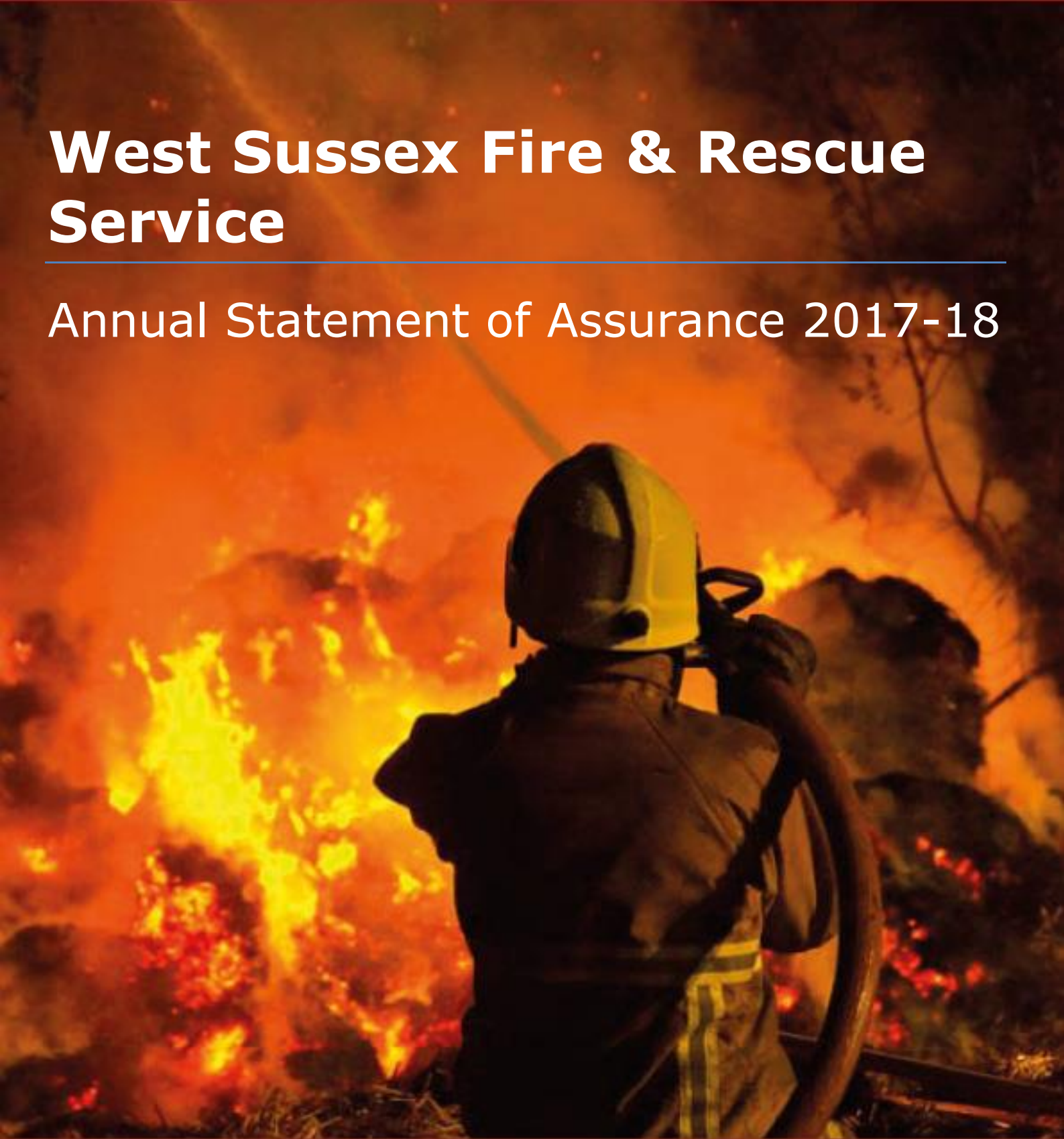


# West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Annual Statement of Assurance 2017-18



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## Forward

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



This report covers the financial year from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and highlights how WSFRS performed in the key areas of protection, prevention and emergency response.

