

# Annual Statement of Assurance 2023-24



PREVENTION



PROTECTION



SERVICE DELIVERY



PEOPLE



ASSETS

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## Foreword from Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue



Welcome to West Sussex Fire Authority's Statement of Assurance for 2023/2024 which provides details on how the authority has met the requirements of the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#), during the period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

This annual report is designed to provide assurance to the communities of West Sussex that our resources are properly managed and accounted for, business is conducted lawfully, and the authority is fulfilling its statutory duties.

With more than 800,000 residents to serve across the county, I firmly believe that West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) does an excellent job of putting the people of West Sussex at the centre of everything they do, and teams across the service work extremely hard to keep communities safe.

These core principles have seen several new programmes of work implemented in order to meet the strategic priorities set out in the [Community Risk Management Plan](#); a plan which sets out the direction of our fire and rescue service over the course of four years.

As the Cabinet Member, I am satisfied that West Sussex Fire Authority's business was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money was used efficiently and effectively.

I am further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been fully met.

**Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue**

## Introduction from the Chief Fire Officer

As Chief Fire Officer for WSFRS I am pleased to introduce our Statement of Assurance for 2023/24. This report provides details on the Service's performance throughout the previous year with regard to our finances, governance and operational responsibilities.

Perhaps the most significant change we saw during this timeframe was the opening of [Platinum House](#), our brand-new training centre and fire station in Horsham.

Platinum House becoming operational marked the start of a new era for WSFRS as it completely modernised the way in which we train our existing and future firefighters. We used the investment from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to build a site which had a core focus on health, safety and wellbeing to ensure that the facilities will be fit-for-purpose for years to come, and I am delighted to now have these industry-leading facilities within the county.

Throughout 2023/24 we also made great strides towards completing the five strategic priorities set out in our [Community Risk Management Plan](#). To address some of our priorities, we improved the resilience of the service by changing how we respond to automatic fire alarms in some low-risk premises, and we extended the immediate response cover at our four day-crewed fire stations.

We made these adjustments to manage local risks and keep the communities we serve safe from harm.

Making West Sussex a safer place to live, work and visit is at the heart of everything we do. Looking ahead, we will continue to build on our successes, and we are firmly committed make improvements wherever we can.

**Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, Chief Fire Officer**



## Community Risk Management Plan

It is a statutory requirement that all fire and rescue authorities produce a [Community Risk Management Plan](#) (CRMP). The plan identifies the risks present in our communities for those who live, work, visit and travel in West Sussex.



The plan is owned by the Fire and Rescue Authority and is delivered by WSFRS. The plan sets out how we address all foreseeable risk across our county and also provides an overview of what influences our service in terms of our national and local obligations. To address the foreseeable risk the plan ensures it is aligned to the priorities set out in the WSCC Plan 2021-25.

1. Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations.
2. A sustainable and prosperous economy.
3. Helping people and communities fulfil their potential.
4. Making best use of resources.

We will always seek to be efficient and effective and to achieve good value for the local community. This means working collaboratively with neighbouring fire and rescue services and other blue light services as well as by maximising our position within WSCC by actively participating in partnership opportunities including tackling the social causes of fire and other emergencies.

## 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 CRMP.

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 Fire Authority and its fire and rescue service delivered the requirements contained in the National Fire and Rescue Framework and the authority's CRMP during 2022/2023.

The West Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority set strategic priorities for the period of 2022-26 based on thorough risk analysis.

**Strategic Priority 1:** Preventing fires and emergencies from happening.

**Strategic Priority 2:** Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be.

**Strategic Priority 3:** Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively.

**Strategic Priority 4:** Have a safe and valued workforce.

**Strategic Priority 5:** Making best use of resources.

Where there are competing priorities, we will focus resources on the area of greatest need. At times this may mean that the order in which we do things is subject to change. This report will look at each area of our service delivery; Protection, Prevention, Service Delivery, Strategic Risk and People and then summarise the progress against the five strategic priorities through projects.

## 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

WSCC 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. Full Council is the Fire Authority and has delegated executive powers of the Fire and Rescue Authority to the Cabinet.

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 as the full council, and they are responsible for deciding some of the overall policies and setting the budget each year.

The Constitution provides a clear separation between the operational decision-making responsibility of our fire and rescue service, the executive policy setting and scrutiny and role of county councillors.

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.

The Cabinet Member that holds responsibility for the fire and rescue service in his portfolio is the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, Cllr Duncan Crow, who is supported by the Chief Fire Officer making operational decisions in alignment with the County Council Constitution. Strategic decisions relating to the fire and rescue service and transformation plans of the service are subject to endorsement by the cabinet member and subject to scrutiny by the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee which was established at the full meeting of the County Council on 17 December 2019.

Key decisions (a decision that amounts to over £500,000 in value or significantly affects more than one division) about the service can be taken by the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, the relevant fire officer, public Cabinet or at a Full Council meeting.

The council's Cabinet, the FRS Scrutiny Committee and Full Council meet in public as a demonstration of accountability to the residents of West Sussex. These meetings can be attended in person or viewed via the council's website. As a Fire Authority the fire and rescue service is linked to a range of the council's 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.

## **Service Executive Board**

Our Service Executive board is made up of our three Principal Officers, supported by strategic advisors from Organisational Assurance & Governance as well as WSCC corporate functions representatives from HR and Finance.

Chief Fire Officer Sabrina Cohen-Hatton  
Deputy Chief Fire Officer Mark Andrews  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer Peter Rickard

Strategic Advisors to Service Executive Board:

Senior Finance Business Partner  
Head of Organisational Assurance & Governance  
Senior Human Resources Business Partner



## His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services

The service continues to work closely with [His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](#) and we look forward to welcoming the inspectorate into service for the round three inspection programme of which commences in early April 2024.

Over the past year representatives from the service have continued to attend national HMICFRS engagement events as well as more local, frequent meetings between our Service Liaison Officer and HMICFRS Service Liaison Lead. WSFRS have seen new standards land from the [Fire Standards Board \(FSB\)](#) such as communication and engagement, leading the service and leading and developing people all of which have been adopted.

The HMICFRS [values and culture in the fire and rescue services](#) report focused on evidence collated via the inspection programmes since 2018, across the 44 fire and rescue services. The results identified issues relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, lack of fairness and diversity and reporting concerns, including allegations of misconduct.

In accordance with the [Fire and Rescue National framework for England](#), Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) must give due regard to reports and recommendations. WSFRS remains dedicated to tackling the issues identified nationally, ensuring all WSFRS staff continue to demonstrate, practice and reflect the county council values and behaviours and NFCC code of ethics.

WSFRS continues to drive improvements in this area by embedding the recommendations from the report across several service plans including its people plan and leadership and culture framework. We continue to report our progress to the Inspectorate.

