the affected services, plans for engagement with external partners including schools has been planned for the period following the consideration of the proposals in this report.

5 Finance

- 5.1 Delivering the mechanisms to ensure adequate funding for the operations of the Trust are necessarily complex and will be subject to further elaboration by the Trust Project Group. This is not required for the completion of the MoU and will be the subject of further information to elected members as the project develops. There is an underlying intention that the service will be as well financed as it currently is. Additionally, a Trust may experience greater

flexibility, outside the County Council's normal financial operating model, to enable it to generate funds to increase investment in the service.

- 5.2 The cost of implementing a Children's Trust falls to be met by the Department for Education. A cost model has been developed and has been fully described in the cost analysis and proposal to be passed to the DfE for approval.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Slippage of timetable	1. Dedicated senior leadership time has been arranged through the employment of the Children First Transformation Director. 2. The contract partnership with external consultancy and legal team will add capacity and expertise in the setting up of the Trust.
Disruption to focus on service improvement	1. The Improvement Board will maintain a strong focus on the improvement plan. 2. The Senior Leadership Team will maintain the delivery of the improvement plan as the priority. 3. External resources will be used to undertake the main tasks for the establishment of the Trust.
Disruption to relations with key service partners	A programme of engagement and information sharing with the full range of partners will be carried through.
Adverse impact on Council assets and resources	Plans for the use of Council assets by the Trust will be assessed against the core aims for service improvement and operational independence whilst ensuring no adverse impact on the County Council's plans and resource needs.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 At the time of the publication of the Commissioner's report, the County Council publicly committed at the highest level to rededicate itself to the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families in West Sussex, and to restore the reputation of the service. This proposal is consistent with that aim.

Lucy Butler

Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning

Contact Officer: Vince Clark, Children First Transformation Director;
Tel: 07402 338396 - vince.clark@westsussex.gov.uk

Appendix A: Report of the Proposed Scope of Services for Children's Trust
Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Background papers

None

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Cabinet

20 October 2020

Scope of Services for a Proposed Children's Trust

Report by Chairman of the Task and Finish Group – Scope of Services for a Proposed Children's Trust

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

The Scope of Services for a Proposed Children's Trust Task and Finish Group (TFG) was established by the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee. Its purpose was to scrutinise the proposed Cabinet decision on the proposals for the set-up of a Children's Trust, including the scope of services to include in the Trust, the start date and length of operation and the proposed governance arrangements.

The TFG undertook its work at a single meeting on 9 October with the conclusions being forwarded for consideration by Cabinet on 20 October through this report.

The TFG comprised the following members: Cllr Ann Bridges, Cllr Heidi Brunsdon, Cllr Stephen Hillier (Chairman), Cllr Kirsty Lord, Cllr Sujana Wickremaratchi and Cllr Jacky Pendleton.

The TFG considered the draft decision report and made its conclusions as set out below:

Conclusions

The Task and Finish Group:

1. Supports the rationale for the inclusion of children's social care, early help and education services into the scope of services of the Children's Trust.
2. Highlights the importance of ensuring the make-up of the Trust Board includes a wide range of skills and expertise that represents and supports education, social care and early help.
3. Recommends that the future running and potential termination costs of the Children's Trust are highlighted as a risk in the decision report as conversations are ongoing with the Department for Education, and that this is considered as an area for future scrutiny.
4. Recommends that disruption to staff and the implications for morale and retention are highlighted as a potential risk in the decision report, given that staff will be moving into the Trust.

Agenda Item 4
Appendix A

5. Supports that the Trust is implemented for an initial period of five years with an implementation date of 1 October 2021, recognising that the operating period of the Trust may change subject to the performance of the Trust.
6. Supports the proposal that the County Council's Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning be appointed as Chief Executive of the Children's Trust.
7. Requests that detailed consideration be given in the Service Level Agreement of how the Trust will engage with other services within the County Council, upon which Children's Services rely; and how these relations will be managed.

Stephen Hillier
Chairman of the Task and Finish Group

Contact Officer: Katherine De La Mora, Senior Advisor, 0330 222 2535
katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk

**Key decision: No
Unrestricted
Ref: n/a**

Cabinet

20 October 2020

Statement of Assurance and Annual Report 2019-2020

Report by Chief Fire Officer

Electoral division(s): All

Summary

The Fire Authority is statutorily required under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to produce an annual statement of assurance. The purpose of such a statement is to provide assurances that the Fire Authority follows the National Framework as set out by the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service in the following key areas:

- Finance details
- Governance
- Operational performance
- Framework requirements
- Future improvements

The Statement of Assurance is supported by an Annual Report that highlights key activity for the service last year, including the overall performance. The report covers the financial year from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Recommendations

That the contents of this report be reviewed along with attached draft submissions of the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20 and the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report 2019-20 are noted by Cabinet members prior to publication.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service produces a Statement of Assurance, supported by an annual report that details how the service delivers its vision, supporting plans and how it then reports on the progress made in the last year. The two draft documents have been produced for the financial year 2019-2020 and are attached:

- West Sussex Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance 2019-2020
- West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report 2019-2020

- 1.2 Under the framework the statement of assurance should contain detail on governance arrangements, operational performance, financials and future Improvements.
- 1.3 Fire authorities are accountable for their performance and should be open to evaluation to the communities they serve. Information should be accurate and transparent, robust and fit for purpose.
- 1.4 One of the principal aims of the Statement of Assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, government, local authorities and other partners may make a valid assessment of their local fire and rescue authority's performance.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 West Sussex County Council is the Fire Authority for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) and is responsible for:
- Firefighting and rescue
 - Protecting people and property from fire
 - Promoting fire safety in the home
 - Providing special services for emergencies
- 2.2 Under the direction of the Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, within West Sussex County Council, have prepared a draft statement of assurance and annual report for 2020/21.
- 2.3** Decisions relating to the fire and rescue service will be scrutinised by the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee which was established at the full county council meeting on 17 December 2019.
- 2.4 In the case of county council fire and rescue services the close working relationships that exist with other county council areas of responsibility such as adult care, children's services and public health are significant. This enables a holistic approach to keeping residents safe.

Annual Operational Performance report

- 2.5 During this financial year WSFRS attended 9,522 incidents in West Sussex with 1,914 being categorised as critical incidents. These are incidents where there is a risk to life or property. Of all these incidents, 1,334 were critical special services (such as a road traffic collision), while 580 were critical fires. We attended 234 incidents throughout the year to assist our neighbouring fire and

rescue services. This is as a result of working with those services to send the fastest fire engine, regardless of county borders.

Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan delivery

- 2.6 Fire and Rescue Authorities have a statutory requirement to publish an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which is supported by service plans that improve the safety of our residents and staff. Our IRMP covers the period 2018-22.
- 2.7 The plan outlines the following strategic commitments:
- Prevention – educating the community on how to reduce risks through safe and well visits, school visits and other training.
 - Protection – providing safer public spaces within the built environment, fire safety inspections and enforcement.
 - Response – sending fire engines and firefighters to emergency incidents. This can include fires, road traffic collisions and flooding.
 - People – how we address the challenges we face in delivering a highly trained, inclusive and diverse workforce.
 - Customer Centred Value for Money – ensuring everything we do is as efficient as possible and delivers what our communities need.
 - Partnership and collaboration – how we will work with other organisations to achieve our aims.
- 2.8 The service is midway through the current IRMP and development has commenced on the next iteration. The Improvement journey has gathered momentum and is now progressing well into our second year.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 The Fire Authority is statutorily required under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to produce an annual statement of assurance, therefore no other options can be considered.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 Feedback from this meeting will considered prior to the final draft being presented to Cabinet.

5 Finance

- 5.1 Most of the Council's £26.8 million budget is invested in frontline services including firefighting, rescue operations and community safety activity. This is summarised as the following:
- Firefighting and rescue operations: £22,011,154
 - Community Fire Safety: £4,352,772
 - Fire Service Emergency Planning and Civil Resilience: £390,071

- 5.2 In addition to the existing FRS base budget, the County Council agreed further funding over a three-year period to deliver the improvements required following the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report. In 2019-20, the Fire Improvement plan spent £0.671m, which is included in the spend shown above.
- 5.3 HMICFRS revisited the service in January 2020, following the inspection in November 2018. In a letter to the Chief Fire Officer, the inspectors noted that the Fire and Rescue Service has made 'tangible improvements' in a number of areas and could see an 'accelerated pace with the improvement work over the past few months'.
- 5.4 Within WSCC back office support services (Including Finance, HR, IT and property) are treated as a corporate resource and are all held centrally and are not recharged to individual services, this means that the above costs relate only to the direct provision of the service itself.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Not adopting a Statement of Assurance (SOA)	All information supporting this informs the Council's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to ensure the SOA is accurate and timely to support the service.
Not recording information accurately	West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service record information about every emergency call received. We analyse where, why and how incidents have occurred to help us understand where incidents might happen in the future and how we are best placed to prevent them. We also use the latest modelling software, demographic profiling, census data and information from our partner agencies. This information informs a critical fire risk map, which is updated every year based on rolling data from the previous three years.
Not mapping critical risk	The critical fire risk map is part of our local Risk Management Plans facilitates the targeting of prevention activity to prioritise resources to the most vulnerable residents and those communities at highest risk. This ensures resources are used efficiently to achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities. The critical fire risk map is part of our local Risk Management Plans and is used to assist in the targeting of prevention activity allowing WSFRS to focus on the most vulnerable residents and those communities at highest risk, thereby ensuring its resources are used efficiently to achieve the best possible outcomes for our local communities. They are also used as the basis for our Emergency Response Standards.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 This report has positive implication for the community, as adoption of a Statement of Assurance and Annual Report supports the positive benefits of an effective Fire and Rescue Service to all residents in West Sussex.
- 7.2 In terms of environmental sustainability, the IRMP makes clear the Authority's commitment to reducing the environmental impact of its operations, and provides an indication of work done to date.

Sabrina Cohen Hatton
Chief Fire Officer

Sabrina Cohen Hatton, Chief Fire Officer,
Sabrina.cohen-hatton@westsussex.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix A: Statement of Assurance

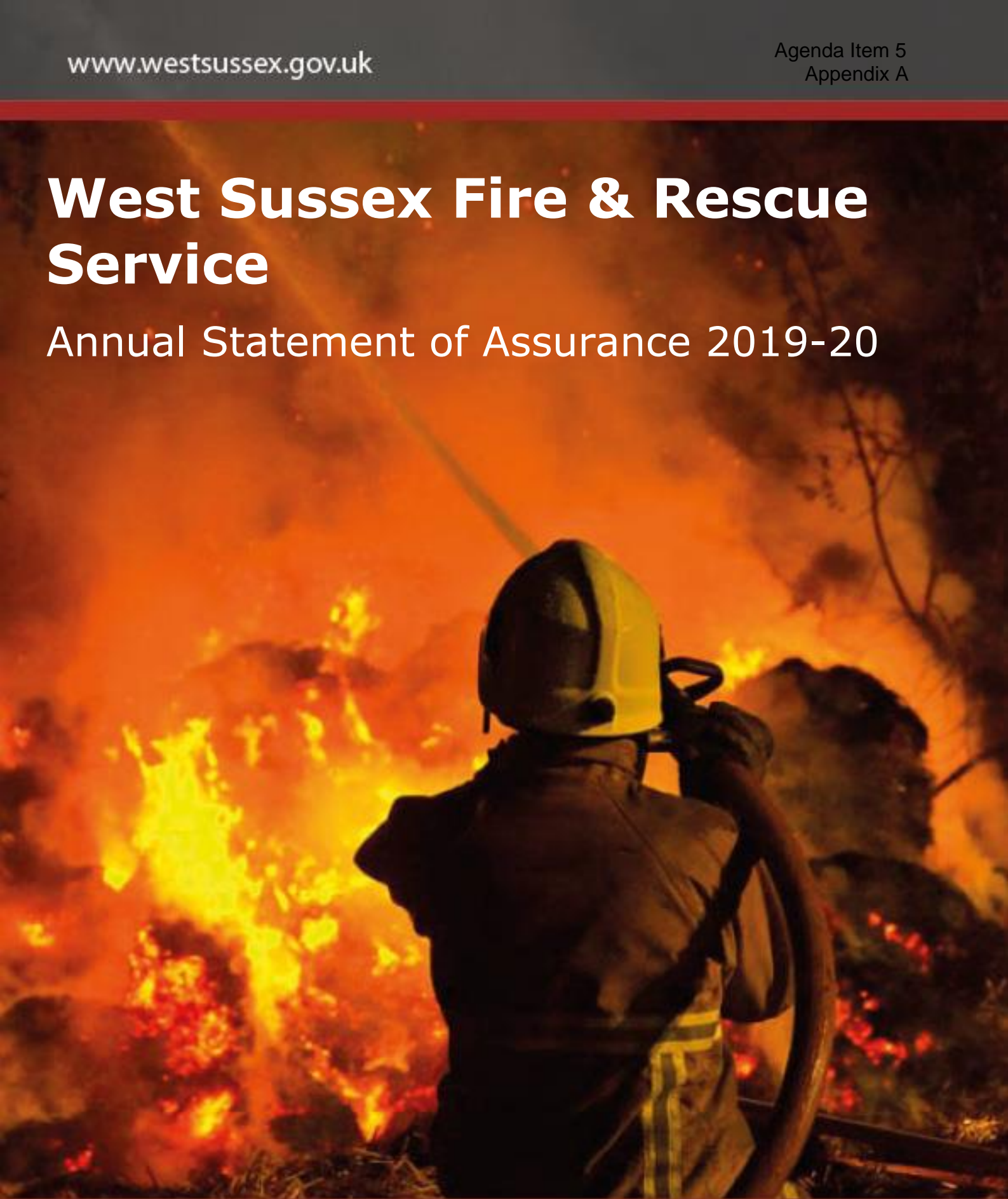
Appendix B: Annual Report

Background papers: None

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West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20



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Foreward

Welcome to West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's (WSFRS) Annual Statement of Assurance.



This Statement details the financial, governance and operational arrangements that were in place for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The Statement is produced in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework 'Guidance on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England.'

I am proud of the fire and rescue service we provide and of the people who work so hard to keep our communities safe.

On behalf of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority, I am committed to supporting the Chief Fire Officer to ensure West Sussex continues to have an effective, efficient and resilient fire and rescue service for the people of West Sussex, those who visit our county, and for the wider community in case of national emergency.

Throughout the service I have seen a high level of dedication from staff that leaves me in no doubt that our fire and rescue teams will continue to provide the best service possible for our communities now and in the future. For that insight I wish to thank the staff across the service.

Duncan Crow

Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities

Introduction

As Chief Fire Officer of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service I am pleased to introduce our Statement of Assurance for 2019/2020.

The Statement reinforces my commitment to provide our communities with clear information about how we manage public funds and assure the effectiveness of our financial, governance and operational fire service arrangements.