Our performance data is also available on the WSFRS section of the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) website where you can access other documents, including our new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2018-22. These documents set out how the service is organised to support communities, with our assessment of risk based, data analysis and professional judgement of existing and foreseeable risks.

I am very proud of our fire and rescue teams and am confident they will continue to provide the very best service possible for our communities both now and in the future, with a leading role at the heart of the county council.

**Councillor Debbie Kennard**

**Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities**

## Introduction

### The Chief Fire Officers Vision Statement



*Vision statement: 'A fire and rescue service focused on the delivery of a value for money response, prevention and protection service operating to the highest performance standards to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to West Sussex.*

*Continuous improvement is at the heart of everything we do.'*

Our annual Statement of Assurance reflects the work we are carrying out on behalf of the fire authority to achieve a safer and stronger community.

The fire service plays a key role at the heart of WSCC's Communities and Public Protection Directorate, supporting the council's Future West Sussex Plan. This plan will help enable a safer, stronger and more resilient community.

This annual Statement of Assurance gives an overview of some of our agreed key areas of performance and highlights how the fire service, and our partners, is striving to deliver a first class service to our residents.

In addition to this Statement of Assurance we also have an Annual Report which will help you see how we are measuring our success and working towards continual improvement.

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

**Gavin Watts**

**Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer**

## Could you join us and help your community?

We continue to urgently need more on-call firefighters in our communities. There are many reasons for taking on the role, including satisfaction at helping your community, learning new skills - and you are paid too. For more information see [www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire)

## 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.

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 2017-18.

## Governance

WSCC is the Fire Authority for 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 West Sussex 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 Safer, Stronger Communities. During 2017/18 this role was fulfilled by Councillor Debbie Kennard.

Four select committees, including Members from all political parties, have been established to provide an independent check on the way the county council provides its services. Decisions relating to the fire and rescue service are scrutinised by the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee (ECFSC).

The performance and transformation plans of the service are regularly scrutinised by ECFSC.

## 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 West Sussex Plan sets out how the county council plans to shape its services for the next five years.

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/campaigns/the-west-sussex-plan/>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budgets/how-the-county-council-spends-your-money/>

WSFRS also operates under broader corporate policies on:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/corporate-policy-and-reports/fraud-and-corruption/>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/corporate-policy-and-reports/equality-and-inclusion/>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/corporate-policy-and-reports/pay-policy/>

## Your fire and rescue service

WSFRS plays a key role in the Communities and Public Protection directorate. The FRS has three fundamental areas of focus: prevention, protection and response. Eight immediate response engines are based at six fire stations – Crawley, Worthing, Bognor, Littlehampton, Chichester and Horsham. These stations are crewed around the clock 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 on-call firefighters who provide an agreed amount of cover 'on-call' via a pager system.

Like other services across the country the number of on-call retained firefighters we have available has continued to decline. This model of cover was originally devised after World War Two and society has changed significantly since that time, particularly with the move of industry away from rural communities, pushing people to travel further away from out-lying areas to work. Improving the on-call duty system 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 319 operational staff and 213 on-call crew, along with support staff and volunteers.

Our retirement profile presents us with a growing workforce challenge and work continues to recruit and train the firefighters of the future in partnership with other services.

The excellent service we provide is thanks to the dedication 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
- Information and communications technology
- Facilities management and estates maintenance
- Rates and utilities
- Insurances
- Legal advice
- 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 of 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 2017-18 financial year was £25.9 million. This is broken down below.

### How your money is spent

Most of our £25 million budget is invested in frontline services including firefighting, rescue operations and community safety activity. This breaks down into:

Firefighting and rescue operations – £21,009,487

Community Fire Safety – £3,851,632

Fire Service Emergency Planning and Civil Resilience £462,573

## Managing risk

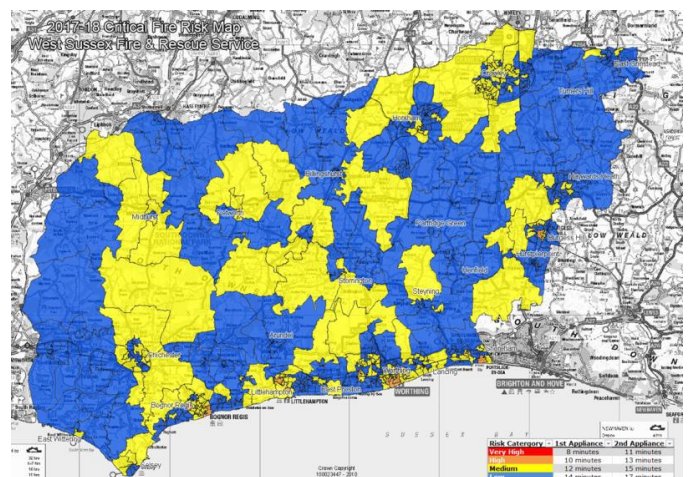
As a service we have to understand and identify our greatest risks in order to be able to effectively manage our resources.

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 of 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.

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, or very high, risk are identified we can target our resources in proportion to those needs.



## Operational performance report

During this financial year WSFRS attended **9,241** incidents in West Sussex with 1,741 being categorised as critical incidents. These are incidents where there is a risk to life or property. Of all these incidents, 1,007 were critical special services (such as a road traffic collision), while 734 were critical fires.

In addition, 233 incidents were attended in neighbouring counties, predominantly East Sussex and Surrey.

Past 5 years historic (annual) data	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18
<b>Critical Special Services</b>	802	748	765	771	1007 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Critical Fires</b>	720	739	732	800	734
<b>All Incidents</b>	9377	8566	8552	8842	9241
<b>Over the Border Calls</b>	271	187	202	162	233

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.

The incidents we attend to assist our neighbouring fire and rescue services have risen by 70 calls last year. This was partly as a result of working with those services to

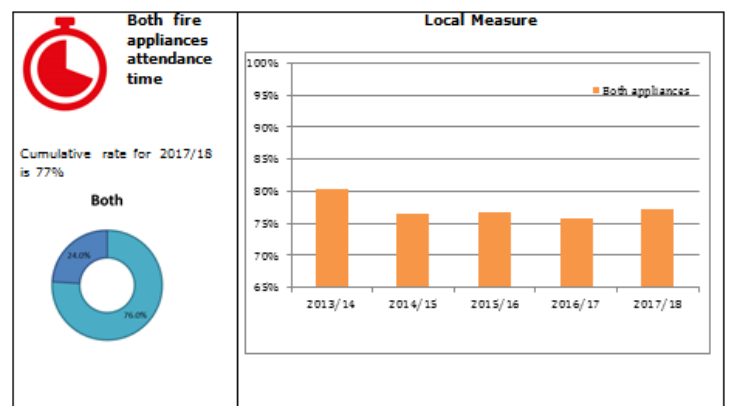
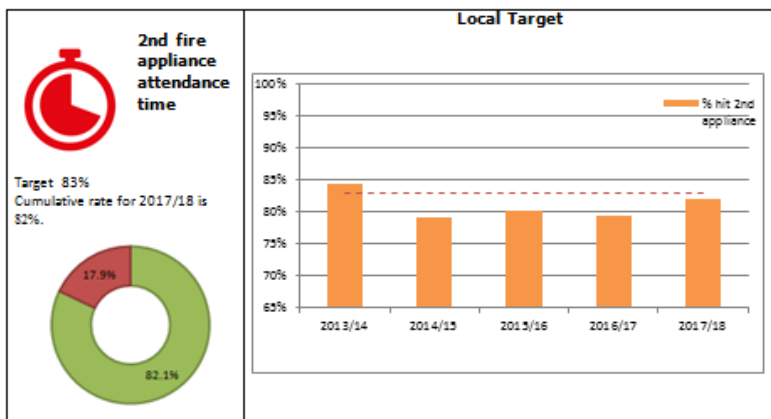
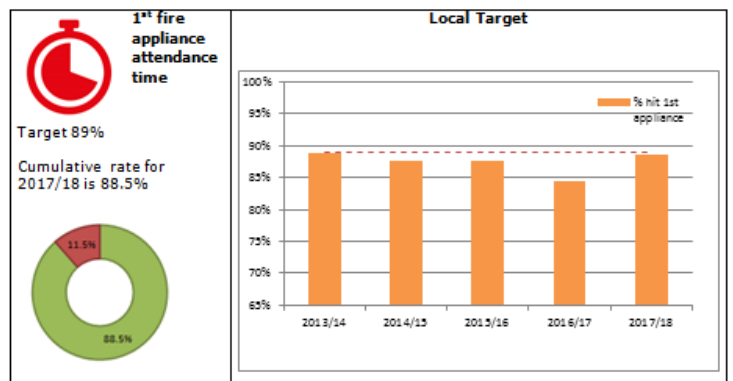
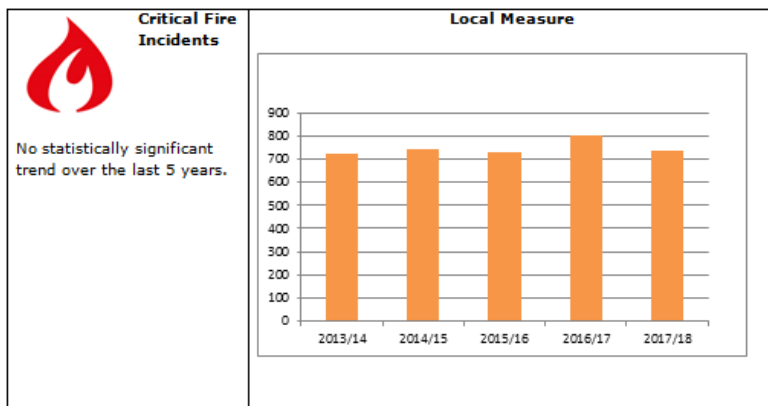
send the fastest fire engine without considering the county borders.