Each year the service is required to provide data and information to the Inspectorate via their Spring and Autumn data returns. We have provided this information which allows the inspectorate to monitor the performance of the service whilst enabling the HMICFRS to gain a more holistic view of the sector.

# Financial Performance Report 2023/24

*How your money is spent*

The budget 2023/24 (excluding grant funding) was £34,145,380.

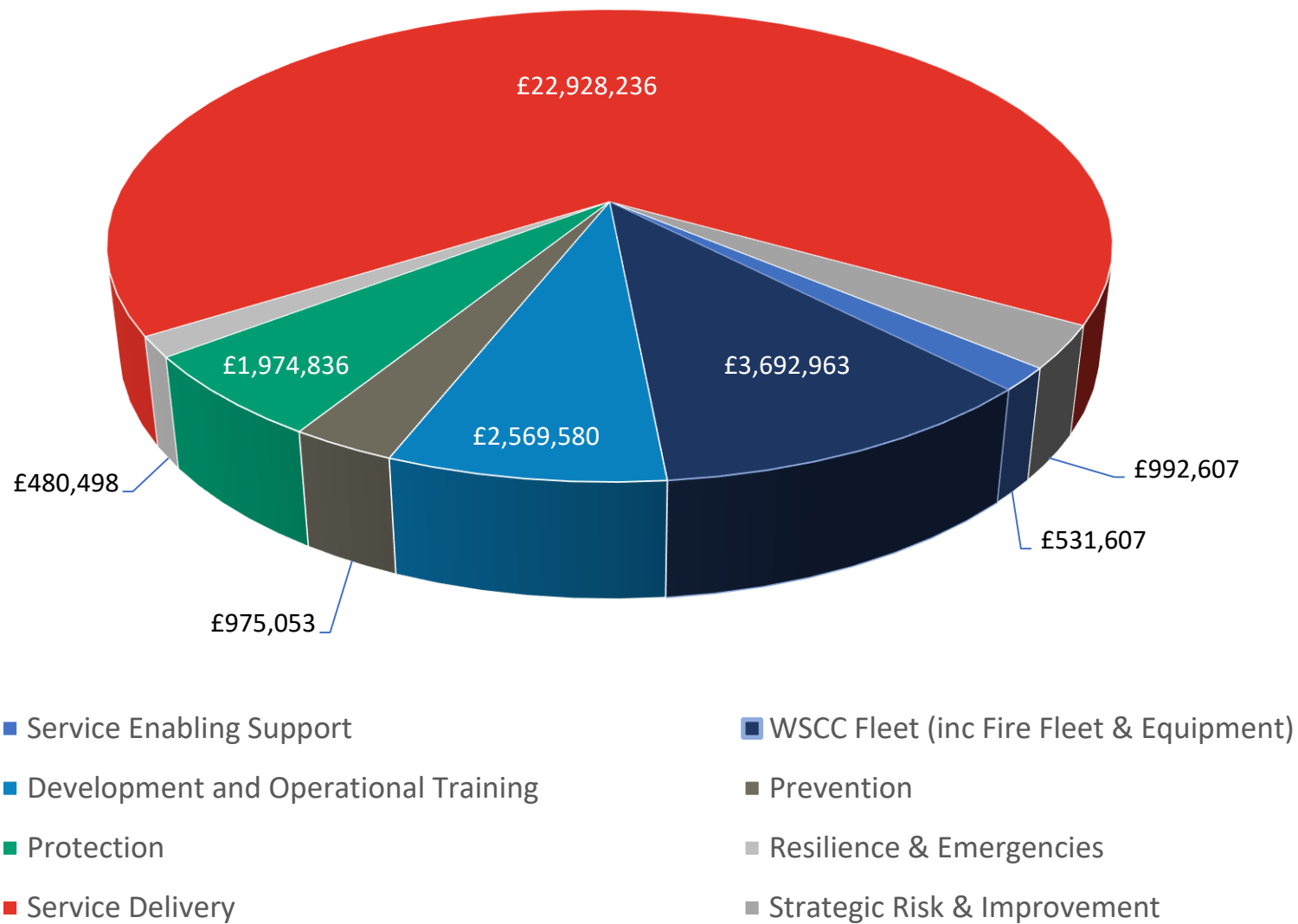


Figure 1 – FRS Expenditure 2023-24

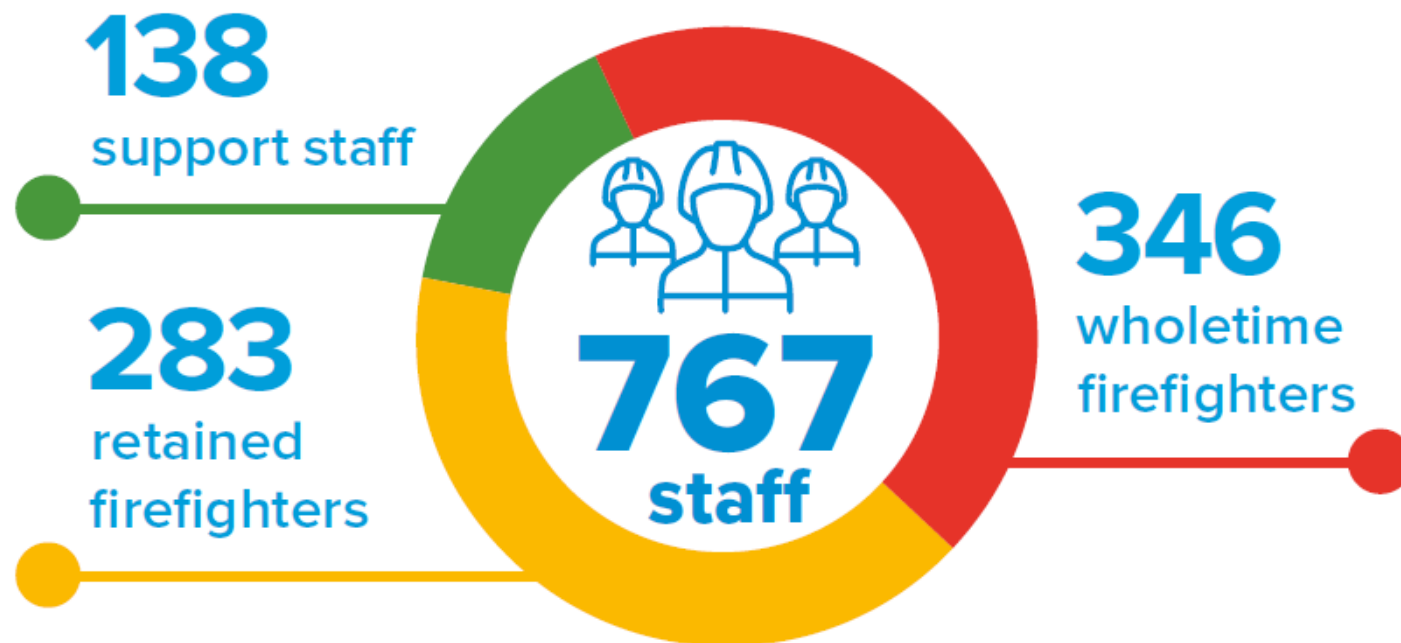
## Our People

At the end of March 2024 our workforce total of 767 included 346 wholetime firefighters, 283 retained duty system firefighters (on-call) and 138 support staff working for WSFRS.