We provide a 24/7 emergency response service to deal with fires, road traffic collisions and a wide range of emergencies. Our staff also deliver activities to reduce fires and road traffic collisions, improve community safety, enforce fire safety legislation and reduce risk in the community. We continue to work closely with our neighbouring services, and other blue light responders, to maximise the benefit of public spending and ensure West Sussex remains a safe county.

We are committed to saving, protecting and improving the lives of people in our county; and that our community is assured they have a fire service able to respond to all reasonably foreseeable emergencies. When you need us, rest assured, our professional teams will continue to deliver the service West Sussex expects and deserves.

Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton

Chief Fire Officer for West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

What is a Statement of Assurance?

Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Statements of assurance should be open and transparent, demonstrating accountability to communities who expect to know how these services are being provided. This document outlines the way in which the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority and its fire and rescue service delivered the requirements contained in the National Fire and Rescue Framework and the authority's IRMP during 2019-20.

Governance

West Sussex County Council is the Fire Authority for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) and is responsible for:

- Firefighting and rescue
- Protecting people and property from fire
- Promoting fire safety in the home
- Providing special services for emergencies

The county council is made up of 70 councillors who are each elected to represent one division every four years. Functions are allocated across the full council, the Cabinet and a range of committees.

The Constitution explains how the county council operates and decisions are made, and the procedures which are followed to make sure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. All members meet together as the full council and they are responsible for deciding

some of the overall policies and setting the budget each year.

The WSCC Cabinet, or 'Executive', has nine members selected from the Conservative majority. The Cabinet proposes the key policy decisions of the council, which are subject to agreement by the full county council. Each Cabinet Member is allocated a portfolio of work for which they take personal responsibility. WSFRS is the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities and the county council holds the position of the Fire Authority. The Cabinet Member for WSFRS is Councillor Duncan Crow.

Decisions relating to the fire and rescue service and transformation plans of the service will be scrutinised by the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee which was established at the full county council meeting on 17 December 2019.

WSFRS is embedded within WSCC. As such, the service is linked to a range of key strategic planning areas that aids a holistic approach to keeping residents safe. These include emergency management, transport and spatial planning, the design of support for vulnerable people, flood risk management and the overall place shaping and democratic ownership of an area.

Planning and policy framework

WSFRS operates as part of WSCC, which sets a clear framework for the work the service does.

The key documents relating to this area are:

[The West Sussex Plan](#): The plan sets out how the county council plans to shape its services for the next five years.

[How the County Council spends your money](#)

WSFRS also operates under broader corporate policies on:

[Fraud and corruption](#)

[Equality and Inclusion policy](#)

[Pay Policy](#)

Your fire and rescue service

The FRS has three fundamental areas of focus: prevention, protection and response. Eight immediate response fire engines are based at six fire stations – Crawley, Worthing, Bognor, Littlehampton, Chichester and Horsham. These stations are permanently crewed using a system called Group Crewing.

There are also four fire engines crewed by wholetime firefighters working from 7am until 7pm, from Monday to Friday, at Shoreham, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead. They carry out immediate response and community safety work during these hours.

Many of our fire stations are crewed by Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters who provide an agreed amount of cover 'on-call' via an alerting system. We do not underestimate the dedication and commitment required to be an on-call firefighter and work hard to support our staff who provide this invaluable service.

As with many other services across the country, we have seen a decline in the number of available RDS firefighters in recent years, however we are now seeing positive signs of improvement. Our retention and recruitment rates have improved over the last 12 months, we have employed 44 new RDS employees with 24 deciding to leave the service, in previous years the numbers of starters and leavers has been broadly the same.

However, we acknowledge that changes to the way we live, and the demands placed upon RDS members time means that being available to respond to emergency calls is often a challenge for individuals with

families and work pressures. Supporting and improving our RDS remains a key priority for WSFRS and we have established action plans within our IRMP to develop future options for the service.

From firefighter to Chief Fire Officer, at the end of this financial year we employed the full-time equivalent of 317 operational staff and 221.25 FTE RDS crew, along with support staff and volunteers. As staff leave through retirement or transferring to other services we continue to recruit and train the firefighters of the future. This gives us the opportunity to ensure that our workforce reflects the communities that we serve. The service we provide is thanks to the dedication, commitment and hard work of every member of the WSFRS team.

Financial performance overview

WSFRS is an integrated part of WSCC. As such, it receives a range of services provided centrally, either via county council back office functions or corporately procured contracts. These include provision for payroll, pensions and human resources administration, human resources and organisational development advice and services, occupational health services, IT and communications, facilities management and estates maintenance, rates and utilities, insurances, legal advice and procurement services.

Costs relating to these areas are accounted for as a whole and are not apportioned at FRS level. Best value and high-quality services in all these areas are sought and achieved council wide.

Financial management for the FRS in areas including assets and estate, revenue provision, debt, and treasury management are covered under arrangements for the whole of the county council and, again, are not reported solely for the FRS.

The fire service's total net controllable expenditure for the 2019-20 financial year was £26.8 million. This is broken down as follows.

How your money is spent

Most of the £26.8 million budget is invested in frontline services including firefighting, rescue operations and community safety activity.

This is summarised as the following:

- Firefighting and rescue operations - £22,011,154
- Community fire safety - £4,352,772
- Fire service emergency planning and civil resilience - £390,071.

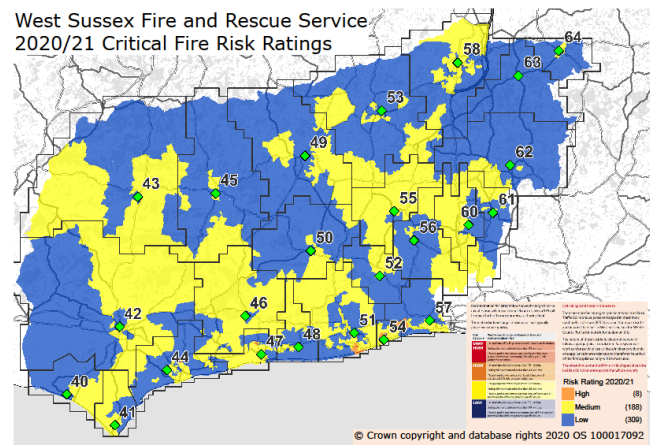
In addition to the existing FRS base budget, the county council agreed further funding over a three-year period to deliver the improvements required following the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report. In 2019-20, the Fire Improvement plan spent £0.671m, which is included in the spend shown above.

HMICFRS revisited the service in January 2020, following the inspection in November 2018. In a letter to the Chief Fire Officer, the inspectors noted that the Fire and Rescue Service has made 'tangible improvements' in a number of areas and could see an 'accelerated pace with the improvement work over the past few months.

Managing risk

As a service we must understand and identify our greatest risks in order to be able to effectively manage our resources.

We record information about every emergency call we receive and analyse where, why and how incidents have occurred to help us understand where



incidents might happen in the future and how we are best placed to prevent them.

We also use the extensive local knowledge of our firefighters and officers, alongside the latest modelling software, demographic profiling, census data and information from our partner agencies.

All this information is pulled together by our risk team in a Critical Fire Risk Map (pictured below) which is updated every year based on rolling data from the previous three years.

The critical fire risk map is part of our local Risk Management Plans and is used to assist in the targeting of prevention activity allowing WSFRS to focus on the most vulnerable residents and those communities at highest risk, thereby ensuring its resources are used efficiently to achieve the best possible outcomes for our local communities. They are also used as the basis for our Emergency Response Standards. All this information informs our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

This shows that, for the period covered by this report, most of the county was classified as low or medium risk. Where small pockets of high risk are identified we can target our resources in proportion to those needs.

Operational performance report

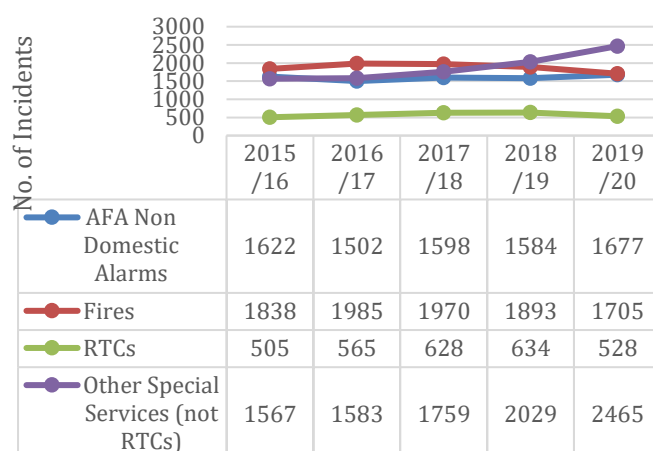
During this financial year WSFRS attended **9,522** incidents in West Sussex with 1,914 being categorised as critical incidents. These are incidents where there is a risk to life or property. Of all these incidents, 1,334 were critical special services (such as a road traffic collision), while 580 were critical fires. Please note these figures relate to incidents attended within West Sussex.

Past 5 years historic (annual) data	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20
Critical Special Services	765	771	1007	1140	1346
Critical Fires	732	800	734	622	585
All Incidents	8552	8842	9241	9292	9582
Over the Border Calls	202	162	233	285	234

Our critical special service incidents have seen an increase from previous years as we are now using an improved method of measuring the incidents which fall into the critical special service category. This means incidents that previously may not have been categorised this way now are and will be for future reports. The higher number is mainly due to this change rather than an underlying rapid rise in critical specials services.

We attended 234 incidents throughout the year to assist our neighbouring fire and rescue services. This is as a result of working with those services to send the fastest fire engine, regardless of county borders.

Incidents attended by West Sussex
2015 - 2020

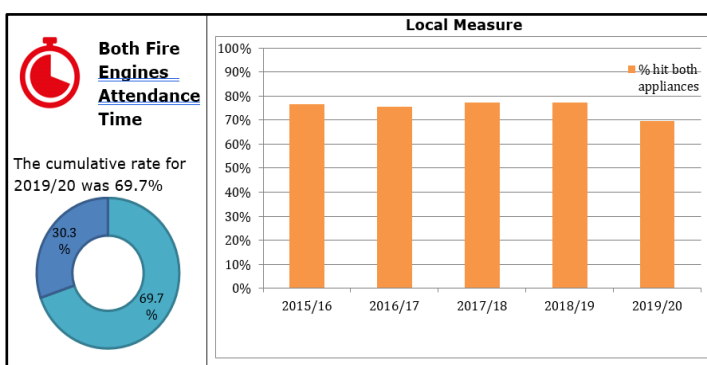
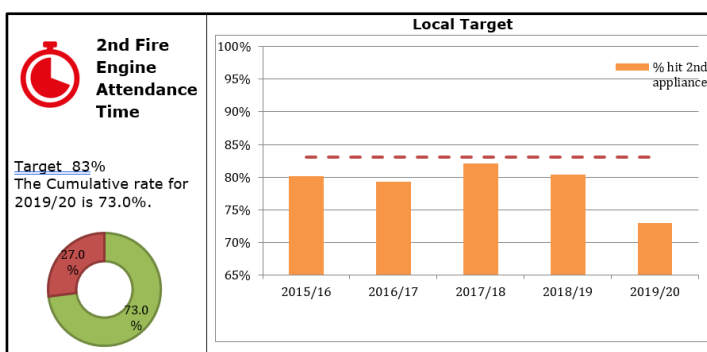
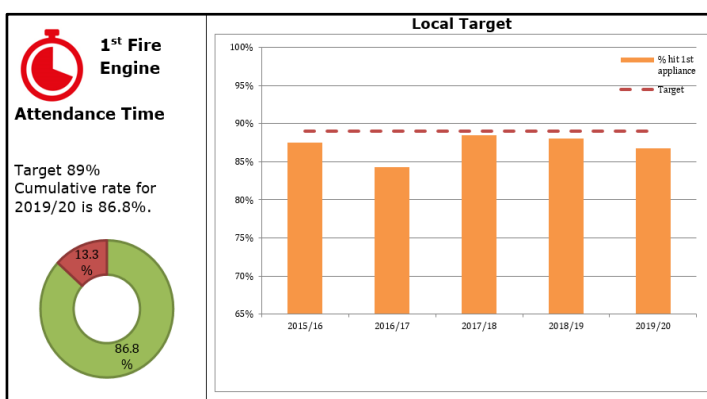
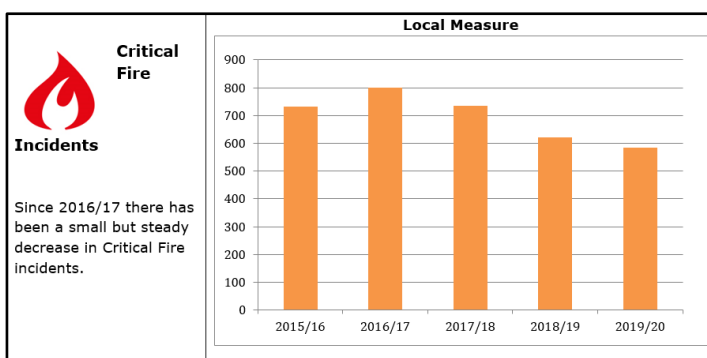