### Operational performance targets and measures

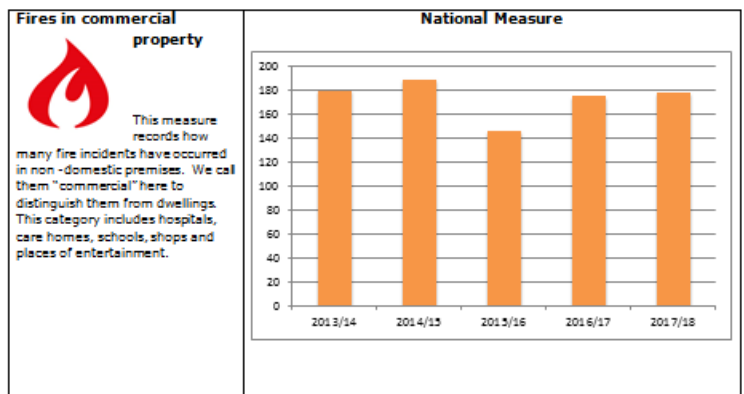
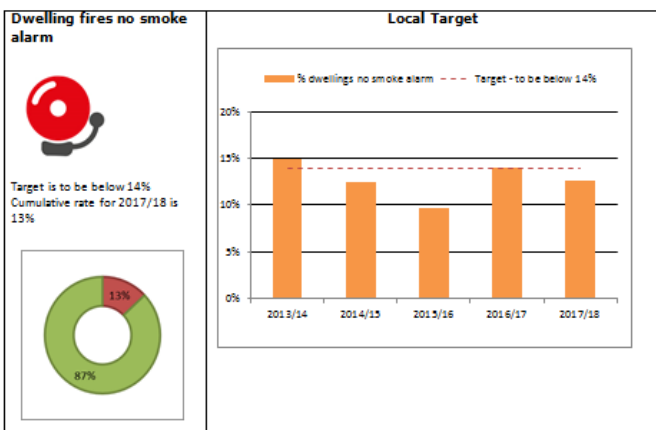
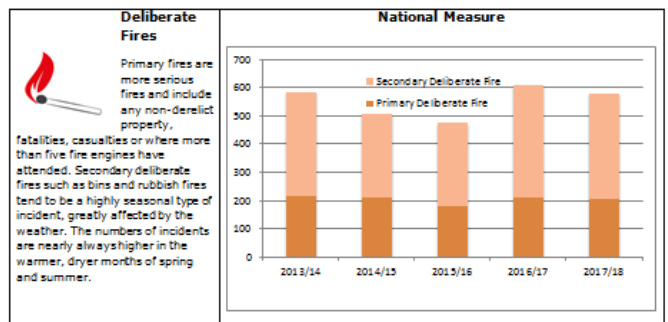
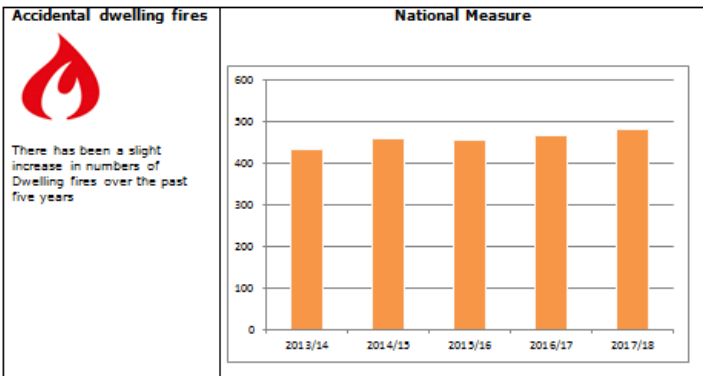
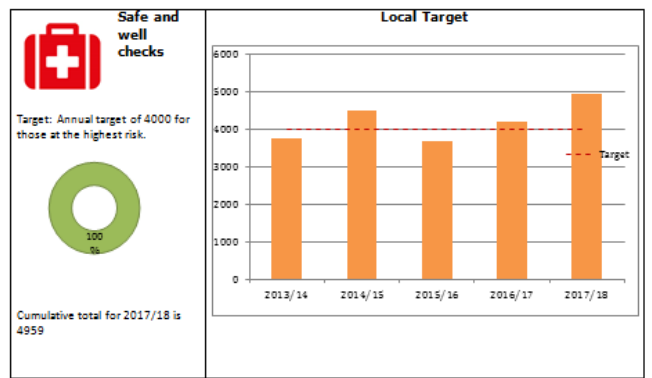
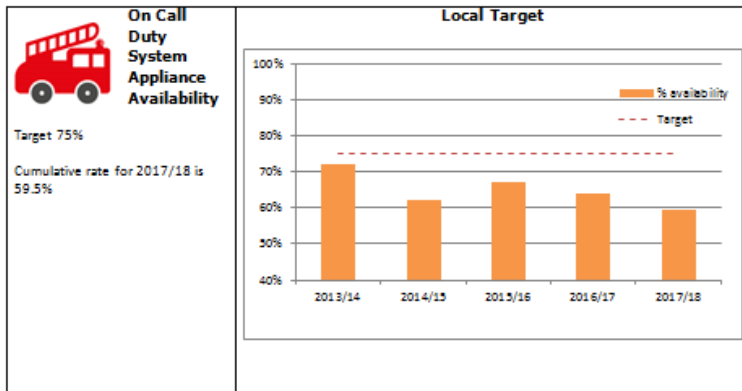