When reviewing the diversity of our workforce, in the past year:

- Gender diversity in the service has improved by just over 1%, with 17% of the workforce identifying as female.
- Colleagues of an ethnic minority account for 4.23% of the workforce, a 0.19% increase since 2023.

Within this time, our total number of employees has reduced and no wholetime firefighters have been recruited. Therefore, the increase of the figures has relied on our recruitment of retained on-call staff and support staff.



## Performance Assurance Framework

Our Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) provides structure and governance arrangements to ensure that the statutory obligations, functions and strategic commitments of the service are being suitably scrutinised and delivered. As part of the [Our Council Plan](#) we ensured a clear link to our PAF with four key measures highlighted to provide assurance. This golden thread continues through our core performance measures and through to service objectives into team plans and individual performance objectives.

### Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations.

OUTCOME - A timely and proportionate approach to prevention through fire safety inspections of business premises

OUTCOME – Support to people when they need it through Safe & Well Visits to those at highest risk

	23/24 Target	Performance
Number of Safe & Well Visits delivered to those at highest risk	5000	5335
Fire safety inspections of business premises (as determined by the Risk Based Inspection Programme) carried out per year	1000	1032

### Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.

OUTCOME - Safe and connected and cohesive communities measured through first appliance attendance to both critical fires and critical special service incidents.

	23/24 Target	Performance
Percentage of critical fires where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard	89%	89.2%
Percentage of critical special service incidents where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard	80%	83.9%

A critical incident is defined as one that is likely to involve a significant threat to life, structures or the environment. The PAF examines performance on a quarterly basis across the four elements of service provision, corporate health, priority programmes and risk through a suite of core and service measures. In the reporting year 2023-24, we tracked the performance of 30 core measures against quarterly and end of year targets (detailed in Appendix A). These core measures are subject to scrutiny at our Strategic Performance Board, Service Executive Board and by the FRS Scrutiny Committee, ensuring organisational aims and objectives are achieved.

# Deputy Chief Fire Officer Annual Review



This year has seen us make some significant progress against our Community Risk Management Plan across all Strategic Priorities.

The progress includes, implementation of quality assurance and evaluation frameworks of prevention activity; 66% reduction in unwanted fire signals and provision of enhanced training to all of our wholetime incident commanders; continued evolution of our Local Risk Management Plans, as well as evaluating Day Crewed 7 station performance; our Leadership and Culture Programme continues as well as delivery of innovative targeted cultural and leadership coaching in partnership with 31ten, independent experts to support in addressing subcultures; and simultaneously opening a state of the art fire station and training centre, which is progressive in many ways including its layout in relation to contaminants.

We implemented a Data, Analytics & Reporting Team in April 2023, which has supported our continued efforts to ensure a focus on intelligence to support our business planning and decision making. In July 2023, we launched our new three-day, team based, annual Maintenance of Competence course which includes components on culture and values.



We have worked specifically on our station-based activity to focus on increased productivity. A key measure of this is station-based staff's time spent with the community as a proportion of the hours available, which has increased since 21/22 by 6.62%. There is further work later in this CRMP, however initial indications show that increased recording and targeted approach supports the organisational goal of increased productivity.

Performance against our 30 core measures continues to be monitored through Strategic Performance Board and at year end, 26 were green, two were amber and two were red. This is further enhanced with the continuation of the dedicated FRS Scrutiny committee which supports both analysis of performance and more recently a focus on the retained duty system and how this can be improved in year 3.

Next year there will be a continued focus on the People Service Plan particularly in relation to the 31ten report and next stage culture action plan. This will further be supported through the increased focus on LRMPs and increased community engagement, improvement of the infrastructure of information technology especially improvements to Firewatch, as well as a continued focus on income generation and development of the next CRMP.

## Progress against our CRMP Strategic Priorities

### Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening

As a public service it is right that we place our communities at the centre of all we do, and this is reinforced by the NFCC's Person-Centred Framework which underpins our Prevention activity.

Throughout the past year our community fire safety officers and firefighters have been working hard to deliver Safe & Well Visits to those persons with the highest level of risk. We have completed 5,335 Safe & Well Visits. These visits are completed in the customer's home and are an opportunity to identify potential fire hazards and provide fire safety advice and equipment to help keep people safe. We also provide additional information on positive health and wellbeing, as our data continues to demonstrate a strong link between those and a reduced fire risk.

In addition to Safe & Well Visits we have completed a further 1,333 Home Safety Interventions to supply and fit fire safety equipment where needed. In total this year we have fitted 3,926 smoke detectors and 1,914 carbon monoxide detectors into people's homes.



Our teams understand the need to make every contact count and will offer additional support to those that need it most. This will often require them to signpost or refer a customer to partner agencies to help them live safely and independently. Where the need is most urgent, we will work with our partners to safeguard an individual.

We made 50 safeguard referrals in the last year and 84% of these were submitted within 24 hours of the incident occurring. We aim to submit 100% of our safeguard referrals within 24 hours and recognise that more work needs to be done in this area. Through the upcoming year we will provide our staff with additional safeguard training to ensure that they fully understand this requirement and are confident in their ability to keep people safe.

We continue to prioritise those with the very highest risk. We welcome the NFCC's National Definition of Risk which will increase our capacity to identify those areas which have a disproportionate level of accidental dwelling fire risk. We are using this data to develop our LRMPs and engage with those communities that need us most.

It is recognised that those with the highest level of risk, may need ongoing support from the fire service, so we now offer those persons additional Safe & Well Visits as their circumstances change, to keep them living safe in their homes. In the past year we have offered revisits to 243 of our most vulnerable customers.

The fire service has continued to work with our partner agencies to strengthen and grow our network. Whilst we recognise the impact that health and wellbeing have on a person's risk of fire, we are simply not specialists in those areas. We collaborate closely with our partner agencies to provide and receive specialist support, information, and training. We form one part of a wider network of agencies working together to keep people safe.