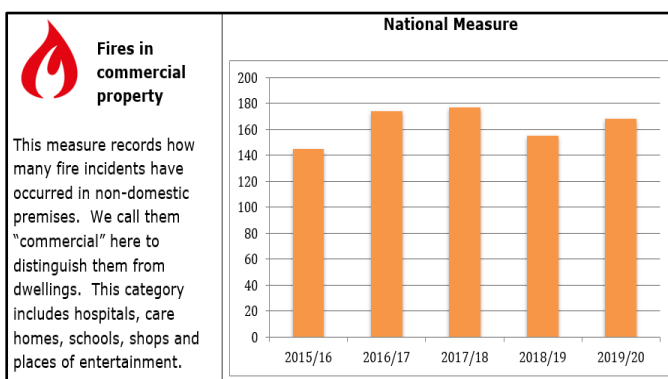
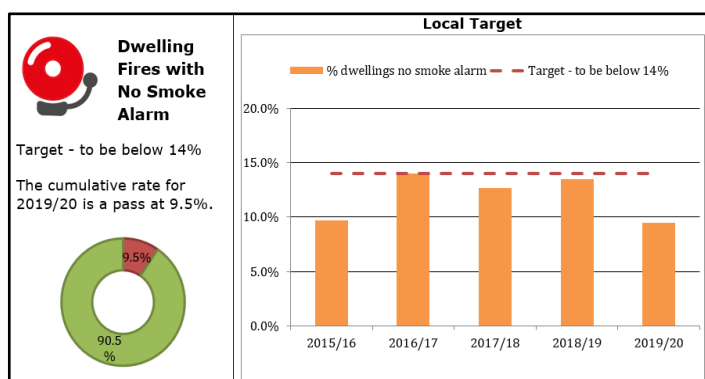
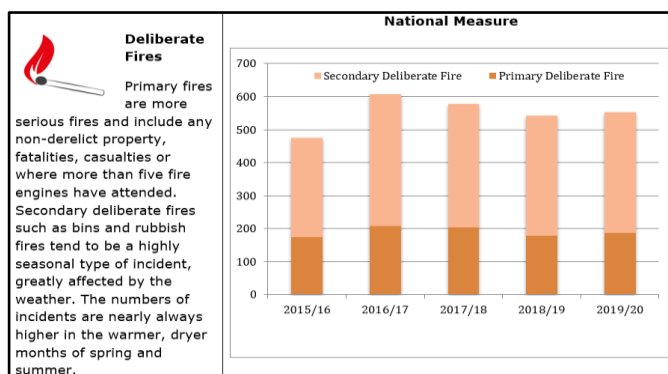
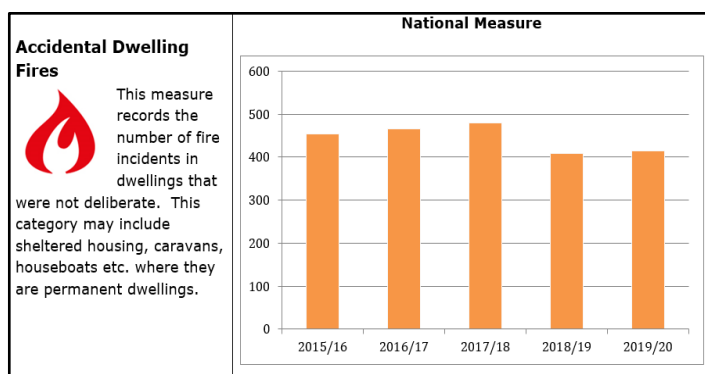
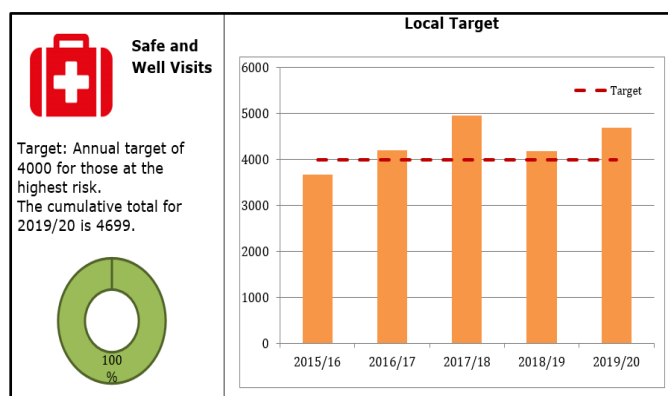
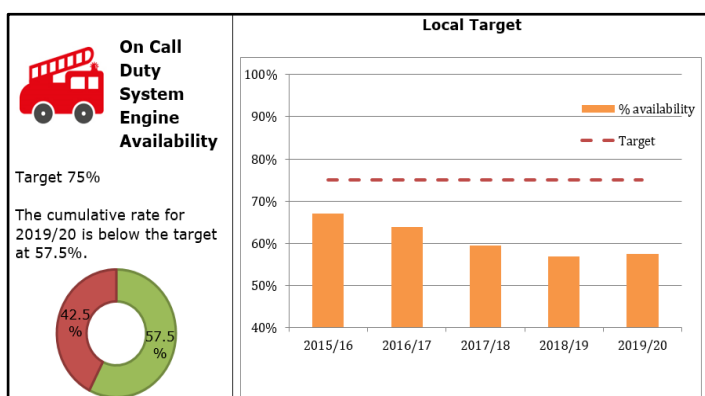
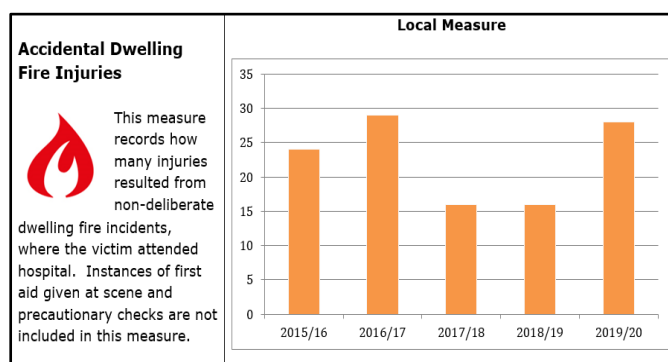
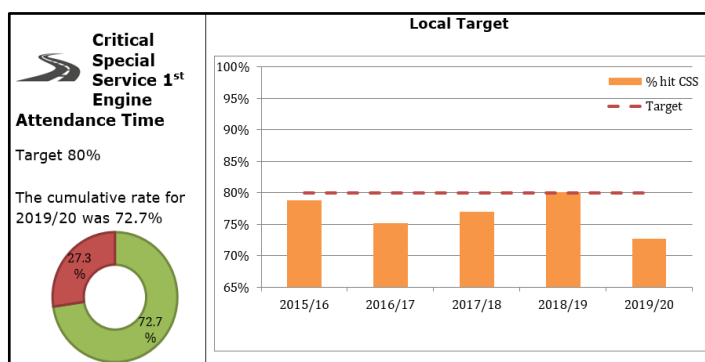
Operational performance targets and measures

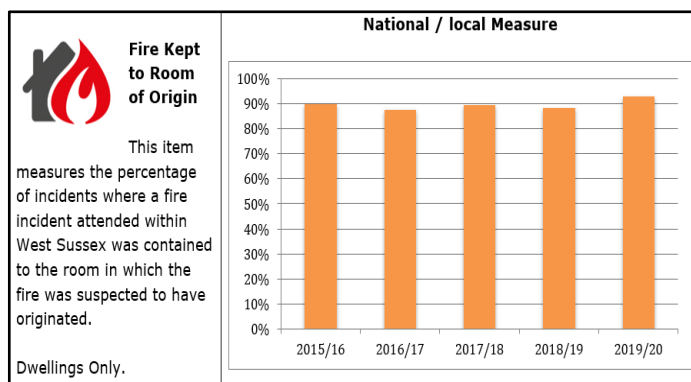
In order to ensure we deliver the commitments we have made in our IRMP we monitor our performance on a quarterly basis. In the reporting year 2019-2020 we had more than 60 key performance indicators and measures which were subject to both internal and external scrutiny. In this reporting year the Fire Authority chose 13 operational performance measures and targets that were reported on a quarterly basis as well as annually in this Statement of Assurance. Details of these are on the following pages.

As we strive for continuous improvement, we have recently undertaken a review of our performance indicators to ensure that they continue to measure our service in the most effective way. We have identified some amendments and some additional indicators that will be measured for the year 2020-2021. This ensures we scrutinise and manage our data to continually drive through improved performance.

#	Indicator	Measure/ target
1	Critical Fire Incidents	Measure
2	1 st Fire engine attendance time	Target
3	2 nd Fire engine attendance time	Target
4	Both appliance attendance	Measure
5	Critical special service attendance time	Target
6	On call duty system availability	Target
7	Accidental dwelling fires	Measure
8	Dwelling fires no smoke alarm	Target
9	Accidental dwelling fire injuries	Measure
10	Safe and well checks	Target
11	Deliberate fires	Measure
12	Fires in commercial property	Measure
13	Fire kept to room of origin	Measure







National Resilience

We have continued to support the National Resilience (NR) Programme which was a UK Government response to the threat of a 9/11 style attack on the UK and critical weather-related events in Sussex and Nationally.

The Technical Rescue Unit (TRU) delivered National Urban Search and Rescue capability in financial year 2019/2020.

The Technical Rescue Unit (TRU) is partly funded by a Home Office grant of £408,800 to be the Strategic Reserve Urban Search and Rescue Team. This has enabled the team to respond to collapsed buildings and major transport incidents anywhere in the UK. Following the withdrawal of this funding we no longer provide this capability nationally.

The High-Volume Pumping (HVP) Unit based at Bognor Regis Fire Station is an NR asset. The HVP is able to pump much larger volumes of water than standard fire engines during flooding and large fires

We receive a grant to specially train and prepare a number of West Sussex firefighters to respond to terrorist incidents. This is known as a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA). This grant was for £49,357 in 2019/20. National Resilience Assets are

maintained and serviced under national maintenance contracts. Our ability to effectively deploy them is tested by assurance audits carried out by National Resilience Capability Officers.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

WSFRS has a statutory duty to consult on, and publish, as detailed in the Fire and Rescue National Framework, an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

The Plan must cover a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary to ensure fire and rescue authorities are able to deliver the requirements of the Framework. This review must include reaction to regional, or national events. This includes the introduction in 2018 of new legislation affecting fire & Rescue services requiring the duty to collaborate and the emerging risks identified from the 2017 Grenfell incident in London.

This plan identifies and assesses all reasonably foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community, including those of a cross-border, multi-authority and/or national nature.

Once we have identified these risks, we review the resources we have in place and the activity we need to undertake to meet these risks. We then develop plans to improve the safety of our residents and staff. From this we developed the IRMP, with supporting strategies and action plans that cover the period 2018-22. This plan reflects how we will respond to the risk.

The plan outlines:

- **Prevention** – educating the community on how to reduce risks through safe and well visits, school visits and other training.

- **Protection** – providing safer public spaces within the built environment, fire safety inspections and enforcement.
- **Response** – sending fire engines and firefighters to emergency incidents. This can include fires, road traffic collisions and flooding.
- **People** – how we address the challenges we face in delivering a highly trained, inclusive and diverse workforce.
- **Customer Centred Value for Money** – ensuring everything we do is as efficient as possible and delivers what our communities need.
- **Partnership and collaboration** – how we will work with other organisations to achieve our aims.

To help us deliver the IRMP action plans as well as the areas of improvement and concern raised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) we have introduced a Programme Steering Board to ensure effective controls are in place to manage risks, assumptions, issues and dependencies. This Board provides support, monitors progress, and makes recommendations that will enable Fire Programmes to be delivered on time, within cost and to our high-quality requirements, this ultimately drives the delivery of the change identified in our action plans.

We are measuring our progress in this board against project and programme milestones as well using our key performance indicators to measure success and report progress to the Fire Authority.

The IRMP provides a detailed understanding of our communities and the risks they face. It also considers wider issues outside of West Sussex including national risks, to

develop national resilience capabilities that are available to support our service when dealing with major incidents that stretch normal resources, such as major flooding.

In this Annual Statement of Assurance, we are reporting on year two of the action plan (2019-20), which has seen some significant progress with items of note being:

Completion of our transition to a joint fire control partnership arrangement. Joint Fire Control went live successfully on 4 December 2019. This has been established under a Fire and Rescue Services Act Section 16 agreement which details its governance, performance and funding.

The ongoing investment and modernisation of our firefighting equipment and techniques is key to firefighter and public safety. We have recently enhanced our firefighting capabilities with the introduction of Fog Nails, which complement the use of our new smoke curtains when resolving building/property fires. The Fog nails enable us to deliver water into rooms within a building and difficult to access areas such as roof spaces and basements. They create a fine misting effect that can dramatically reduce the temperature and spread of a fire. Being able to tackle a fire in this way means firefighters are kept safer, property can be preserved more effectively, and firefighting time is reduced.

The investment in upgraded heavy hydraulic rescue equipment which we use to rescue people from vehicles was delivered in this reporting year. Modern vehicles have increased safety designs to better protect people from harm, but this means that we now need more specialist heavier equipment to rescue people from them. We also use this equipment to rescue people from larger vehicles such as Large Good Vehicles' across our three Heavy Rescue Tenders. This equipment enhances the capability we already have on our frontline fire engines

and provides the specialist equipment required for these types of incident.

The completed procurement of seven new fire engines, which aligns to our strategy of a mix of 12 tonne and 18 tonne fire engines against the risk profile. All seven delivered this year are 12 tonne Volvos which we call Medium Rescue Pumps (MRP). The 12 tonne Volvo MRP is lower, shorter, narrower and has a much smaller turning circle than the 18 tonne Super Rescue Pumps (SRP). This will allow the MRPs to access more roads and be nimbler in crowded towns and narrow rural roads which will assist us in improving our response times. They will carry new equipment such as a 9 metre main ladder and Ultra High-Pressure Hose Reels, which offer new capabilities which will complement the equipment of the 18 tonne Super Rescue Pumps. This will ensure that at every significant fire the incident commander has a full range of tactical options, including Ultra High Pressure, 22mm Hose Reels, Compressed Air Foam and traditional lay flat hose of 70 and 52mm diameter. Which again will improve our effectiveness in firefighting and rescue operations.

We work together on a number of projects with our neighbouring services under 4Fire.

Projects that we have collaborated on date include working with East Sussex and Surrey fire and rescue services, and with Sussex and Surrey Police on a more efficient and effective fleet management programme, a joint approach to noise management and a joint e-learning platform for staff training.

The 4Fire collaboration has also included the delivery of a three-fire service wholetime training course developed and led by WSFRS. Gatwick FRS have now joined the three services with sharing the same learning platform for Maintenance of Competence (MoC) and training.

The 4Fire Integrated Transport Function initiative has delivered an outward facing 360-degree camera package will be fitted to all frontline fire engines. The first installation has taken place on our new 12 tonne fire engines. Front and rear facing cameras are also scheduled to be fitted to officer cars. This additional safety equipment will be for the purpose of public and responding crew's safety.

The West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's health and safety team have completed over 25 noise assessments across the workplace, results and information are being shared with our collaborative partners of East Sussex, Surrey and Kent Fire and Rescue Services in the delivery of the 4Fire (Noise) initiative. This has significantly contributed to the understanding of the noise impacts of equipment used at incidents and during training activities may have on our operational crews. We have been able to improve crew safety by understanding this impact.

We have been working collaboratively with East Sussex Fire & Rescue, Sussex Police and the South East Coast Ambulance Service to assist with gaining entry to premises during medical emergencies. A delay in gaining access to properties can have a detrimental impact on the patient, by utilising crews we are able to gain swift access for ambulance crews using our equipment and training.

Fire and rescue support has also reduced the operational demand on Sussex Police colleagues who have previously undertaken this work. We have attended over 200 incidents of this type since January 2019 as part of a collaborative pilot project which has now been adopted as core business.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (known commonly as firefighting uniform) is provided to all operational staff to protect them from a range of hazards encountered during the course of their operational duties. Our previous contract for the supply and management of fire kit ended in January 2020. Using a collaborative procurement solution established by Kent Fire & Rescue Service and following in-depth technical assessment and subsequent staff consultation on their preferred PPE solution, replacement fire kit was issued in January 2020. The new provision also includes a rescue jacket that can be worn at non-fire incidents and reflects the evolving role of a modern firefighter.

We have made improvements to the way that we allocate and arrange our crewing resources through the introduction of a new Service Delivery Centre to support and coordinate the use of our Wholetime and Retained Duty System staff. This will allow us to maximise the availability of our fire engines and will enable the most efficient use of our crewing resources in support of our core prevention and protection activities

We have conducted a review of the fleet of special fire engines that support unusual and larger incidents to improve our service capability where appropriate and provide future delivery options that will be delivered in 2020-21.