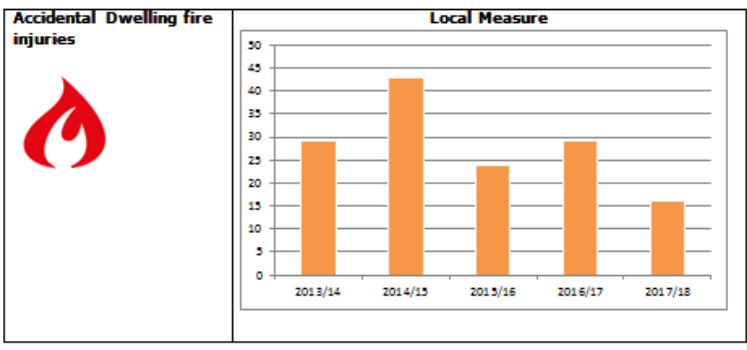
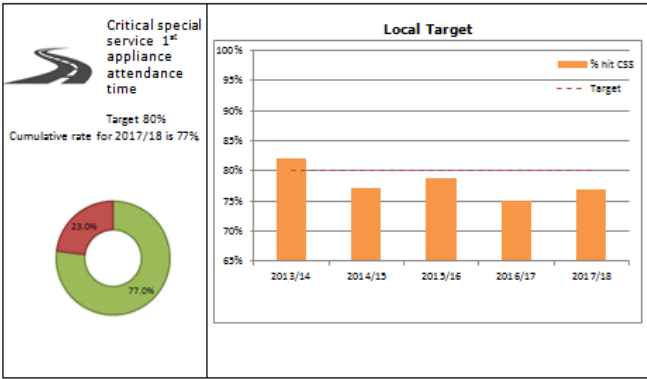
We are required under our governance structure to carry out quarterly performance monitoring. We have over 60 key performance indicators and measures which are subject to both internal and external scrutiny.