We have developed a network of Fire Leads within partner agencies that can promote our fire safety messages and act as an ambassador for the fire service. The learning identified from our Fatal and Serious Fire Reviews is shared with our partner agencies to ensure that every opportunity to prevent a future fire is taken by all.

### ***1.1 Place the public and communities at the centre of our activities.***

In the past year we have developed robust quality assurance and evaluation frameworks to ensure that our work is being completed to a consistently high standard and is rightfully targeted towards those with the highest risk.

We have developed our capacity to deliver fire prevention through our frontline staff, volunteers, and our partner agencies. Our firefighters receive specialised fire prevention training at our new training facility, Platinum House. We also work closely with our partner agencies to increase their understanding of fire risk, which ensures that the customer is always central to our engagement.

For more details about safety in the home please see our webpages on [home fire safety](#).



## ***1.2 Develop our capacity, through our frontline staff, volunteers and the frontline staff of partner agencies.***

Our volunteers are an asset to the fire service and they continue to play a significant role in supporting their local fire stations and community engagements. In the past year, our volunteers have provided 2,220 hours of their time to help us keep our communities safe from fires and other emergencies.

The fire service has continued to work with our partner agencies to strengthen and grow our network. Whilst we recognise the impact that health and wellbeing have on a person's risk of fire, we are simply not specialists in those areas. We collaborate closely with our partner agencies to provide and receive specialist support, information, and training. We form one part of a wider network of agencies working together to keep people safe.

We have developed a network of Fire Leads within partner agencies that can promote our fire safety messages and act as an ambassador for the fire service. The learning identified from our Fatal and Serious Fire Reviews is shared with our partner agencies to ensure that every opportunity to prevent a future fire is taken by all.

If you are interested in joining our incredible team of volunteers, please visit our [Fire & Rescue Service Community Volunteer page](#).

## ***1.4 Provide school children with fire safety education and deliver programmes so children and young people can make safer decisions and fulfil their potential.***

We continue to support children and young people with their fire safety education and have completed 168 school visits in the past year. Those children that have received and understood our fire safety message, carry this with them into adulthood and their future homes.

The prevention team have delivered 10 youth engagement courses to 119 children and young people. Using techniques traditionally found on the fire service drill ground to help develop teamwork, build resilience, and increase their fire safety awareness. This team was recognised by the NFCC and have received a national award for their work in this area. They were also honoured to receive a High Sheriff's Award this year.





We continue to support children and young people that have demonstrated fire-setting behaviours. The team work closely with the individual through our FireWise programme to highlight the dangers of fire and to promote positive change.

You can find lots of exciting and informative educational information for children, parents, carers and teachers on [WSFRS's Learning zone](#).

Through our Firewise programme we work with children and young people who play with fire. Providing education on the dangers of playing with fire or using fire inappropriately can significantly reduce the chance of this behaviour continuing.

### ***1.5 Strengthen and grow our partnerships, working together to keep the individuals and communities safer.***



We continue to work closely with our partners in the Safer Sussex Road Partnership. This partnership works to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads. Through support of the partnership, we have been able to deliver 12 Biker Down events across the county to promote safe road use and instruct bikers on how to respond to a road traffic collision.

We recognise that the home is the foundation for safe and independent lives. For this reason, we continue to actively lead the Safe & Habitable Homes Forum as well as being an active member of the Registered Landlord Forum for Social Housing alongside our partner agencies.

For more information visit our [road safety webpage](#).

## Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be

2023/24 has enabled us to continue with the same level of productivity and enhancing public safety, as we saw in the previous year. The latest piece of new fire safety legislation, drafted and enacted as a direct result of the outcomes of the Grenfell Inquiry, came into force on 01 October 2023 (The Building Safety Act 2022).

As a result we now have an additional Fire Safety Regulator within the service who continues in their development journey, ready to play their part in the South-East regional fire safety hub to support the Building Safety Regulator as part of a multi-disciplinary team, to ensure high-rise residential buildings are constructed and managed in a manner that ensures the safety of those members of our communities that live within them.

Following the introduction of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, we ran a priority programme of work, as part of our Risk Based Inspection Programme, to audit all of those buildings that fall under the scope of the most stringent requirements of those regulations. As a result we have further enhanced the knowledge of those responsible for these buildings, as to their requirements under those regulations, and continue to ensure that we enforce those standards robustly to ensure that people can be assured of their safety.

With the rapid development of alternative fuels, and the green agenda, WSFRS are leading the way with a cross-protection group existing of Operational Risk Management, Complex Premises Team, and the Water and Access Team, who have developed and enacted a Memorandum of Understanding with the planning departments of all of our local district and borough councils. This is to ensure there is proactive engagement between them, developers, and ourselves, where plans are in place to construct any battery energy storage Site (BESS), or solar farm of less than 50MW in size, to which the fire and rescue service is otherwise not a statutory consultee under the current planning legislation.



This is to ensure that developers are considering fire safety at the earliest opportunity, including the very latest developments in fire-fighting technology, making the impact of fire involving these installations less impactful their local communities, the environment, and maximise the safety afforded to our firefighters.

We continue to be an appropriate regulator of the fire safety legislation, holding those responsible persons to account where they place the public at risk of death or serious injury as a result of their significant failures to manage the preventative and protective measures in their premises appropriately. As a result we have seen one case enter the court system during 2023/24, with three further cases progressing towards the courts during 2024/25.

We have progressed additional elements of our CRMP 2022-26 commitment to the public, having provided enhanced training to all of our wholetime incident commanders to enable them to thoroughly investigate the causes of accidental fires, that are of a simple nature. This ensures that we are better aware of how fires start and develop, and that these can then be understood within our Fire Prevention realm so as to be able to prevent fires starting in the future, as well as our Strategic Risk and Improvement team who can then ensure that our future firefighting techniques and equipment are fit to meet the demand.

We have continued our commitment to ensure that our Fire Safety Regulators have the qualifications and skills to continue to be able to make them effective, with three of our specialist team attaining their Level 4 Diplomas in Fire Safety. We have also furthered our succession planning agenda by having four colleagues from other departments commence their Level 3 Certificate in Fire Safety as part of their development journey.

2023/24 has given us the first full 12-months since the instigation of our call challenge and non-attendance policy where our Joint Fire Control are no longer automatically mobilising fire engines to reports of the activation of automatic fire alarms within lower-risk commercial premises. As a result we have seen a 66% reduction in unwanted fire signals, which has given our operational frontline fire crews the ability to be far more effective with their time, using it to do more fire prevention and fire protection work out in their communities, and be able to spend more time maintaining their operational competencies.



## Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

As part of WSFRS's commitment to keeping its communities safe, our fire stations produce annual Local Risk Management Plans (LRMPs). At the operational level our staff design their LRMPs in collaboration with various stakeholders to set local-based objectives to mitigate threats to residents, groups and infrastructure within their community, aligned to our Vision: Proud to Serve; and our Mission Statement: We work with our communities and partners every day to prevent emergencies, helping everyone to be safe and to improve lives in West Sussex. Emergencies will always happen and when they do, we are ready to respond as quickly as possible to help people in their time of need and to save lives. We empower and support our people to be the best they can be, to deliver to the highest standards when serving our communities and to uphold the values of our fire and rescue service.

A Local Risk Management approach was adopted by WSFRS in 2019 and forms part of the golden thread of managing community risk, supporting the overarching and statutory delivery of the CRMP and its Strategic Priorities. LRMPs start by



identifying, analysing, and evaluating potential community risks using quantitative and qualitative data approaches - incident data alongside local and national risk intelligence. Locally, staff will work with their internal and external stakeholders and their community to comprehensively understand local needs, issues, and risks. Service Delivery leadership teams then use these assessments to review threats and opportunities that align with the organisation's Vision, Mission, and Strategic Priorities.

Over the past year, WSFRS has been actively involved in responding to numerous incidents and collaborating closely with multi-agency partners at road traffic collisions and gaining entry incidents to ensure effective outcomes. Notably, incidents such as the industrial building fire in Burgess Hill in June 2023 and the significant fire at the Harvester Restaurant in Littlehampton on 10th August 2023 which highlighted the complexity and scale of large building fires.

Through coordinated partnership efforts and strategic deployment of our resources, we successfully minimised damages and supported recovery in our communities.

On 29th October 2023, firefighters were requested to support a multi-agency incident at Shripney Road, Bognor where an electrical substation was being impacted by flood waters. The impact to residents, the local hospital and retail units meant that a multi-agency approach was needed to ensure that this piece of critical infrastructure was maintained. Several specialist pumps were brought in along with our high-volume pump from Bognor Regis to keep water levels at an acceptable height whilst a bund was placed around the building. Crews worked over two days supporting this incident, but the wider community were impacted for several days with roads and businesses closed.



In 2022 WSFRS underwent a significant transformation by renaming the Response department to Service Delivery, a change aimed at better reflecting our commitment to community risk reduction and public safety.

This rebranding commitment has been successfully integrated throughout the organisation, facilitated by our meeting governance model within Service Delivery. Each month, our fire stations convene within this meeting structure, supported by the active participation of departments such as Prevention, Protection, Risk and Improvement. This collaborative meeting framework ensures the flow of information from our fire stations to strategic decision-makers, fostering transparent communication throughout the organisation.

The Code of Ethics principles underpins our meeting structure framework, and it is evident through evaluation that positive outcomes are being realised for our communities. In the past year, our fire stations have achieved unprecedented levels of productivity in risk reduction initiatives focused on prevention and protection.

We conducted a total of 3,128 safe and well visits, with 2,451 targeting individuals in the medium to high-risk category, highlighting our risk-based approach in assisting the most vulnerable members of our communities. Additionally, we completed 730 fire safety audits for local businesses, providing invaluable fire safety advice and support.

Comparing these figures to the previous year, we are proud that this has resulted in a 55% increase in all safe and well visits and an increase of 102% in the medium to high-risk category.

Our commitment to reducing fire safety risk in businesses is also highlighted by an 88% increase in the number of fire safety audits conducted this year. This confirms that our firefighters are using risk data effectively.

Furthermore, our CRMP commitment to transition four-day crewed fire stations to operate seven days a week, from 7 am to 7 pm, has improved the immediate response coverage and times in these areas by 45 seconds to get a first engine to scene between 7 am and 7 pm. Our DC7 fire stations are also more productive with protection and prevention activities in the communities they serve. We will be moving the DC7 CRMP project into business as usual in mid-2024.

We have also introduced Service Delivery Assurance Visits (SDAVs) which are designed to provide an objective overview of core response workplace standards at our fire stations. The visits are conducted using a supportive and coaching style and are aimed at identifying both positive practices and areas for improvement. Taking a mature, collaborative, and developmental approach to conducting the assurance visits is a key principle, building upon and supporting the NFCC Leadership Behaviour Framework and Code of Ethics.

Neighbouring services from Surrey and East Sussex will be invited on quarterly basis, to shadow and observe SDAVs for collaborative working, and in 2025 the invite will be extended to colleagues from South East Operational Realignment Response Group (SEORRG).

## Strategic Priority 4 Have a safe and valued workforce

### Our People

Our people are extremely important to us, and our aim is to have a workforce where every colleague puts psychological safety at its core, and a workforce that is diverse, flexible, highly skilled and agile.

We remain committed to maintaining the highest standards and expectations culturally and putting people first. As a result, during 2023/24 the service has continued to make progress on our People Service Plan to support Strategic Priority 4 within our CRMP, to 'Have a safe and valued workforce'.

Our aim is to empower and support our people to be the best they can be, to deliver to the highest standards when serving our communities and to uphold the values of our fire and rescue service. We do this by the following key priorities in our People Service Plan:

- Strengthen leadership and line management skills to support organisational cultural change, talent management and service delivery to the public.
- Develop our cultural values and behaviours, creating an environment of psychological safety which makes WSFRS a great place to work.
- Provide high quality training and development opportunities that respond to the needs of our staff, our desired culture, our service model needs and ensures performance improvement of services to the public.
- Strengthen our ability to provide an excellent service by diversifying our staff.
- Continue our work on creating a fair and equal place to work.
- Continue to support the health, wellbeing and ways of working for all our staff.

## Values and culture

[The 2022 independent culture review at London Fire Brigade report](#) and the 2023 [Spotlight report](#) by HMICFRS into the values and culture across the sector noted widespread discrimination, harassment and bullying and received extensive coverage in the media.

WSFRS prides itself on its values and the positive culture in the service and wants to assure the communities of West Sussex that we are fully committed and actively progressing the recommendations that are not already committed to within our People Service Plan.

As such, in 2023/24 WSFRS have continued to build a culture of psychological safety where every aspect of our work aligns with the aspirations set out within the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics and the WSCC values. Our core priority in the past 12 months has really focused in bringing these values to life at every level of the organisation, on an individual and a team basis to ensure we continue to develop the right culture in WSFRS.

We have worked with an external coaching consultancy to support our delivery of a team-based Cultural Development Programme to support the rapid development of our organisation's culture towards everyone displaying our values. The programme has enabled us to; identify what staff feel is or isn't working well; develop the working culture within WSFRS to help support and deliver our vision, strategic aims, and objectives; and make changes sustainable beyond the close of the formal programme.

A complimentary activity of focus groups to further understand the organisational challenges from staff has been conducted in the past year. The key themes from these groups, and the themes from the external coaching have so far shown close alignment and will be developed further for inclusion in our next stage culture development plan.