During this reporting year we have been introducing a new and improved IT risk management system to replace the current ageing database. Our investment is a specific, tried and tested risk management system that will improve service effectiveness and efficiency. Firefighter safety and improvements in public protection will also be realised. It provides a mobile application for front-

line Protection, Prevention and Response staff which is intuitive and easy to use; early feedback from future users in all areas has been very positive.

To support our staff wellbeing strategy over the past year we have:

Recognised that supporting the Health & Wellbeing in the most effective way requires direction and input from a Wellbeing professional. As a result of this we created a Health & Wellbeing Manager post, and successfully recruited to this position in June 2020. The Health & Wellbeing Manager will be responsible for managing the Physical Education Officer, ensuring that we have an aligned approach to the physical, mental and emotional health of our employees.

To support our managers, we have developed and published guidance on bullying and harassment in the workplace. The guidelines were developed with input from staff, managers and the representative bodies. In order to build on this support, we will also be rolling out other initiatives such as staff engagement surgeries at stations and within teams creating a space for staff to talk to someone about any concerns. We will also be developing a forum of diversity and inclusion champions, and in addition delivering training for both managers and staff to raise awareness and to improve the way in which we manage instances of bullying and or harassment. As a result of feedback sessions and engagement with staff we

have identified that many staff at WSFRS need help and support with a wide range of issues that are not necessarily related to work. This includes domestic violence, menopause and caring responsibilities. To ensure that there is a consistent approach across WSFRS we have developed and published a Staff Special Circumstances Support Policy, as well as guidance for staff and managers.

Last year we launched and ran our 'It's OK not to be OK' awareness campaign during the year to encourage staff to openly talk about their mental and emotional health with their line manager and colleagues so that support mechanisms are available to support our staff. This initiative supports our Employee Assistance Scheme, which is a confidential service that staff are able to access 24/7 to speak to someone if they are experiencing difficulties.

Our pathway was developed for referring staff to the occupational health team to ensure early intervention and that our occupational health providers are receiving relevant and up to date information. The review resulted in a clearer pathway for mental health referrals and early access to interventions for our staff.

Working with colleagues in WSCC to develop initiatives to support staff experiencing mental health issues. The aim is to create a work

environment where it is the 'norm' to discuss mental health and staff know where to go to access help. An initiative to introduce Mental Health First Aiders across WSCC and WSFRS is planned for implementation in 20/21.

We have identified that some of our staff have previously experienced a traumatic event as part of their job role. For some, this has included events that might have occurred sometime earlier, such as during time served in the armed forces. We therefore considered it important to embed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) training as part of the initial recruits' induction course from this year's intake, in order to create awareness.

Acknowledged that Covid-19 presented some challenges and we considered it important that we regularly provide our staff with appropriate guidance during the pandemic. Information provided to date includes:

- How to manage their mental wellbeing whilst working at home;
- Bereavement and the change transition;

In addition to this, managers were encouraged to hold regular wellbeing meetings (virtually) with team members. Where concerns were raised by managers or members of staff, further support was made available through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or

telephone calls with Occupational Health.

As part of the development and delivery of our action plans for equality inclusion and diversity across the service over the past year we:

Recognised that the WSCC Values needed to be adopted by the service and in order to undertake this successfully, it needed to make some changes.

We recognise that the organisation is underrepresented by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and female staff, and that currently our workforce does not reflect the diversity of the communities that we serve. This was also reflected in a lack of people from ethnic minority backgrounds applying for jobs with the service. As a starting point WSFRS decided to appoint a Diversity & Inclusion Adviser to support managers in the organisation to promote diversity and inclusion and give advice on appropriate actions to take to improve the diversity profile of the workforce, including attraction. This includes working with teams who engage with the community to ensure that all groups are involved in events, are consulted with and given the opportunity to contribute. Our Diversity & Inclusion Adviser is now a member of the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) Executive Leadership Team. We have engaged with the community and staff to ensure that we involve and reach all groups and arranged and promoted a number of events including:

WSFRS female Firefighters participated in a heat tolerance

research project led by the University of Brighton with UK Fire Research & Development and FireFit UK;
All female crew for International Women's Day 2020

Participated in Worthing and Brighton Pride Parades July and August 2019

Staff attendance at AFSA summer and winter 2019 conferences

Engaged with AFSA and other FRSs to begin sharing best practice on community engagement to improve business fire safety outcomes.

Planned to host AFSA regional development day (on hold until Mar 2021 due to COVID19) to share best practice and knowledge with invited delegates from across WSFRS, neighbouring fire and rescue services, Gatwick Airport Fire Service, Crawley Borough Council and services across WSCC.

We are working hard on plans to develop a new training centre and fire station in Horsham. We are continually seeking to improve our training offer to our teams and recognise that a reduction in fires and operational incidents reduces the opportunity for learning. The initial design was approved by WSCC on 18 February 2020 and we are now in the process of developing this design fully with an aim to submit planning submissions in 20/21.

Initially, the scheme progressed as part of the One Public Estate Programme but is now a standalone WSFRS project that will also support Joint Emergency Service Interoperability (JESIP) training where required. The current design will provide facilities for a new fire station, state of the

art live fire training facility and cold smoke training tower and the anticipated completion date for the project is Autumn 2022.

In order to ensure that we are aware of the risks at a local level and that our crews are prepared to respond to them, we have introduced a Local Risk Management Plan approach. This includes the development of an app that all firefighters can see, that provides a simple, visual overview of incidents and risks that are specific to the station area. It also provides an insight into the communities that live and work in that area, so that if those communities have specific needs, such as additional support for vulnerable people or for different language needs, we can prepare for them. An action plan, tailored to each individual station ground, is being developed based on that data and the professional knowledge of local station staff. This means that we are helping our crews not only to better understand the kind of incidents that they are likely to be called to, but also gives them the opportunity to fully prepare for them. Our prevention and protection activity, as well as exercise scenarios are being tailored to meet those specific risks, making sure that we are honing our knowledge and skills for the best outcomes possible for our residents.

Prevention work is delivered with the aim of reducing incidents and their impact, as well as supporting communities to take care of themselves wherever possible, through the provision of education, advice and equipment

Specialist staff within the Prevention team focus on residents who are most at risk from fire and those who are most at risk of death and injury on the road. Targeted programmes work on an individual and group basis with the most vulnerable adults and children with the

highest risk levels and most complex issues.

The team has been restructured in 2020 to create capacity focussing on ensuring the team have the knowledge and skill to respond to pressures in specific areas of statutory delivery and to the areas of concern identified by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The overarching principles of the restructure are as follows:

A risk-based approach – as defined in the IRMP

To support communities by responding to the greatest areas of risk, threat and harm, not just fire and road safety

To develop and expand the role of a firefighter in relation to prevention

To maintain and improve our resident's health and wellbeing

It is essential that the team focuses on working with the highest risk and most vulnerable groups in relation to core fire and rescue service activity. This means continuing our work with children who have a potentially dangerous fascination with fire (Firewise), Safeguarding, further developing the service's volunteer programme and the delivery of Safe & Well Visits (SWV) to residents who are most at risk and have a high likelihood of fire in their home. It also includes existing work with victims of domestic violence, and contributions to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements. The team will be able to extend its delivery to include the highest risk individuals and communities across the county to reflect the risks identified in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

The restructure is now complete, outcomes of the restructure will be evident in the service's corporate performance measures published in 2020/21.

Throughout 2019-20 Protection has been reviewing its service delivery including fire safety audits and enforcement arrangements in WSFRS which also addresses the concerns raised by HMICFRS.

A Fire Safety Enforcement Strategy (FSES) has been published which defines the fire safety risks in West Sussex and how we will address, these risks. This is the supporting rationale for us increasing our staffing level to respond to the risk profile in the county.

The Fire Safety team has been restructured to better align staff levels to the risk identified in both the IRMP and FSES. This has permanently increased the establishment by eight people in dedicated fire safety posts, following significant investment from WSCC.

The team name Business Fire Safety has been changed in favour of Fire Safety, as we are dealing with more premises under the Housing Act, working closely with our local housing authorities and the term business often caused confusion with the public 'who live in housing not businesses'.

The new structure has helped deliver an increase in output delivering 1,391 full premises audits; 259 resulted in notices being issued. This increase in output also cleared the audit backlog noted by the HMICFRS.

We successfully instigated the removal of high-risk cladding panels systems from a large hotel and a high-rise residential block. We will continue to work with our other 72 high-rise residential blocks, to directly support the work of the National

Protection Board in addressing risks. This is driven through our learning from past incidents such as Grenfell and ensuring the safety of residents is paramount.

We responded to 185 referrals to fire safety, relating to concerns from business partners and members of the public. A referral is a fire safety complaint from a member of the public or a professional partner. All referrals are immediately risk assessed and often receive a fast response from a fire safety officer. Where immediate action was required in some of these establishments in this year, we issued eight prohibition notices, which is where we can stop people using all or part of a building if considered unsafe to continue to do so. This resulted in one prosecution being heard and four further prosecutions currently going through legal process.

During March 2020 our operation was impacted by the Covid-19 crisis and we have maintained our ability to enforce during this period by the adoption of PPE and new techniques, in line with NFCC Guidance, such as telephone audits. However, the impact of Covid-19 will continue to change how we approach fire safety enforcement in 2020-21.

Type of Inspection	Description	Number undertaken in 19/20
Prosecutions under the Fire Safety Order 2005	As an enforcing authority, we use our power to prosecute the people responsible for serious fire safety failings that endanger people.	1 complete / 4 pending
Full Premises Audits under the Fire safety Order 2005	We proactively inspect buildings to ensure they are safe for people who use those buildings. We focus on the buildings people sleep in as there is most risk in those.	1391
Notices	We issue a range of legal notices to make the responsible person improve the fire safety of buildings when we find them to be substandard.	259
Enforcement Notices	One of the most powerful notices we issue to instruct responsible person to make changes to buildings to make them safer.	19
Fire Safety Referrals	We respond to concerns or complaints from members of the public or other agencies, some are minor but some are very serious and so it is vital we can respond to these 24/7 to protect the safety of people.	185
Building Regulations	We comment on building regulation applications for workplaces and public places, to ensure that new buildings are safe	694
Licensing Applications	We comment on building regulation applications for places that provide alcohol and entertainment to ensure that the buildings are safe for the public	619
Town and Country Planning Applications	We comment on these applications to ensure that there are hydrants and good access for fire engines in new developments	2110
Hydrant Inspections	To ensure we can access water for firefighting we test all hydrants in the county at least once every three years.	5246
Hydrants Repaired	In the last year we repaired 102 hydrants to maintain the water supply for fire fighting	102
Tier 2 Fire Investigations	Tier 2 are the most serious investigations, carried out by a specialist fire investigation officer, these are typically fires where people are seriously injured	18

The IRMP action plan link below details the outcomes of each delivery year and what will be delivered in future years, to view please see:

www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/fire-rescue-service-integrated-risk-management-plan/

Our HMICFRS Improvement Plan can be found here:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/hm-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-and-rescue-services-hmicfrs-inspection-report/>

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS)

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) in the autumn of 2018. The report was issued in June 2019.

This is the first time that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had inspected fire and rescue services across England. Their focus was on the service provided to the public, and the way we use available resources. The inspection assessed how effectively and efficiently WSFRS prevents, protects the public against, and responds to fires and other emergencies. They also assessed how well we look after the people who work for the service.

The service worked hard to address the issues that were raised.

To assist in the delivery of the Home Office Inspectorate findings we established an Improvement Board. We welcomed the report to enable continual improvement across our service.

In January 2020 HMICFRS carried out a three-day revisit of WSFRS.

The reinspection team paid specific attention to the Prevention and Protection areas, which were the main concerns raised in the report with regards to public safety.

They reported seeing a clear commitment to making further improvements and they could see an accelerated pace with the improvement work over the past few months, mitigating the risk to public safety.

The inspectors reported that West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has made 'tangible improvements' in a number of areas and they could see an accelerated pace with the improvement work over the past few months, mitigating the risk to public safety.

They also recognised the new reporting line with the Chief Fire Officer reporting directly to the Chief Executive as part of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) structure within WSCC. Recognition of recent National Fire Chief Council support and Local Government Association (LGA) involvement was also positive and new allocated funding from WSCC was recognised as a positive step towards increasing capacity.

The report can be found here:
www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/hmicfrs-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-and-rescue-services-hmicfrs-inspection-report/

Legislation

The FRS works within a clear legislative context. Key legislation documents are as follows:

The National Fire and Rescue Service Framework for England 2018

Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (the 2004 Act), the Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework:

- a) Must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions.
- b) May contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions.
- c) May contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions

that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

This Act came into effect on 1 October 2004. It clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding or a terrorist attack
- Respond to the particular needs of our communities and the risks they face.

Fire and Rescue Service (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

The Fire and Rescue Service Emergencies (England) Order 2007 outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities.

The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents, both within and outside the authority area, involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

The Order complements the National Mutual Assistance Protocol, to which this Authority is a signatory. This requires fire authorities to make a reasonable response to requests for assistance in relation to any large-scale emergency outside their area.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

This Order is a statutory instrument, applicable only in England and Wales, which

places the responsibility on individuals within an organisation to carry out risk assessments to identify, manage and reduce the risk of fire. It became law on October 1 2006.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Fire and Rescue Authorities are 'Category 1 responders' under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

This Act sets out the full set of civil protection duties, including assessing the risk of emergencies happening (ranging from widespread flooding to terrorist attacks) and using this to inform contingency planning. Fire and Rescue Authorities must ensure that emergency plans and business continuity management arrangements are in place.

The Equality Act 2010

This Act is designed to reform and harmonise equality laws, to increase equality of opportunity and to have regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities. It is designed to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017

The Act makes three key provisions pertaining to the FRS:

1. It places a duty on the emergency services, Police, Fire and Ambulance, to collaborate, when there is a proven benefit to operational effectiveness or efficiency.
2. It established an independent inspectorate for the Fire and Rescue Service, the HMICFRS
3. It enables transfer of Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) duties to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) where a case for change is made.

Further legislation which applies to the Fire Authority can be found within our IRMP.

Contact us

In an emergency you should always dial 999.

To find out more on West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service please follow the link to our website:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire>

Your views and comments on this Statement of Assurance are very welcome.

If you have feedback or any questions, please get in touch with us.