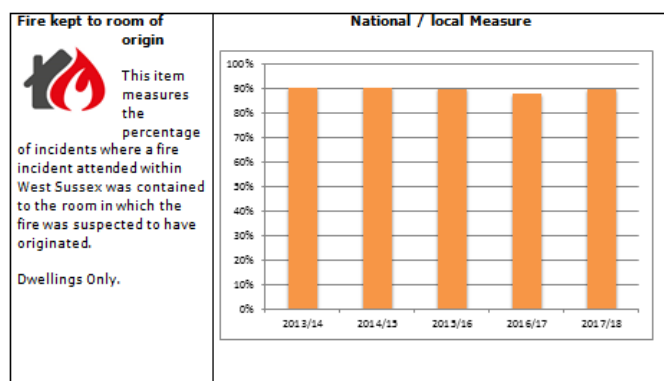
The Fire Authority has chosen 13 operational performance measures and targets that are reported on a quarterly basis as well as annually in this Statement of Assurance. This ensures we scrutinise and manage our data to continually drive through improved performance.

#	Indicator	Measure/target
1	Critical Fire Incidents	Measure
2	1 <sup>st</sup> Appliance attendance time	Target
3	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fire appliance 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 supported the national resilience programme since its inception post 9/11 by receiving government grant funding to provide specialist capabilities to attend national incidents. These include flood and terror related incidents where mass decontamination of the public may be required, buildings may have collapsed or large quantities of flood or firefighting water requires pumping. Following a recent government review, and during this reporting year, the decontamination capability was nationally reviewed. West Sussex no longer holds a national decontamination resource, but we continue to train and equip for the initial stages of these incidents prior to the full decontamination units arriving.

During the financial year of 2017-18 we received the following national grant funding for providing resources for:

- Urban search and rescue £408,800
- Operational response to terror related incidents £28,256

We continue to deliver our agreed response to national resilience including the joint emergency services training, equipping of our teams. We look to support future developments over the coming years.

## 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).

We reviewed our Community Risk Management Plan during this year as there have been a number of changes to legislation that affect the fire and rescue service including the duty to collaborate and the emerging risks identified from the Grenfell incident in 2017.

This plan identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community.

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.

Over the period of this report we have developed a new plan that covers the period 2018-22. This plan, and the action plans that are contained within the plan, reflect 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, flooding etc.
- 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 organisational aims.

The plan also highlights a number of challenges. To help us deliver the plan we will set up four boards: Service Delivery, People and Culture, Integration and Collaboration and Customer Centred Value for Money, to deliver the change identified in our action plans and to monitor our progress.

We will measure our progress in these boards 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 takes into account 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.

Over the next three to five years we will report back on our progress on the delivery of the IRMP action plans in this annual statement of assurance.

Our IRMP can be found on the WSFRS pages of the WSCC website at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire).

## 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:

It places a duty for emergency ('blue light') services to collaborate, and to build this into collaboration agreements.

- It establishes an independent inspectorate for FRSs.
- 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](mailto:wsfrs@westsussex.gov.uk)

By telephone: 01243 786211

Or write to us at:

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