## Equality, Diversity and inclusion: Why it's so important for our service

The [public sector equality duty](#) of the Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

In West Sussex we understand that a diverse workforce with individuals who can offer different skills, experience and knowledge will benefit us as an organisation and ensure we are able to meet the needs of the diverse community we serve. We have therefore committed ourselves to wide-ranging positive action initiatives, aiming to attract candidates from diverse groups to join and ensure they then feel psychologically safe to stay with our service.

To support our recruitment and retention of colleagues, within the past year, WSFRS have launched our Dignity & Respect Policy. This is to ensure all our colleagues:

- are treated with dignity and respect.
- understand the role they play in creating a culture of equity and inclusion; and
- have a positive work experience and feel empowered and supported to reach their full potential.

In addition to this policy, the aforementioned HMICFRS Spotlight report asked that Chief Fire Officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes as well as the supporting process and actions are in place to manage any reports. We therefore implemented the 'Say So' confidential reporting line in 2023, which ensures staff have an opportunity to report confidentially. A confidential reporting facility is an additional resource to facilitate our culture change alongside the many other mechanisms of support and development we continue to implement.



We have also committed to providing every manager in our service with a 360-degree feedback report and coaching. This feedback is based on our Core Values, of which inclusivity is a core component, enabling managers to develop themselves and in turn support colleagues in their team to be inclusive.

In the past year we have continued to increase colleagues understanding across all protected characteristics, including development events on; neurodiversity, menopause, involuntary celibates, celebration and recognition of black history month including anti-racism in practice and black history in West Sussex; and transgender awareness. We have also created more internal bitesize guides for all colleagues to understand what inclusivity means for specific groups.

People Impact Assessments are also consistently both conducted, monitored and tracked for completion across all internal governance papers, to ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is considered in all projects. Our Diversity Champions group and Diversity & Inclusion Steering Board remain key to our success in driving the Inclusion agenda.

### **Leadership and Development**

We want to ensure we are developing leaders at all levels of our service to lead in alignment with our Code of Ethics. As such in the past year, our Leadership & Culture Programme has continued to support all our leaders in their development to role model our expected values and behaviours, to be confident and capable in their roles, and to enable them to create a positive, inclusive, supportive, and empowering work environment.

The modules completed in 2023/24 include: coaching, inclusive behaviours, encouraging conversations, managing grievances, managing absence, managing wellbeing in the workplace, and effective performance and development.

Learning at all levels is supported by programmes of coaching, mentoring and underpinned by opportunities of shadowing, performance conversations, secondments, training and e-learning.

Development centres for aspiring leaders at all levels in operations were held in 2023 and are scheduled for a repeated full programme in 2024. Our Development & Training Steering Group ensures we continue to provide supportive, inclusive and aligned development activity across the service.

In February 2024 we launched a new service-wide induction programme for all and any new colleague joining WSFRS. It will be held three times a year and will be a complimentary programme to the operational training induction sessions for our new wholetime and retained new recruits as well as our colleagues in our support functions.

Professional development via the apprenticeship route continues to be supported and we are very pleased that eight of our colleagues achieved level 5 and or level 3 qualifications in 2023 in a range of different disciplines.

## Health & Wellbeing

Driving a positive Health & Wellbeing culture remains a key priority for the service with the wellbeing of our employees always at the front of our thoughts.

The service is ensuring it reviews and adopts best practice from the latest [NFCC Health and Wellbeing research](#) findings including mapping wellbeing provision to career and life stage transition points to ensure we provide a variety of effective avenues of support. And utilising the feedback from our engagement actions such as the team coaching and focus groups, to support our understanding of related issues which affect wellbeing of staff and enable action plans to be drawn up to ensure our wellbeing approach remains appropriate and targeted.

We offer a range of services to support all employees to maintain healthy lifestyles. We have a network of Wellbeing Champions who are all volunteers from throughout the service and play a vital part in our wellbeing approach.

We also have a trained group of staff as mental health first aiders, to ensure they can work alongside the wellbeing champions in supporting our workforce. Alongside our occupational health provision and Employee Assistance Programme. We also continue to develop a close partnership with The Fire Fighter's Charity to tailor our organisational wellbeing interventions to the wider sector. As well as a reinvigoration of our previous work around 'Its OK not to be Ok' to promote staff wellbeing further.

In 2023, we introduced wellbeing support dogs for staff. We are partnering with the National OK9 network for this support. A Wellbeing Support Dog has been a proven concept across blue light services. This model of delivering additional wellbeing support to colleagues shows the significance in staff wellbeing and the dogs are another resource that can be used alongside current provisions.

We also continue our focus on ensuring high levels of fitness across our operational firefighters in their annual fitness testing. Fitness testing results are monitored by the Strategic Performance Board and have remained consistently high in 2023/24.



## Operational Training

WSFRS places great importance on operational staff being highly skilled and knowledgeable, enabling them to respond safely to different types of emergencies at any time.

Our first operational training courses began at Platinum House in early July, welcoming the first crews taking part in our official training courses at Platinum House which was a significant moment for the service.

Operational training is delivered through a range of methods ranging from on station firefighting practice to major exercises involving blue light partners, emergency planning officers and specialist advisors. Firefighters are exposed to wide ranging training scenarios ranging from those created using virtual reality modelling at our state-of-the-art Incident Command suite in the new training centre, to fire simulations at our state-of-the-art Live Fire Building or water rescue training. We have taken the opportunity as part of our move to the new training centre to refresh and relaunch our training courses. Training Instructors have nationally recognised teaching and assessing qualifications and our training team has enhanced its capability to assess at nationally accredited Skills for Justice (SFJ) levels. We can now provide in house training and assessment from firefighter to station manager level.

All new firefighters attend basic training which is broken down into modules and each module is assessed. In the past year, we have completed one new wholetime recruits' course and run three new retained recruits' courses, amounting to 28 new firefighters joining our service.

Operational Training publish an Annual Training plan on the 1 October each year, this plan includes all courses for the following calendar year. In 2023, we commenced our new three-day Maintenance of Competence model for all firefighters to attend annually to cover off their core training requirements. In order to comply with the elements of fire and rescue, the service provide training in:

- Breathing apparatus and fire behaviour training
- Incident command
- Blue light driving
- Road traffic collision
- Firefighter core skills

In relation to emergencies other than fires and road traffic collisions, our Operational Training plan identifies emergency special services to include flooding and water rescue incidents, animal assistance incidents, rescue from height, maritime,

wild fire and hazardous materials/spills. In 2023, we also commenced the full roll out of our immediate emergency care training to all firefighters.