By email: wsfrs@westsussex.gov.uk

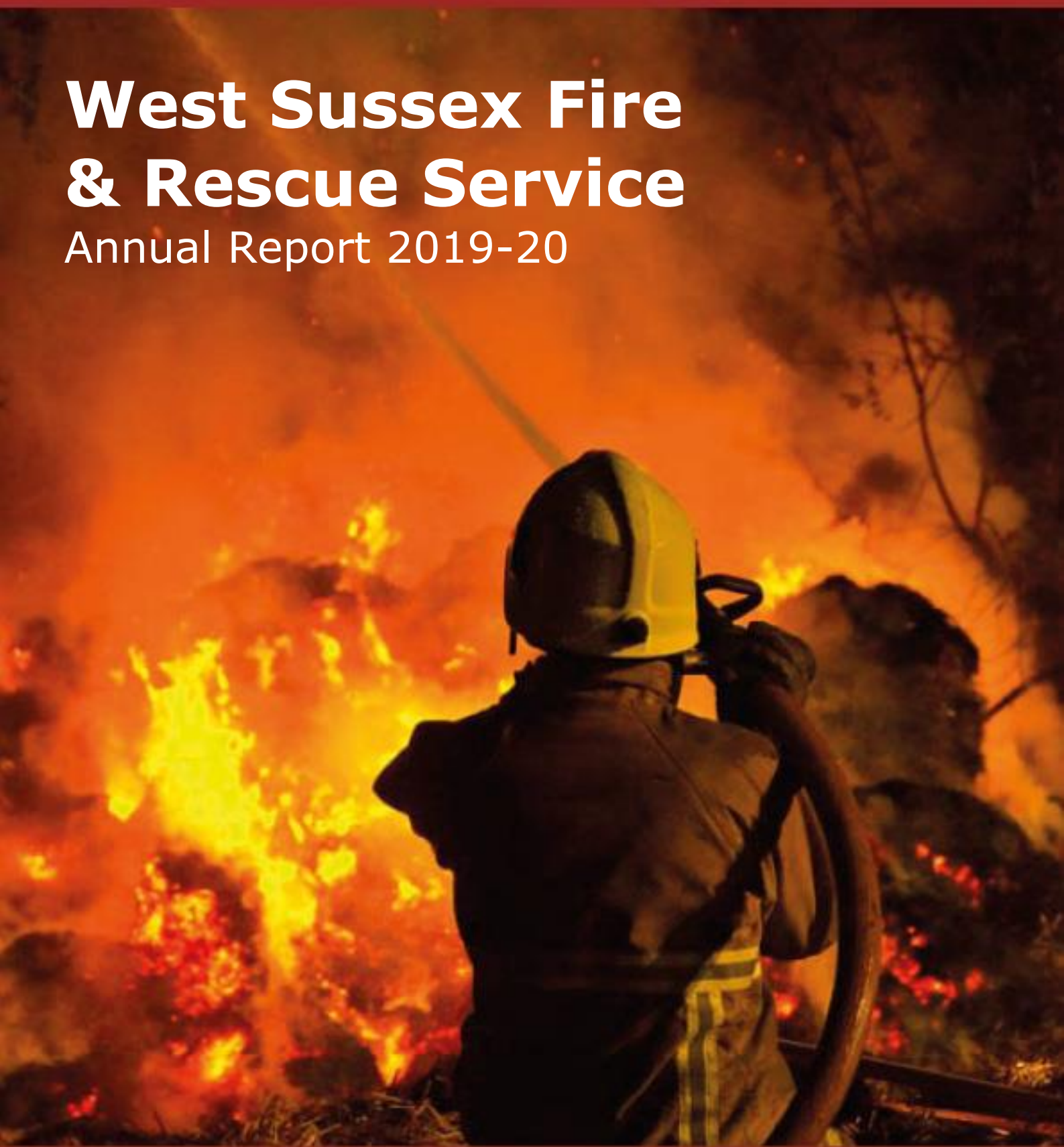
By telephone: 01243 777100

Or write to us at:
West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
Headquarters
County Hall
Chichester
PO19 1RQ

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West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Annual Report 2019-20



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Foreword

Welcome to the 2019/2020 West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Annual Report.

This report tells you about what the fire service did last year, including the overall performance and some of the main highlights of their work.



This report covers the financial year from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The report can be found on the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS)

section of the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) website as well as the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2018-22 and supporting strategies.

This year's Annual Report sees us moving forward with a new Chief Fire Officer, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton. Sabrina joined West Sussex in September 2019 and is helping to navigate us successfully through a challenging period following the publication of our first inspection report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in June 2019 which identified our areas for improvement. The West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority is committed to the core purpose of providing our communities with sustainable, high quality firefighting, rescue and preventative services, and I want to thank all our staff who continue to work with great professionalism and dedication to help achieve this. The achievements from last year are clear evidence of this dedication.

Duncan Crow
Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities

Introduction

Our people are at the heart of our fire and rescue service. I cannot thank our staff enough for their continued courage, effort and dedication. We are proud to serve the people of West Sussex. We are committed to saving, protecting and improving the lives of people in our county.

We will continually challenge ourselves and our practices to improve our service and make



a difference to people's lives. The inspection report of our service published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in 2019 identified our areas for improvement. We welcomed these findings so that we can improve our service and the impact that we can have. We know we have a lot to do, but we have a clear plan in place. I also want to note that in their follow up visit this year inspectors said we had made 'tangible improvements'.

We enjoy putting together our annual report as it gives us the chance to reflect on the accomplishments of our talented staff and to share it with you. In addition to this Annual Report, our Statement of Assurance for 2019-20 provides more details on our finances and performance.

When you need us, rest assured, our professional teams will continue to deliver the service West Sussex expects and deserves.

Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton
Chief Fire Officer

The community we serve

West Sussex is home to almost 859,000 people.

The four largest towns are Crawley, Horsham, Worthing and Bognor Regis. 21.3% of the county's population and 30% of businesses are in rural areas.

Arun District has the highest proportion of residents with 19%, while Adur, the smallest district, has the lowest, at less than 8%.

Over 506,000 people, around 59% of West Sussex population are of working age (16-64yrs). Almost 196,000 (23%) of the county population are 65 or over.

The county is the second most wooded in the UK – 19% woodland compared to the national average 9%.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's headquarters, as well as that of West Sussex County Council, are based at County Hall in Chichester.

The county includes part of the South Downs National Park and coastal areas.

It has several stately homes, including Goodwood, Petworth House and Uppark House, alongside Arundel Castle and Bramber Castle.

More than half of our county is protected countryside, including the South Downs National Park. In addition, large areas of the county are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

As well as major road and rail links, Gatwick Airport, which has over 46 million passengers each year, is also located in the county.

West Sussex covers 768 square miles, incorporating coastal strips in the south,

Gatwick Airport in the north-east of the county and significant rural area in between.

While West Sussex generally has a strong performing economy, there are pockets of deprivation notably in some of the coastal districts and in Crawley.

Employment rates in West Sussex are above the regional and national average, with around 426,000 economically active residents of working age. Around 71% of workers are full time and around a third of jobs in the county are in the health sector, retail or business administration and support services. Self-employment rates in West Sussex are 13.4% and above the average for both the South East and nationally, being particularly high in the more rural districts of Chichester and Horsham. The highest proportion of businesses are in the professional, scientific and technical sectors.

Average weekly earnings in West Sussex are above the national average but lower than the regional average, with higher earners working in Chichester and Crawley. West Sussex is a small firm economy with around 85% employing fewer than 10 people, though Crawley has one of the higher proportions of large businesses with over 250 or more employees.

West Sussex remains a desirable place to live and the average house price in the county is £328,196. This is above both the national (England) and regional average. In addition, the ratio of house price to earnings is higher in West Sussex than the regional and national average, with a range of variation across the county.

Much of the rural part of West Sussex includes the areas that lie within the South Downs National Park and two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The South Downs National Park is the most visited national park in the country. The attractiveness of the county, as well as

visitor attractions and the location on the south coast, result in leisure and tourism being an important sector for West Sussex.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

Our current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) runs from 2018 to 2022. Over the past two years the plan has been adopted and we have been developing action plans around the priorities.

To help us deliver the IRMP action plans and the areas of improvement and concern raised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) we have introduced a Programme Steering Board to ensure effective controls are in place to manage risks, assumptions, issues and dependencies. The role of this Board is to provide support, monitor progress, and make recommendations that will enable Fire Programmes to be delivered to time, cost and quality requirements and ultimately drive the delivery of the change identified in our action plans.

Strategies have been developed for the following:

- Fire Safety Enforcement Strategy 2020-2022
- Customer Centred Value for Money Strategy 2018-2022
- Integration and Collaboration Strategy 2018-2022
- People and Culture Strategy
- Prevention Strategy 2019-2022
- Service Delivery Strategy 2018-2022

A review is being undertaken. You can read more here under 'Other internal reports': www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/fire-rescue-service-reports

We will continue to measure our progress in these boards against project and programme milestones as well using our key performance indicators to measure success.

To view the full IRMP visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/fire-rescue-service-integrated-risk-management-plan

Protection

During this year Business Fire Safety has restructured to align resources better to the risk identified in both the IRMP and RBIP. This has increased the establishment by eight people in dedicated fire safety posts, following significant investment from WSCC. In February 2020 Protection was revisited by the HMICFRS who reported in letter that all the concerns from their 2018 Inspection had now been addressed and good progress had been made.

The department name has changed from Business Fire Safety to Fire Safety as we are dealing with more premises under the Housing Act, working closely with our Local Housing Authorities and the term business often caused confusion with the public.

Following the restructure, we continued our inspections as part of our risk-based inspection programme, targeting those premises most at risk. These included care homes, high risk residential buildings, licenced premises and other high-risk public

spaces and events with large numbers of people.

As part of the risk-based inspection programme we carried out 1,391 audits of which 259 resulted in notices being issued. We also cleared the audit backlog which had been created as a result of the positive work to make residential buildings safer following the Grenfell tragedy and our commitment to work with high risk residential buildings. Initial planning for the next phase of the national Building Risk Review has also been completed and this work will commence in Summer 2020.

Sleeping accommodation remains a priority, working closely with the residents and the 'responsible person' for high-rise residential blocks. As such, we successfully oversaw the removal of high-risk cladding panels systems from a large hotel and a high-rise residential block. We continue to work with another 80 high-rise residential blocks to directly support the work of the National Protection Board in addressing Grenfell-like risks and ensuring the safety of residents. We then make sure that this key information is available to responding fire crews through the computer in the cab of the fire engines, known as a Mobile Data Terminal.

We responded to 185 referrals to fire safety concerns from business partners and members of the public. All referrals are immediately risk assessed and often receive an immediate response from a fire safety officer. Where immediate action was required in some of these establishments, we issued 8 prohibition notices. This resulted in one prosecution being heard and four further prosecutions are currently going through the legal process for breaches of fire safety legislation.

Enforcement notices were issued to establishments including restaurants, takeaways and residential flats. The team

also received 363 general fire safety enquiries during the year.



We assessed 2,110 planning applications during this year looking at the provision of water supplies and access for fire engines in case of an incident. These were examined and commented upon to ensure new buildings, or changes to existing building infrastructure, provided the required facilities. In addition, 5,246 hydrant inspections were carried out and 102 hydrant defects were identified and repaired.

With the continual changes to building infrastructure in the county, 694 statutory building consultations were examined and commented upon. Additionally, 619 licensing applications were received, reviewed and assessed to ensure fire safety standards were satisfactory. This also included licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

This represents a 57% increase in licencing consultations from the previous year.

Low level tier 1 fire investigations were carried out at all fires by operational crews. However, 18 fires required a full tier 2 investigation by our specialist fire investigators. The fire investigators worked alongside police and community teams to reduce fire risk or support police with arson prosecutions and to learn the causes of fires so they can be prevented in the future. This is a reduction of 47% in part due to our increased protection and prevention activities.

Prevention

The prevention work that we carry out is designed to reduce the number of incidents and their impact. It reduces loss of life, enables us to identify vulnerable residents who require additional support and can reduce the level of risk that our firefighters are exposed to.

Our prevention activity is focused on those who have a high level of fire risk and may have a limited ability to respond safely in a fire situation. This can include the elderly and people with mental or physical health issues.

So much of our prevention work is built around partnerships and the sharing of knowledge and intelligence. Our partners provide subject matter expertise in their specific fields and data to help us identify where there is the greatest level of community risk. The WSCC Communications and Engagement team play a crucial role in the delivery of our prevention work through the promotion and distribution of our safety messages as well as creating material to use in our safety campaigns

In the year ending March 2020, our operational crews and Community Fire

Safety Officers carried out 4,699 high priority Safe and Well Visits, to those deemed most at risk.

As part of a Safe and Well Visit our staff install smoke detectors and where there is a very high level of fire risk and risk of personal harm or loss of life, we recommend residents consider a linked smoke detector as part of a telecare package. When we meet residents, who have needs that we are unable to assist them with we make a referral to one of our partners for additional support.

During the 4,699 Safe and Well Visits we:

- Installed 2,635 ten-year smoke alarms
- Provided 1,940 telecare linked smoke alarms
- Distributed 153 deaf alarm systems
- Supported 47 domestic violence cases with specialist equipment and advice
- Provided 854 other items of detection and protection equipment, which includes fire aprons or blankets for vulnerable smokers with limited mobility

As a result, 4,699 homes are now safer, with early warning of a fire and tailored fire safety advice. The residents will now be aware of how they can reduce the likelihood of fire in their home and what to do in the event of one. At each visit we leave the resident with a booklet packed with fire safety advice as well as other information e.g., falls prevention, support to quit smoking, avoidance of scams and how to prepare for an emergency provided by our partner agencies along with their contact numbers.

The tele-linked smoke detectors are a vital lifeline protecting some of our most vulnerable residents with disabilities and or medical conditions, those who may be unaware that there is a fire or able to move

themselves to a place of safety. We are mobilised via the telecare call centre without the resident having to make the call, which on 33 occasions resulted in reduction in damage to someone's home and harm to the resident and on three occasions saved someone's life.

Community Fire Safety Officers, or local crews, will often return to a property after an incident to offer additional advice and support, and to help residents consider how the risk of future incidents can be reduced.

Being a trusted organisation gives us more open access to some individuals. To ensure we can provide the most appropriate help, our staff have been given safeguarding training to help them identify a wide range of issues.

Where required, we can refer people to other organisations we work with, or other relevant departments within WSCC. Last year we raised safeguarding concerns about more than 71 people and referred 642 individuals to other services or sources of support. Referrals were made to Carepoint, occupational therapy, telecare providers, the Prevention Assessment Team and local Wellbeing Hubs to support people with their care needs and for Attendance Allowance and Carer's Allowance, Winter Warmth to support them with their financial needs.

As part of our safeguarding responsibility we attend the Adult's Safeguarding Board and work closely with the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences where there is an identified fire risk.

Public Health colleagues have provided advice and content for the information we leave with residents when undertaking Safe and Well Visits for example information on falls prevention, smoking cessation and the five ways to wellbeing. They have also

provided advice on healthy eating, which has been included in our programmes of work for children and young people.

We carried out drop-in events to deliver safety measures to wider audiences. These included testing 328 electric blankets last year, which found 70 of them to be unsafe. The unsafe blankets were withdrawn from use and with the owners' permission disposed of, enabling the resident to sleep safely at night by preventing a potentially devastating fire in their home.

