

Mrs Kennard, Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities	Ref No: SSC5 18.19
September 2018	Key Decision: Yes
Endorsement of the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance and Annual Report 2017-18	Part I
Report by Executive Director Nicola Bulbeck and Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer Gavin Watts	Electoral Divisions: All

Summary

The Fire Authority (FRA) is required under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (updated and published in May 2018) to produce an Annual Statement of Assurance that the FRA is in compliance with the National Framework as set out by the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service.

The Annual Statement of Assurance concerns the following:

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

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service also publishes alongside the SOA an Annual Report.

Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member approves the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance and the Annual Report for 2017-18.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

1.1 Producing an Annual Statement of Assurance (SOA) is a statutory requirement for all Fire and Rescue Authorities as part of the National Framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities, England 2018.

The framework states:

'Fire and rescue authorities must provide annual 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 and the requirements included in the Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance’.

- 1.2 Under the framework the SOA should contain detail on governance arrangements, operational performance, financial data 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 SOA 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.
- 1.5 The SOA will be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State’s biennial report under section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Act 2004
- 1.6 Statements of assurance should be published annually by fire and rescue authorities.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Under the direction of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Fire Authority (Safer, Stronger Communities), West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, within West Sussex County Council, has prepared a SOA and Annual Report for 2017-18.
- 2.2 In accordance with the requirements contained in the National Framework the SOA and Annual report covers the following:

Statement of Assurance

- Legislation relating to Fire and Rescue
- Finance details
- Governance
- Managing Risk
- Annual Operational Performance report
- IRMP action plan delivery
- A report of service activity

3. Resources

- 3.1 Following the publication of the reports the Fire and Rescue Service will be monitoring performance through a quarterly performance review and will publish subsequent our Integrated Risk Management action plans to drive performance improvement. The Business Planning Group of the Environment, Community and Fire Select Committee has undertaken to consider a performance report at each of its quarterly meetings.

Factors taken into account

4. Issues considered by the Select Committee

- 4.1 At its meeting on 13 June 2018 the Environment Communities and Fire Select Committee met to challenge and scrutinise the Statement of Assurance.

The ECFSC recommended the following:

1. That the Committee agrees the FRS draft Annual Statement of Assurance 2017-18 and draft Annual Report 2017-18, with a request that the proposed additions be included:
 - a. To include 5 years' data with more detailed narrative
 - b. Provide Red, Amber and Green status for the targeted Key Performance Indicators.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 No public or staff consultation was required for the reports.

6. Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 Production and delivery of open and transparent documentation satisfies the National Fire and Rescue Framework for England. Once approved the documents will be displayed alongside previous statements of assurance and annual reports for public viewing.

7. Other Options Considered

- 7.1 The Statement of Assurance and Annual Report are statutory duties. Therefore no other options were considered.

8. Equality Duty

- 8.1 The publication of the SOA and Annual Report is a procedural matter.

9. Social Value

- 9.1 There are no procurements involved in this exercise which would be subject to social value requirements.
- 9.2 In terms of environmental sustainability, the SOA and Annual Report make clear the Authority's commitment to reducing the environmental impact.

10. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 10.1 No Impacts in this area

11. Human Rights Implications

11.1 No Impacts in this area

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Appendix A: West Sussex FRS Statement of Assurance 2017-2018

Appendix B: West Sussex FRS Annual Report 2017-2018

Background Papers: None