The Operational Training team ensure all training delivered is National Operational Guidance(NOG) compliant, has the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) principles woven throughout and adheres to the appropriate Fire Standards and relevant legislation. We align with our 3F Partners (East Sussex FRS & Surrey FRS) for Incident Command, Operational Training & Development, Command Support standards, and associated equipment.



## Strategic Priority 5 Making best use of resources

### ***5.1 & 5.2 Develop and deliver an Estates Improvement Plan and improve the layout of our buildings to support equality and diversity***

2023/24 saw the official opening of Platinum House, which will provide a central location for all of our operational and support staff to train at. The facility has world leading real fire training facilities and incident command training suite. The venue has already hosted several courses and the feedback we have received on the quality of the venue has been excellent.

We have also been working on improving our other fire stations using Platinum House as a blueprint. This means starting the work to introduce the following improvements across all of our fire stations:

- Designated clean, transitional and dirty areas
- Individual dorms and changing facilities
- Dedicated 'retreat' spaces
- Separate PPE and personal locker space
- Community spaces

The service was successful in securing £3.15m in capital budget to continue the roll out of these improvements at both wholetime and retained stations.

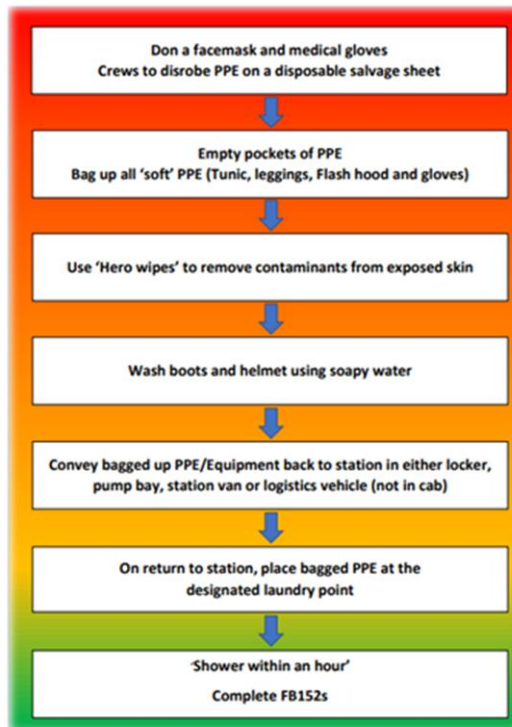
We have also been working closely with WSCC to support their work to achieve carbon net zero by 2030. This work includes heat decarbonisation

across several of our fire stations. Work has begun at three of our fire stations as part of the county council's first phase of decarbonising buildings within our estate. The first three stations; East Grinstead, East Wittering and Petworth, will see work completed concluded in early spring with a further three fire stations having just started their heat decarbonisation work in early 2024. This will see these fire stations with new more efficient boilers and air-source heat pumps, improved insulation, efficient heating systems and installation of solar panels.



### 5.3 We will continue to work to minimise any risk from contaminants to our firefighters

Throughout 2023/24 we have continued to work hard to reduce the risk to our firefighters and those that support operational activities from the risks posed by contaminants from firefighting. This has seen the service launch of new seven step decontamination process. This process is supported by a new policy and risk assessment, a new training package and new decontamination equipment on fire engines and at fire stations. The process went live in November 2023 and was used 35 times in the first two months.



We are continuing to work with other regional fire and rescue services to develop a contaminants tool kit which highlights good practice from across the region and shares it between services. The team has worked across different functions to highlight to the risks of contaminants and is currently working with our Fleet and Procurement teams to design the next generation of fire engine which will further support our ability to minimise the risk of contaminants to firefighters. These include the introduction of clean cabs on all new fire engines and expanding the number of Breathing Apparatus washers at fire stations.

Our Health and Safety team will continue to develop our long-term strategy for reducing the risk of contaminants to firefighters through the introduction of things like health screening and monitoring.

### **3.8 A risk-based review of our specialist capability and asset requirements**

2023/24 has seen us continue to progress our work to review of specialist capabilities. The project has already identified some improvements that the service can make through focusing our capabilities on those incidents that occur the most and have the greatest risk to human or animal life.

This has seen the project set up a dedicated working group with colleagues from across the service to refocus our technical rescue response on three core areas: rescues from height, rescues from water and rescues of large animals. This project aims to implement a new operating model for our technical rescue capability by the beginning of 2025.



The review has also worked with our teams in fleet and procurement to develop a new specification for the procurement of eight new extreme weather response vehicles to replace our current 4x4 fleet. These vehicles will be capable of responding to both wildfires and flood incidents, as well as supporting other extreme weather events. This is important as the risks change across the county due to climate change and we experience more extreme weather, such as the heat wave and subsequent wildfires in 2022 and the more recent spate floodings from storms Babet and Ciaran. The service hope to complete the procurement of the first of these vehicles by the end of 2024/25.

The service has a Horizon Scanning and Future Risks Group and leads a regional group to share best practice around the response to incidents involving lithium-ion batteries. These groups work together to identify emerging and future risks that the service will need to adapt to. Through this group the service has identified a range of evolving risks. The consequences of which are not fully understood. This means that as a fire and rescue service we need to be able to adapt and evolve as the risk we respond to change. These include risks as a result of new vehicle technology, alternative fuels and energy systems, the environment and climate change and the health and well-being of firefighters.

As a result the project has started work to develop the specification for new Breathing Apparatus Support vehicles. This will again see the service move away from a risk specific vehicle to a multi-use adaptable vehicle which will enable the service to adapt to the evolving risks across the county over the lifetime of the vehicle.



***3.10 We will undertake a review of our ERS based on the new national risk methodology which is currently being developed by the NFCC. When complete, we will consult with you if any changes to our ERS are proposed***

2023/24 saw the service launch its project to review of its Emergency Response Standards (ERS). The service's current ERS have been in place since 2009 and span across nine different standards of response. This makes it difficult for a member of the public in West Sussex to know what response standard they can expect from WSFRS. Additionally in the 15 years since the service's current ERS we implemented much has changed in the UK FRS, with changes to national guidance both from the NFCC as well as from central Government. This means that for the service to maintain its position at the forefront of the UK FRS good practice it was important for the service to review its ERSs.

So far the project has undertaken a whole service engagement process to establish all colleagues views on our existing ERSs and if and how the service should improve these. This has given us a set of criteria that are important to our firefighters and will enable them to have better conversations with the public to enable them to reassure communities of the response they expect from WSFRS and how they can make themselves safer from fire and other emergencies if they were to occur.

Members of the project team have worked closely with the NFCC in the development of their Community Risk Products and updated guidance around the definitions of risk. This work has supported the development of our proposals for our new ERS.