We are in a privileged position when we visit someone's home to undertake a Safe and Well Visit. We very often get to meet people who are shut away from the world in their personal struggle without any support. It's at times like this that we take the opportunity to carry out small acts of kindness which can make such a huge difference to someone's quality of life. During a Safe and Well Visit to a resident who had recently been discharged from hospital with a life limiting illness it became apparent that not only did they need a linked smoke detector they also had other needs. They were struggling financially, struggling to cook and their broadband connection was down. Our officer was able to put them in touch with the meals on wheels service, benefits support and quite quickly and easily fix the broadband issue. As a result of the visit not only had we helped reduce their fire risk, we had also reconnected them back with the outside world.

On another occasion when one of our firefighters visited a resident to carry out a visit, he noticed how cold they felt when he shook their hand. The coldness alerted him to the fact that all was not well. It became apparent that the resident was struggling with their mental health and taking care of them self. Having provided the resident with fire safety advice the firefighter was also able to recommend some partner agencies

who could offer support and assist them with getting social care.

Work with children and young people

We play a valuable role teaching children about fire prevention and road safety, from primary school age upwards.

We use specialist learning materials to ensure that we engage with children at the most appropriate level and can communicate information in a format they will be able to retain and share with others.

Last year we had contact with 16,186 pupils during 245 School Education Visits. We also saw 2,499 pupils through Junior Citizen events across the county. During Junior Citizens we work alongside several of our partner organisations, Sussex Police, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Junior Neighbourhood Watch, Magistrates in the Community, Bike Ability and Sussex Community Rail Partnership to deliver interactive sessions on a variety of subjects, the children learnt how to keep themselves and others safe, and how to become good citizens in our communities.



Firefighters can be positive role models for young people. We work in partnership with a number of organisations such as schools, local community safety teams, Sussex Police

and Alternative Provision Colleges to discourage anti-social behaviour and last year 41 children were referred to our Firewise programme, which helps young people understand the potential consequences of experimenting with fires.

We also ran FireBreak, in partnership with county council colleagues from Youth Services and schools. It is aimed at young people aged between 12 and 14, and actively encourages students to become positive role models within their communities.

Students attended a fire station over five consecutive days, working alongside uniformed firefighters on a structured programme of events that combine classroom-based activities and practical training to promote teamwork, social awareness, self-discipline and to help reduce negative influences.

The course provides skills and experiences that will help support young people as they prepare to enter the world of work. In addition, it gives an insight into a career in the fire and rescue service and presents West Sussex County Council as an employer of choice.

We ran six of these courses during the year, working with a total of 65 students, including a tailor-made course for a special needs school. Sessions included crime and consequence delivered by a Police officer and water safety delivered by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Not only did 65 students receive a lifesaving Heartstart qualification, feedback from parents and teachers noted that students were more engaged, more confident and had made significant personal achievements, for some it was 100% attendance, for others it was conquering a fear of heights or forming new friendships.

Community Volunteers

Our Community Volunteers have played a vital part in being able to offer advice and information to help keep our communities safe and engage with our residents. Volunteers provide connections and local insight into their home communities assist with the transfer of fire and road safety messages to their personal networks.

The volunteers have generously given over 1,100 hours of their time to support our community-based activity. They supported the operational crews at various community events across the county, including the 'Tea and Tips' events held at Chichester, Littlehampton, East Preston and Hassocks to mark 'Older Persons Day' and prevent social isolation. They also supported the operational crews with campaigns such as kitchen safety, electrical safety and Christmas drink drive.

Some of our volunteers were trained in the use of the virtual reality headsets and attended freshers fairs to provide road safety advice and give the students the experience of being in a virtual road traffic collision.

Volunteers supported electric blanket testing dates. They performed a crucial role in helping the days run smoothly by signing attendees in, directing them where to go and providing fire safety advice and other useful information to those waiting.

There have been many other occasions where the volunteers have made an extremely valuable contribution these include station open days, Safe Drive Stay Alive, Junior Citizens and Biker Down as well as performing a ceremonial function at official WSFRS events.

Towards the end of 2019, volunteers took part in several engagement sessions across the county, aimed reviewing the existing

volunteer programme. Their feedback was crucial in starting to shape what the Community Volunteers will look like going forward. We have created an action plan to further develop this area of our work. We would like to encourage more people to join us as a volunteer and intend to broaden the role.

Road Safety

We deal with the consequences of road traffic collisions on a daily basis. We work closely with our national and regional partners to do everything we can to reduce the number, and severity, of such incidents.

One of our key road safety collaborations is the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP), a partnership which includes Brighton & Hove City Council, East and West Sussex County Councils, Highways England, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services and Sussex Police.

All of the organisations in the SSRP work together to help make the roads of Sussex safer and, since April 2015, the SSRP has been fully funded using some of the speed awareness course fees, where drivers detected speeding are offered the opportunity to take an educational course rather than have a penalty fine and points on their driving licence.

Road Traffic Collisions

Over the course of last year there were 1,961 reported road traffic collisions (RTCs). Sadly 29 people lost their lives, 591 people were seriously injured and a further 1,998 people suffered slight injuries.

More information can be found following this link: www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/road-accidents-and-casualty-data/

We are not asked to attend all collisions, but we were called to 516 incidents last year and carried out work to rescue casualties 70 times.

We work hard with a number of partners to try to reduce this number through initiatives such as Safe Drive Stay Alive.

Working with young road users

Almost 7,250 young people from local schools and colleges attended our hard-hitting road show Safe Drive Stay Alive. Sadly, the final show of the 2019/20 season had to be postponed due to COVID-19. The show is delivered in partnership with staff from Sussex Police, South East Coast Ambulance (SECamb), NHS and seriously injured victims, as well as relatives of those who have been killed on our roads.

It brings to life difficult messages to make young people aware of their responsibilities as new or potential drivers, or as passengers travelling with their friends, and of the devastating consequences that can occur otherwise.

We also engaged with 95 motorcyclists through our Biker Down programme, which promotes rider safety at events across the county and helps make motorcyclists aware of what to do in the event of a collision, as well as the courses and advice available to them. This is delivered in partnership with the Sussex Police.

Advice and information for all drivers can be found on the SSRP website www.sussexsaferoads.gov.uk.

Response

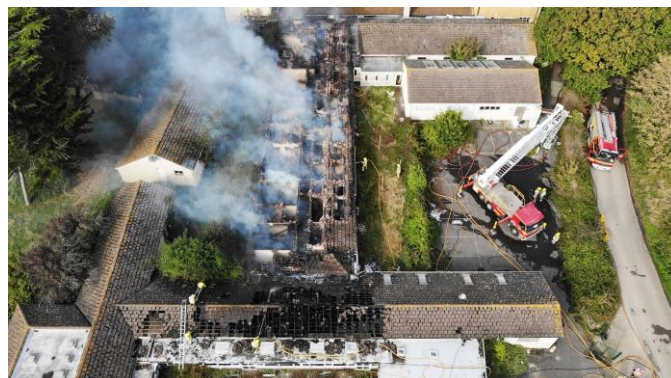
We will work every day with our communities and partners to prevent emergencies, make people safer and improve lives in West Sussex. Emergencies

happen and when they do, we will be ready to respond professionally and as quickly as possible in order to help people and save lives.

The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2018-22 sets out the Fire Authority's risk assessment for fires and rescues in West Sussex and outlines how we are equipped to deal with the risks and incidents identified in the IRMP.

These risks include building fires and road traffic collisions which are directly covered in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. As well as other incident types such as animal rescues and flood responses which are discretionary for the Fire Authority.

We send the quickest fire engine to every incident, this being the fire engine that can get there before any other fire engine. This means on some occasions a fire engine from another service will be the first on scene as we operate on borderless mobilising with neighbouring services.



For each incident type we know how many firefighters and what equipment will be needed to initially resolve incidents, we ensure we send this in what we call a 'Pre-Determined Attendance'

Speed and weight of attack are important however, the quality of work on scene is also critical to how well we resolve an incident. We work hard to ensure our crews are well

trained and well equipped. We also ensure that the people who have the responsibility for being in charge of an incident are well supported with tactical advice and specialist support where required.



We utilise a number of different crewing systems across the service to provide twenty four hour operational cover, seven days a week, three hundred and sixty five days a year to our communities, the type of crewing system used will be based on the risk and demand in each geographical area.

We have eight immediate response, wholtime crewed fire engines based at six fire stations – Crawley, Worthing, Bognor, Littlehampton, Chichester and Horsham. These stations are permanently crewed using a system called Group Crewing.

There are also four fire engines crewed by wholtime firefighters working from 7am until 7pm, from Monday to Friday, at Shoreham, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead.

Many of our fire stations are crewed by part time Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters who provide an agreed amount of cover 'on-call' via a pager system and respond to their station when there is an incident. We use RDS firefighters at 23 of our 25 fire stations, 14 of which are crewed entirely by on-call employees. There are a

number of challenges in maintaining the availability of our RDS appliances, changes to the way we live, and the demands placed upon our time have made it challenging to recruit and retain the number of RDS firefighters that we need.

We have made a number of improvements to increase our RDS availability.

- We have introduced a new Service Delivery Centre to support and coordinate the use of our Wholtime and RDS staff. This allows us to maximise the availability of our appliances and to respond as quickly as possible to incidents by having more appliances available and ready to respond.
- We have also introduced three additional Retained Liaison Officers (RLOs) to support our retained managers. Our Retained Unit Leaders have to balance their managerial responsibilities with their full-time employment. The RLOs provide additional support to these managers and their stations with retention and recruitment activity, additional managerial support and they also provide operational cover across West Sussex as qualified incident commanders. This further supports and contributes to the availability of our RDS appliances and the day to day management of our RDS stations.
- We have also introduced 'County Crewing' to maximise RDS availability. This involves redeploying RDS personnel from their home station to other RDS stations to increase the number of RDS appliances that are available. This enables us to attend incidents as quickly as possible across the county.

Keeping our firefighters safe is of paramount importance, we are constantly reviewing and investing in new equipment and techniques to make our firefighters both safer and more effective. These developments are fully supported through quality training programmes developed by our People and Organisational Development team.

- **New fire appliances:** We have completed the procurement of seven new 12 tonne Medium Rescue Pumps (MRP) and have recently taken delivery of the first one. The 12 tonne Volvo MRP is lower, shorter, narrower and has a much smaller turning circle than our 18 tonne Super Rescue Pumps (SRP). This will allow the MRPs to access more roads and be more manoeuvrable in crowded towns and narrow rural roads which will assist us in improving our response times. They will carry new equipment such as a nine-metre main ladder and Ultra High-Pressure Hose Reels, which offer new capabilities that will complement the equipment of our 18 tonne Super Rescue Pumps. This will ensure that at every significant fire the incident commander has a full range of tactical options that will improve our effectiveness in firefighting and rescue operations. These appliances will be located at Worthing, Crawley, Henfield, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath fire stations.



Fog nails: We have introduced this new equipment to compliment the use of our new smoke curtains in support of our enhanced firefighting tactics. Fog nails enable us to deliver water into rooms within a building and difficult to access areas such as roof spaces and basements. They create a fine misting effect that can dramatically reduce the temperature and spread of a fire. Being able to tackle a fire in this way means firefighters are kept safer, property can be preserved more effectively, and the fire can be extinguished more quickly.

Heavy hydraulic rescue equipment: We have upgraded the tools we use to rescue people from large vehicles such as LGV's across our three Heavy Rescue Tenders.

New Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): New firefighting and rescue PPE has been issued to all our staff as part of a national collaboration.

Drone: Our drone is now fully operational and will support our Incident Commanders decision making by providing enhanced situational awareness, particularly at larger and more complex incidents. The drone is operated by our Technical Rescue Unit and specially trained officers.

Enhanced Medical Support Packs: We have upgraded the medical equipment that we carry on our appliances for use by staff with enhanced Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) qualifications. This enables us to provide improved care when first in attendance at operational incidents.

New equipment procurement is based on the lessons learnt from previous incidents. We debrief incidents to ensure that we update training, procedures and equipment to continuously improve how we respond.

Collaboration

Gaining entry: We have been working collaboratively with East Sussex Fire & Rescue, Sussex Police and the South East Coast Ambulance Service to assist with gaining entry to premises during medical emergencies. A delay in gaining access to properties can have a detrimental impact on the patient, by utilising fire and rescue crews we are able to gain swift access for Ambulance crews using our equipment and training. Fire and rescue support has also reduced the operational demand on Sussex Police colleagues who have previously undertaken this work. WSFRS have attended over 200 incidents of this type since January 2019 as part of a collaborative pilot project which has now been adopted as core business in WSFRS.

National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning:

The sharing of notable practice or opportunities for development beyond our immediate service is extremely important. National Organisational Learning (NOL) and Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) platforms enable us to share our learning on a national level within the fire and rescue sector and partner emergency services. Each of these

platforms are assisting emergency services to have an improved shared understanding of risk and how services have overcome these challenges. This promotes the safety and welfare of our communities and personnel.

Operational Assurance

Responding to emergencies is core to our role as a fire and rescue service, where risk is at its highest, and our operational competence must be the very best. A person is operationally competent only when they can apply their skills, knowledge and understanding at operational incidents or in a realistic simulation.

Within the National Occupational Standards (NOS) that apply to fire and rescue services, there is a requirement to implement a quality assurance system.

Such systems ensure:

- we deliver our services to a standard expected of the communities we serve
- our operational staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding in order to fulfil the vast array of operational demands placed upon them
- continuous development of a safe, and competent operational workforce
- that issues are managed and rectified in an appropriate and timely manner.

We implement operational assurance so that an appropriate quality management system is in place. To facilitate this, we undertake regular performance and review of all aspects of our operational performance.

We have carried out 26 multi agency exercises ranging from smaller less complex incident types to larger more protracted scenarios with agencies such South East Coast Ambulance Service, Gatwick Airport and Sussex Police. These exercises also include cross border working with

Hampshire, Surrey and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Services.

We are keen to learn from national learning to ensure we continue to improve our performance at incidents, cope with future changes in the operational environment and continue to provide the best service to the public and improve firefighter safety.

The Joint Fire Control project

In August 2018 the Fire Authority made a decision to start work on a project to assess how we were fulfilling our statutory duty for receiving and acting upon emergency calls for help and present options for our future mobilisation function. The options were presented in January 2019 and approved by the cabinet member.

The chosen option was to enter into a collaboration with Surrey Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) and demonstrated value for money, the suitability of tried and tested technology and to address the wider IT strategy for the fire and rescue service. WSFRS teamed up with our county IT partners to deliver the project during 2019.

The full statutory duties for mobilisation of West Sussex resources were passed to SFRS, this included a new personnel asset management system that was implemented with enhanced resilience and functionality including a full interface to automate the availability of firefighters and fire engines. This system frees up control operators to carry out essential mobilising operations and streamlines the end user experience. As part of the wider IT strategy the team improved firefighter safety, the service introduced new computers in the cabs of fire engines, the computers hold critical safety information on risks within the county that are now shared across both services. We also addressed

improvements in resilience of our IT systems that are linked into the mobilisation systems and improved the way we track our officers and dynamically mobilise them making our officer resource more effective. Other new systems included how we report on fires to the Home Office. We work to continue the collaboration with SFRS in the alignment of our procedures to improve cross boarder working.