2024/25 will see us soft launch these new standards so we can ensure that our systems are recording our response to all critical incidents correctly and undertake a public consultation with all West Sussex communities on our proposals. We will launch our new ERS at the end of 2024/25 following the appropriate approval processes.

The outcome of the project will not affect the response any member of the public will receive from WSFRS but will make our response more transparent and open so that we can be held to account for our performance.

## Future Improvements

2023 saw a major step in moving WSFRS into the future. In July, the service mobilised its first appliance to an incident in Horsham from the new station and Platinum House became the centre of all training operations.

The project was completed on time and to budget and has even been nominated for national awards.

Feedback from stakeholders has been extremely positive, with our training and Horsham staff now having suitable and modern facilities and feeling valued by the level of investment in the service.

The Service is now settling in and embedding new ways of working, including a new Maintenance of Competence training model, made possible through having a venue local to West Sussex. Training in the live environment continues to be developed whilst trainers continue to test and gain experience in using this state-of-the-art facility.

Focus will now turn to reviewing working methods further to continually improve efficiency and effectiveness, as well as developing the foundations and maximising opportunities for cost recovery initiatives in 2024/25.



# Supporting Appendices

## Appendix A - Service Performance and Assurance Framework– Core Measures over last 3 years

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM1	Number of accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <381 Amber 381-398 Red >398	363 ↓	338 ↓	380 ↗
CM2	Number of fire deaths in accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green 0 Amber 1- 3 Red >3	1 ↓	3 ↗	0 ↓
CM3	Number of fire casualties in accidental dwelling fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <20 Amber 20 – 30 Red >30	14 ↓	14 →	10 ↓
CM4	Number of deliberate primary fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <180 Amber 180 – 199 Red 200+	134 ↓	160 ↗	101 ↓
CM5	Number of deliberate secondary fires in West Sussex over a year period	Green <350 Amber 351 - 375 Red >375	246 ↓	299 ↗	218 ↓
CM6	Percentage of safeguarding referrals made within 24 hours of discovery	Green 100% Red <100%	96% ↘	98% ↗	84% ↘
CM7	Number of Safe and Well Visits delivered to households with at least 1 vulnerability or risk factor	Green 5000 Amber 4800 – 4999 Red <4800	3355 ↗	4680 ↗	5335 ↗
CM8	Percentage of very high risk Safe and Well referrals contacted within 1 working day	Green 100% Amber >98% Red <98%	98.80% ↗	100% ↗	100% →

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM9	Percentage of high risk Safe and Well Visit referrals contacted within 7 working days	Green 100% Amber >98% Red <98%	99.40% ↗	99.80% ↗	99.90% ↗
CM10	Number of FSO regulated buildings having received an audit in each financial year	Green 1000 Amber 850-999 Red <850	841 ↗	1004 ↗	1032 ↗
CM11	Percentage of unsatisfactory fire safety audits	>40% green 35%-40% amber <35% red	39.50% ↗	28.60% ↘	55.0% ↗
CM12	Percentage of successful prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005	>75% green <75% red	100% →	100% →	100% →
CM13	Percentage of statutory fire safety consultations completed within the 14-day time period	100% green <100% red	99.50% ↗	100% ↗	100% →
CM14	The number of unwanted fire signals attended in West Sussex over a year period	Green <700 Amber 700-800 Red >800	1601 ↗	1305 ↓	523 ↓
CM15	Percentage of SSRIs that are currently in date (high risk last 12 months, medium risk last 36 months)	Green >90% Amber 60% - 90% Red <60%	98.50% ↗	99.3% ↗	99.5% ↗
CM16	Percentage of emergency calls answered within 10 seconds by Joint Fire Control	Green >=95% Red <95%	94.60% ↗	95.4% ↗	98% ↗
CM17	Average time taken between Joint Fire Control receiving the emergency call and the station being notified	Green <1m 45s Amber 1m45s - 1m55s Red >1m 55s	Measured Differently Previously	Measured Differently Previously	00:01:26

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM18	Percentage of notifications of a level 2 Incident Commander to life risk calls within 5 minutes by Joint Fire Control	Green >98% Amber 95% - 98% Red <95%	98.90%	100%	100%
			↗	↗	→
CM19	Percentage of occasions the first fire engine meets its emergency response standard at a critical fire incident.	Green >89% Red <89%	88.90%	89.1%	92.2%
			↘	↗	↗
CM20	Percentage of occasions the second fire engine arrives at a critical fire incident within its emergency response standard.	Green >83% Red <83%	79.50%	84.20%	84.90%
			↗	↗	↗
CM21	Percentage of occasions the first fire engine meets its emergency response standard at a critical special service incident.	Green >80% Red <80%	78.70%	81.3%	83.9%
			↘	↗	↗
CM22	Percentage of availability on all wholetime frontline pumping appliances	Green 100% Amber 95% - 99% Red <95%	98.80%	97.60%	97.60%
			↘	↘	→
CM23	Percentage of availability on all retained frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)	Green 75% Amber 65% - 75% Red <65%	53.80%	48.60%	47.40%
			↘	↘	↘
CM24	Percentage of all FRS survey respondents satisfied with the overall service from WSFRS	Green 95% Amber 85% - 95% Red <85%	97.80%	98%	98%
				↗	→
CM25	Percentage of staff who are not sick across all staff groups	Green 95% Amber 90% - 95% Red <90%	96.50%	96.80%	95%
			↘	↗	↘

CM #	Measure	Tolerance / Targets	IRMP Y4 2021-22	CRMP YR1 2022-23	CRMP Y2 2023-24
CM26	Percentage of eligible operational staff successfully completing fitness test	Green 95% Amber 85% - 95% Red <85%	89.80%	94.7%	96.7%
			↗	↗	↗
CM27	Percentage of eligible operational staff in qualification	>95% green 85% - 95% amber <85% red	90.30%	91.9%	91.50%
			↘	↗	↘
CM28	Percentage of RIDDOR accidents that are investigated and reported on time	100% green <100% red	86.40%	85.70%	100%
			↘	↘	↗
CM29	Percentage of Health and Safety Risk assessments within date	100% green >95% amber <95% red	99.70%	100%	100%
				↗	→
CM30	Occasions where a Fire Engine in the fleet was made available for each West Sussex crew in operational service	100% green >95% amber <95% red	Not measured	Not measured	100%

## Appendix B – Framework Requirements

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 - which sets out how the county council plans to shape its services for the next five years supported by the corporate services including how the county council spends your money.

WSFRS also operates under broader corporate policies on:

- Fraud & Corruption Policy
- Equality & Inclusion Policy
- Pay Policy

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) Fire and Rescue National Framework for England published May 2018.
- b) Must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions.

c) May contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions.

d) 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 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). 40 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 1st October 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 CRMP.

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 777100

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