The new control function went live on 4 December 2019 delivering the statutory function on time and within the project budget. This new collaboration will see year on year savings moving forward.

The project team delivered significant benefits to the service in collaboration with SFRS and we continue to develop this collaboration in 2020.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS)

HMICFRS inspected WSFRS in the autumn of 2018.

This is the first time that HMICFRS has inspected fire and rescue services across England. Their focus is on the service we provide to the public, and the way we use resources available. The inspection assessed how effectively and efficiently WSFRS prevents, protects the public against, and responds to fires and other emergencies. They also assessed how well we look after the people who work for the service.

The report was issued in June 2019 and can be found here: www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/hm-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-and-rescue-services-hmicfrs-inspection-report/

The service has put in place a robust Improvement Plan which can be found here: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/performance-plans-and-reports/hm-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-and-rescue-services-hmicfrs-inspection-report/>

In January 2020 HMICFRS carried out a three-day revisit of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

The reinspection team paid specific attention to the Prevention and Protection areas, which were the main concerns raised in the report with regards to public safety.

They reported seeing a real commitment to making further improvements and they could see an accelerated pace with the improvement work over the past few months, mitigating the risk to public safety.

Other notable areas seen positively by the reinspection team included governance changes, the Programme Management Office's ability to support driving improvements forward with staff and the establishment of the Independent Advisory Board to support the improvement journey.

They also recognised the new reporting line with the CFO reporting directly to the Chief Executive now places the CFO as part of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) structure within WSCC. Recognition of recent National Fire Chief Council support and LGA involvement was also positive and new allocated funding from WSCC recognised as a positive towards increasing capacity.

Incidents of note

Westhampnett

Fire crews were alerted to a fire at Westhampnett Household Waste Recycling

Site at 8.25pm on Tuesday 2 April 2019. On arrival, crews found a developing fire in the main building of the centre. At the height of the fire four fire engines and the aerial ladder platform were at the scene.

During the initial stages of the fire we allowed the fire to burn under control with the fire service in attendance at all times. This incident involved multiple agencies including the Environment Agency, Viridor, West Sussex County Council and local council representation. The controlled burning decision was based on the environmental impact of firefighting water runoff and the risk it may have posed to the local lakes, weather conditions at the time also assisted a controlled burn approach. Residents living nearby were kept informed throughout the fire, advice was given to ensure minimal exposure to smoke, and data from nearby air quality stations was continually monitored.

A couple of weeks later there was a second fire at the site, involving a waste vehicle. This was quickly brought under control. On 4 March 2020 there was another fire at the site involving around 200 tonnes of waste. Firefighters worked quickly to stabilise the fire and managed to save a number of nearby lorries and items of heavy plant from fire. The professional response made by WSFRS and our partners helped to minimise the impact on the environment.



Shell garage fire

At 9.31 on 6 May 2019 Sussex Control Centre received multiple calls to a camper van fire on a petrol forecourt at the Shell service station at Fontwell.

Three appliances from Chichester, Bognor and Worthing along with a water carrier from Petworth were mobilised. Six sets of breathing apparatus, two firefighting jets and one foam jet were used to extinguish the fire.

A cordon remained in place for some time after the fire was extinguished due to residual LPG gas from the auto gas supply. This had a large impact on the A27, with traffic diverted. Officers worked closely with Sussex Police to ensure drivers were aware of the impact and were urged to avoid the area.

The garage remained closed for some time due to extensive damage.



RTC East Wittering

The service received a call to a serious road traffic collision (RTC) at 8.44pm on 31 July 2019, on Bracklesham Lane, Bracklesham, involving four cars with persons trapped and a car on fire.

Crews were faced with multiple casualties and one person still trapped in a car on its side that was on fire with flames beginning to enter the passenger compartment.

The trapped casualty was quickly rescued by crews as a result of decisive and courageous actions by crews the fire was extinguished.

First aid was given to a total of seven casualties by crews, these actions undoubtedly saved further lives.

Firefighters were supported by multiple ambulance crews and the helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS). Sadly, this was a fatal incident and the service carried out many forms of community engagement with those affected by the incident in the days following the crash.

Texaco Garage fire

At 2.12am on 15 September 2019, SCC received a call to a fire at the rear of the Texaco Garage in Copthorne Road, Crawley.

On arrival the crew was faced with a well-developed fire in a garage workshop and requested a further three appliances be mobilised. Due to the challenges with water supplies a further two appliances and two water carriers were requested.

As a result of the structure collapsing crews used one jet, three high pressure hose reels, three ground monitors and two fog nails to contain the fire.

This was a complex incident, but crews worked effectively to extinguish the fire and prevent extensive spread of fire to neighbouring properties.

Bognor fire

At 1.45am on 28 October 2019, the service responded to a fire in Bedford Street at the back of a business property, a fridge retailer.

This fire grew rapidly and spread to the building and resulted in a significant fire loss of the retail shop. At its height there were six fire engines on the scene and the aerial ladder platform (ALP) was also in attendance.

A full range of firefighting techniques was used including fog nails, compressed air foam (CAFs) and using the ALP as a water tower to prevent the fire spreading further.

Haywards Heath College fire

At 1.29pm on 27 January 2020, we were mobilised to a fire in Central Sussex College.

On arrival crews from Haywards Heath were faced with a developing fire in a void behind the external fascia.

The incident commander immediately requested more resources and an Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) this was followed by a further request for resources. In total 10 fire appliances from along with the ALP and the Technical Rescue Unit attended.

Crews extinguished the fire using main jets and fog nails as well as using the ALP and TRU cutting equipment to remove the external fascia to ensure no hidden fire spread in the internal voids. Crews used a wide range of equipment available to them in order to bring this fire under control and prevent further spread to the rest of the building.

Storms Ciara & Dennis

In mid-February 2020 the service responded to several incidents following the outbreaks of Storms Ciara and Dennis.

During Storm Dennis West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service received around 200 flooding-related calls in one 12-hour period.

These varied from flooded properties to people trapped in their vehicles in floodwater.

Firefighters from across the county used specialist water rescue techniques and equipment to assist residents who had become stranded in several different situations to ensure they were brought to safety.



People

Operational Training Team (OTT) are responsible for ensuring we have a safe, competent and well-trained workforce by delivering all operational training requirements.

The team provide a diverse range of training including:

- wholetime and retained recruit initial training
- Breathing apparatus initial and maintenance training
- Incident Command initial and maintenance training
- Emergency Response Driver initial and maintenance training
- Water Rescue initial and maintenance training
- Immediate Emergency Care (Trauma) initial and maintenance training

During 2019-20 282 courses were delivered at WSFRS venues at Worthing and Horley with live fire and specialist training courses facilitated by the OTT at the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gatwick and Hampshire FRS.



The OTT team are also responsible for the continued review and updating of the 2 yearly Maintenance of Competence programme for firefighters.

A wholetime recruit initial training course took place between September 2019 and November 2019 with 12 new wholetime firefighters successfully passing the course.



This was the second cohort of successful candidates from our Wholetime recruitment campaign held in 2018.

Eight retained (on-call) assessment days were facilitated by People Support. This resulted in four retained (on-call) recruit initial courses for 44 new starters.

During 2019-20, the service retention rate improved compared to last year's data with the main reason for wholetime leavers being retirement and retained (on-call) being personal circumstances.

One Public Estate



One Public Estate (OPE) is a national programme, jointly managed by the Cabinet Office, MHCLG and the Local Government Association, which brings public sector organisations together. By working in partnership, we can look at how we can use our land and buildings collaboratively to:

- Improve public services to residents, visitors, employees and businesses in the county.
- Renew and rationalise the public estate so there is a reduction in the amount of money we spend on buildings.
- Free up much needed land for the development of housing, commercial and employment space.
- Support local economic growth.
- Generate capital receipts and income.

WSFRS has established clear principles to inform and guide the design and development of new FRS facilities including:

Operational

- Stations are located in appropriate places to optimise emergency response, minimise response times and add value to their communities.
- Stations provide a great working environment that encourages recruitment and retention, supports diversity and inclusion and the wellbeing of staff.

- FRS working environments encourage and support cultural and behavioural change.
- Our buildings are smarter, more flexible, modern, and sustainable, supporting service improvement and able to adapt to changing service demands.
- The FRS estate provides training facilities that meet the needs of a modern fire service.

Estate

- Increased value from estate, through sharing of sites, co-location/integration with other services, additional development.
- Sustainable buildings that are cheaper and easier to maintain/run.

Partnership

- Supports collaboration with blue-light services and other agencies.
- Contribution to delivery of partnership outcomes through One Public Estate and other partnership-delivered initiatives.
- Proactive engagement and co-operation with partner organisations within local communities.
- Economies of scale with associated savings and efficiencies through joint development/occupation.

Horsham Fire Station and Training Facility:

WSCC are currently engaged in delivery of a new Fire Station and Training Centre at Highwood, Horsham. (Update September 2020: Funding was agreed at Cabinet for this project).

The project responds to risks identified within the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2018-2022.

In addition, the recent HMICFRS report identified areas for improvement aligned with items within the IRMP, such as: diversity and inclusion, firefighter skills, recruitment and retention and ensuring the adequacy of the WSFRS estate.

Fire and Rescue Services training and preparedness for dealing with high rise scenarios is also a significant area under national scrutiny and the new facility would provide the training to address this requirement within West Sussex.

The scheme aims to:

- Provide a new operational Fire Station, accommodating whole-time crews, fire appliances and other key teams such as People and Organisational Development (incorporating the training delivery department).
- Provide a new, centralised training centre for the Fire Service to replace the facility at the former Horley fire station and the Worthing site including an upgraded and enhanced training offer with live fire training, incident command and breathing apparatus training.
- Release the Horsham and Horley estates and part of the site at Worthing.

This project was previously approved up to and including the appointment of the main contractor (Willmott Dixon) in October 2019 to complete the design phase works, after a successful tendering process.

The service is currently seeking governance approval in September 2020 to complete the project, including the submission of a planning application, leading to a start on site of construction works around July 2021.

It is anticipated that the construction works will require circa 16 months to complete, with full handover of the facilities around November 2022.

Burgess Hill:

This project will see the redevelopment of several sites within public sector ownership at The Brow.

Proposals include the creation of a new tri-service blue light centre, children's and adults' services, alongside new housing and commercial space to support regeneration in the area, a feasibility report is expected in late summer 2020.

Chichester:

Feasibility funding was awarded in the latest round of OPE funding to explore the potential to relocate and re-provide Chichester Fire Station, potentially alongside other blue-light services.

Initial work on this proposal will start shortly.

Relocation of this station would enable new modern facilities to be provided for WSFRS, and land to be released at Chichester Northgate for new housing, commercial and retail uses as part of the Chichester Vision.

A highways study at the location is being carried out of the Summer of 2020, this will provide key information to understand how the site could be used.

Events of note

As a service we are invited to attend a number of national and local events throughout the year. These include attending the Service of Remembrance in London as well as local services across the country.



Throughout the year our staff undertake several charity events. These include car washes, annual ladder climbs and other events to raise money for local and national causes.



In December 2018, two of our firefighters walked the length of the South Downs Way to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity and Macmillan. They completed the 100-mile trek over the course of five days.

We hold community open days across the county for the public to come into fire stations, meet the crews and experience what it is like to be a firefighter. We also promote community and fire safety advice.

This year our Wholetime recruits took part in a 24-hour breathing apparatus challenge raising money for the Firefighters Charity, the Kent Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance and Macmillan. The total amount raised was £1,440.



We also hold our annual Christmas Carol Service at Chichester Cathedral where staff and the public are invited to attend.

In February 2020, a number of our staff attended a celebration of all emergency service workers held by the High Sheriffs of East and West Sussex at Lancing College.



Awards and Medals

Each year the work of our firefighters is honoured with an awards ceremony held at the Baron's Hall in Arundel Castle.

The latest event, which took place in September 2019, saw long service and good conduct (LSGC) medals awarded to wholetime and retained (on-call) firefighters for two decades of outstanding service to their communities. Meritorious medals were given to all staff who had served an incredible 40 years.

Serving firefighters and teams within the service were also singled out for their courage, dedication to the service and selflessness in the last year.

Organisations and partners who have supported the fire service throughout the year were also recognised, alongside volunteers and individuals who contributed to The Fire Fighters Charity.

The event was sponsored by Gatwick Airport.



What people thought about us

We send out a customer feedback survey following fires. Overall, 99% of respondents were satisfied with the way the fire service dealt with their incident and 94% of respondents were very satisfied with our service.

The comments received included:

“Control of the situation – quick response - sympathetic in dealing with me at a very stressful time.”

“The officers were very knowledgeable and professional. Answered any questions we raised.”

“Managed to get us back in the building and up and running again very quickly. Helpful and friendly.”

“Very grateful. Totally awesome team. Excellent leadership.”

“Calm, awesome, non-judgmental.”

“The speed of arrival, the way they contained the fire to a small area of the kitchen without spoiling the surrounding rooms with water.”

“The team arrived very promptly on Christmas Day evening and were in very good spirits. We were very impressed indeed.”

Contact us

In an emergency you should always dial 999.

To find out more about West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, please follow the link to our website: www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire

Your views and comments on this Annual Report are very welcome.

If you have any feedback or any questions please get in touch with us.

By email: wsfrs@westsussex.gov.uk

By telephone: 01243 777100

Or write to us at:

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
Headquarters
County Hall
Chichester
PO19 1RQ

In addition, members of the community can get involved with our work and receive updates through our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/wsfrs>) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/WestSussexFire](https://twitter.com/WestSussexFire)) pages or through their local county councillor.

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Cabinet

20 October 2020

COVID-19 Response: update

Report by the Chief Executive

Electoral division(s): all

Summary

Attached at the Appendix is an update on West Sussex County Council's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing information on cases in West Sussex, local outbreak management, the re-opening of schools and other priority issues.

West Sussex County Council is ensuring the ongoing COVID-19 response is managed in an integrated way with the other challenges potentially facing the authority and its partners over the next few months. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting to ensure an up-to-date picture is provided given the fast-moving nature of current events.

Recommendation

- (1) Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
-

Proposal

1 Proposal details

- 1.1 The details of this item for consideration are set out in the attached Appendix.

2 Resource/risk implications

- 2.1 The resource implications of the COVID-19 emergency response continue to be assessed. There are significant risk implications.
- 2.2 Decisions required to address COVID-19 include assessments in accordance with Council policy and the statutory framework of duties and responsibilities including those relating to Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability and Crime and Disorder Reduction implications.

Becky Shaw
Chief Executive

Appendix A - West Sussex COVID-19 response - update

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West Sussex County Council Covid-19 briefing 20 October 2020

Priority issues

- a) Local Outbreak Management (para 1 - 14)
- b) Delivering support for those who are required to self-isolate (para 15 – 17)
- c) Schools reopening - update (para 18 - 25)
- d) Care Homes update (para 26 – 38)

Priority issues

a) Local Outbreak Management

West Sussex Data

Recorded Cases

1. In the 14 days between 23 September and 6 October 509 people tested positive for Covid-19. This is 115% higher than the number testing positive during the previous 14-day period (10 September to 23 September).

	10 - 23 Sept	11 -24 Sept	12 - 25 Sept	13 -26 Sept	14 -27 Sept	15 -28 Sept	16 - 29 Sept
West Sussex recorded cases	237	250	277	279	302	321	336
	17 - 30 Sept	18 Sept-1 Oct	19 Sept-2 Oct	20 Sept - 3 Oct	21 Sept - 4 Oct	22 Sept - 5 Oct	23 Sept -6 Oct
West Sussex recorded cases	360	383	397	430	472	503	509

2. The seven-day incidence rate varies among the districts and boroughs of West Sussex. Over the period 30 September to 6 October, Arun demonstrated the lowest rate at 23.0 per 100,000 population, and Horsham had the highest rate with 50.1 per 100,000 population.
3. The overall West Sussex seven-day incidence rate was 34.0 per 100,000 population.

District	Number of new cases between 30th September and 6th October	7 day incidence rate per 100,000 population
Adur	16	24.9
Arun	37	23.0
Chichester	34	28.1
Crawley	42	37.4
Horsham	72	50.1
Mid Sussex	62	41.1
Worthing	31	28.0
West Sussex	294	34.0

4. The latest published seven-day incidence rate for England (published 8 October 2020) was **117.5 per 100,000** population, and covers the period 27 September to 3 October 2020. All districts in West Sussex have an incidence rate below that of England.
5. Of the people testing positive for Covid-19 over the seven-day period, 68% were aged under 40, and 11% were aged over 60. Young adults showed the highest age-specific incidence rate during this period.

Age group	Number of new cases between 30th September and 6th October	Percentage of total new cases	Age-specific incidence rate per 100,000 population
0-9	8	3%	8.1
10-19	92	31%	98.3
20-29	64	22%	77.4
30-39	35	12%	34.6
40-49	26	9%	23.2
50-59	36	12%	29.0
60-69	9	3%	8.8
70-79	12	4%	13.2
80+	12	4%	20.5
All ages	294	100%	34.0

6. The seven-day incidence rate for those aged 18 to 24 years was 247.0 per 100,000 population.

Laboratory Capacity in Sussex

7. The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adults and Health wrote to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care at the end of September 2020 to raise their concerns regarding the lack of Covid-19 laboratory capacity and the significant impact on the Council's ability to track, control and contain the spread of coronavirus within the county.
8. There remain challenges with laboratory capacity in Sussex, however, it is slowly increasing, and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has advised the Council that it has increased laboratory capacity by 10%.
9. The Council is also aware of the DHSC's plans to provide further local laboratory capacity, which the Council is supportive of.

West Sussex Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan Escalation framework – Alert Levels in West Sussex

10. The West Sussex Covid-19 Health Protection Board agreed to move West Sussex to a level of 'Raised local alertness' (Yellow alert level) on 16 September 2020 due to emerging evidence of increasing trend at community/area level suggesting potential community spread of Covid-19.

11. The decision to move to this level was informed by the West Sussex Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan Escalation Framework. The purpose of this Framework is to outline how the organisations involved in the delivery of the West Sussex Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan respond to increasing numbers/rates of Covid-19 cases and to define the triggers for moving to different levels of the Framework.
12. The Framework has four increasing levels, which are presented as a traffic light system:
 - Green (Outbreak prevention and containment)
 - Yellow (Raised local alertness)
 - Amber (Raised local concern)
 - Red (National oversight)
13. The Yellow alert level means that there is an increase in Covid-19 cases, and to slow the virus residents should continue to practice social distancing, wear face coverings where advised, limit contact between households and follow the 'rule of six'. The County Council will carry out targeted communications, campaigns and social media to support people in making extra efforts to reduce their risk.
14. The alert level is [published on the Council's website alongside the Local Outbreak Control Plan and weekly data report. The Interim Director of Public Health and his team monitor COVID-19 data on a daily basis, assessing any impact on the alert level for the county.](#)

b) Delivering support for those who are required to self-isolate

15. The changes to self-isolation announced on Sunday 20 September introduce a number of new measures to assist in controlling the spread of coronavirus within our communities and to help protect the health and care system. These will come into effect on Monday 28 September 2020 alongside the legal duty to self-isolate.
16. Included in this raft of measures is a new Test and Trace Support Payment of a £500 lump sum payment for those on low incomes to support them if they cannot work during their self-isolation period. There are several criteria that must be met for this benefits-linked eligibility with the scheme due to run until 31 January 2021. A discretionary funding allocation is being made available for local authorities to help those who require corresponding financial support to the Test and Trace Support Payment to self-isolate but do not meet all of the eligibility criteria.
17. The Community Hub is working with district and borough councils as these new mechanisms for the verification of eligibility and payment processes are established to meet the implementation date of Monday 12 October. The Council's joint working approach seeks to ensure that urgent practical support can be provided for those in immediate need ahead of receipt of their payment. This will be essential given the ability for backdated claims to be made. A close partnership aims to minimise the risk that those experiencing

hardship and who are unable to access critical food and supplies but not eligible for the £500 benefits-linked payment don't fall between gaps in processes.

c) Schools reopening – update

18. All schools opened at the beginning of the autumn term with strong risk assessments and plans in place to ensure that the return was managed safely. The situation remains fluid in relation to the number of positive cases among children and staff, and also on the number of children with symptoms but unconfirmed.
19. Attendance in schools has been consistently above the national average and this is also reflected in the proportion of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) attending school and also the proportion of children with a social worker. Data is submitted by schools to the Department for Education (DfE) on a daily basis and the proportion of West Sussex schools submitting their data runs at 74% which is above the national average.
20. On the 5 October 2020, the attendance for all pupils, in all fully or partially opened schools, is at 93.5%, the highest this term, and higher than the corresponding day last week, 92.2%. This compares to a national average attendance of 89%. West Sussex attendance is currently 4.5% higher and, over time, has been consistently above average.
21. For those pupils with an EHCP, in all fully or partially opened schools, attendance is currently at 86.8%, which is an increase on the previous week. Compared to 84.6% nationally has a positive difference of 1.2%. The rolling 7-day average for EHCP pupils is at 86.3%, similar to the last few days. For pupils, in all fully or partially opened schools, with a social worker, attendance has generally mirrored the national rise and fall but has, in general, been consistently above the national average over time.
22. Confirmation of confirmed cases of Covid-19 reach the Council through different routes and occasionally dates of notifications and the details of confirmed cases require amendment. In some cases, an individual with Covid-19 may not have attended the setting during infection, although such cases are included in the data below.

Confirmed case headlines up to Friday 2 October 2020

- 10 confirmed cases in early years and childcare settings (7 staff, 2 child, 1 parent who attended setting)
- 15 confirmed cases in primary schools (3 staff, 11 children including at 1 boarding school, 1 unknown)
- 18 confirmed cases at secondary schools (9 staff, 7 children, 2 unknown, including 2 boarding schools)
- 3 confirmed cases at a special school (2 staff, 1 child)
- 5 confirmed cases at FE colleges (4 students, 1 unknown)
- 2 confirmed cases University (2 students)

Outbreaks

- 1 outbreak within a nursery in Horsham on 18 September (3 members of staff)
- 1 outbreak within a secondary school from 28 September (3 staff members connected, plus a fourth confirmed unconnected staff member)

Closures

- 1 full closure within Special School in on 2 October due to safeguarding staff to child ratio (1 confirmed case and 20 isolating within staff). Four separate learning bubbles closed.

Name of venue	Date of notification	Staff or Child/Student	District/Borough	Bubble Closure
Vale primary	14 September 2020	Child	Worthing	Y
Escots Primary	16 September 2020	Child	Mid Sussex	Y x 2
Felpham Community College	24 September 2020	Child	Arun	Y
Littlegreen Academy	05 October	child	Chichester	Whole School

Home to school transport

23. In the first few weeks of term school transport has worked well. The Council's pre-planning and work with schools and parents during August and early September has identified and dealt with the majority of the capacity and access issues across the county. Using government support funding we have put additional buses running into various schools around the county to ensure there is sufficient capacity on public bus services. We are currently exploring a small number of routes linked to areas where public transport is crowded. Due to the need to ensure as much social distancing as possible, our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport has had to withdraw concessionary transport which has been provided in a few cases for parents who do not qualify but where we have had surplus seats in existing transport. These spare seats are no longer available and for the few children who have been affected, parents are now organising their own arrangements.

Local lockdown

24. While our aim is to ensure schools remain open, every school will also have a plan for the possibility of a local or national lockdown, partial closure of a school owing to an outbreak in a 'bubble', 'class' or 'year group', and how they will ensure continuity of an education service should such scenarios occur.

25. We are assured our school leaders and governors, whilst operating with the national and local guidance we have provided, have been supported to take and make the very best decisions on behalf of children and families in their community, and will continue to work closely with us to achieve this safely and securely from September.

d) Care Homes - update

Care homes

26. There are 235 care homes for older people in West Sussex. The care homes provide around 8,608 beds. A third of these are commissioned by the County Council with the remainder commissioned through other local authorities, health or funded directly by residents.
27. The issue still causing the most concern for care providers is testing. More care homes are closing to admission and visitors where they are concerned that the virus could spread from the community, this could impact on the ability of the health and social care system to discharge those medically fit for discharge.
28. The Government published the [Adult social care: COVID-19 Winter Plan 2020-21](#) which includes updated information for local authorities and care providers, including expectations on day care, respite, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provision and visiting; the latter adds that care providers should supervise visits and limit visitors to one or two regular visits per person.

Hospital capacity

29. Hospital discharge hubs and a combined placement team continue to operate, as well as working with the Clinical Commissioning Group to secure appropriate levels of domiciliary care, care/nursing home beds and voluntary services to support effective discharge. Acute hospitals are now facing increasing pressures with rising numbers of Covid-19 positive cases- symptomatic and asymptomatic – and the challenges with managing these on the wards. Hospitals are also being expected to deliver against the national restoration plans including for cancer treatments.

Adult Social Care winter plan

30. On Friday 18 September the Government published the policy paper [Adult social care: our COVID-19 winter plan 2020-2021](#). This references and builds on previous guidance and policy set out in the Social Care Action Plan (May 2020) and Hospital Discharge Guidance (August 2020).
31. The winter plan has been reviewed and the key issues for the local authority are set out below.
32. The Government's 3 overarching priorities for adult social care are:

- ensuring everyone who needs care or support can get high-quality, timely and safe care throughout the autumn and winter period
- protecting people who need care, support or safeguards, the social care workforce, and carers from infections including Covid-19
- making sure that people who need care, support or safeguards remain connected to essential services and their loved ones whilst protecting individuals from infections including Covid-19

Actions for local authorities and NHS organisations

33. For key actions for local authorities, it should be noted that this relates to both self-funded care providers and local authority commissioned services within the authority.

34. Key actions for local authorities and NHS organisations to take:

- local authorities and NHS organisations should continue to put co-production at the heart of decision-making, involving people who receive health and care services, their families, and carers
- local authorities and NHS organisations should continue to recognise the importance of including care provider representatives in local decision-making fora, ensuring they are involved throughout
- local authorities must put in place their own winter plans, building on existing planning, including local outbreak plans, in the context of planning for the end of the transition period, and write to the DHSC to confirm they have done this by 31 October 2020. These winter plans should incorporate the recommendations set out in this document. NHS and voluntary and community sector organisations should be involved in the development of the plans where possible
- local authorities and NHS organisations should continue to address inequalities locally, involving people with lived experience wherever possible, and consider these issues throughout the implementation of this winter plan
- local authorities must distribute funding made available through the extension of the Infection Control Fund to the sector as quickly as possible, and report on how funding is being used, in line with the grant conditions
- local authorities must continue to implement relevant guidance and promote guidance to all social care providers, making clear what it means for them
- local systems should continue to take appropriate actions to treat and investigate cases of Covid-19, including those set out in the contain framework and Covid-19 testing strategy. This includes hospitals continuing to test people on discharge to a care home and Public Health England local health protection teams continuing to arrange for testing of whole care homes with outbreaks of the virus
- local authorities should ensure, as far as possible, that care providers carry out testing as set out in the testing strategy and, together with NHS organisations, provide local support for testing in adult social care if needed
- local authorities should provide free PPE to care providers ineligible for the PPE portal, when required (including for personal assistants), either

through their Local Resilience Forum (if it is continuing to distribute PPE) or directly until March 2021

- local authorities and NHS organisations should work together, along with care providers and voluntary and community sector organisations, to encourage those who are eligible for a free flu vaccine to access one
- local authorities should work with social care services to re-open safely, in particular, day services or respite services. Where people who use those services can no longer access them in a way that meets their needs, local authorities should work with them to identify alternative arrangements
- local authorities and NHS organisations should continue to work with providers to provide appropriate primary and community care at home and in care homes, to prevent avoidable admissions, support safe and timely discharge from hospitals, and to resume Continuing Healthcare assessments at speed
- local authority directors of public health should give a regular assessment of whether visiting care homes is likely to be appropriate within their local authority, or within local wards, taking into account the wider risk environment and immediately move to stop visiting if an area becomes an 'area of intervention', except in exceptional circumstances such as end of life

35. Key to the delivery of the plan is the recurring message about joint work between the County Council and health and other partners, both strategically and operationally. It will be critical that funds available for hospital discharge pathways is used efficiently and effectively and planned jointly with, as the winter plan states clearly, the Council acting as lead commissioner. The governance of the joint commissioning arrangements is being worked through to ensure that it is clear and captured within a formal agreement between the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Council.

36. Alongside the delivery of the core elements of the plan, the Government is also seeking assurance as to the resilience of local plans and a submission is due by the end of October which will need to be developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders.

37. There will also need to be commitment from the Council to engage in the Service Continuity and Care Market Review in the autumn. This aims to understand the robustness of the plans local authorities have in place, and what additional support may be needed, to secure sufficient, sustainable and suitable capacity over winter, and maintain continuity of provision.

Next steps

38. The County Council will consider the implications of the plan with partners via the Covid-19 governance hierarchy. A more detailed implementation plan will be brought together. Initial priorities are considered to be:

- distribution of the extended infection control grant once further guidance is received as to the conditions
- development of alternative accommodation to meet the needs of those on a hospital discharge pathway who are required to self-isolate before moving to a care home or other setting

Agenda Item 6
Appendix A

- establishing resource needed to deliver the plan and previously published guidance
- building on the partnership work with care providers and the community and voluntary sector to further develop the plan
- formalising joint commissioning arrangements
- building appropriate capacity in the community – domiciliary care and bed based – for the winter period in relation to both Covid-19 and broader anticipated winter pressures.