

Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

6th March 2025

Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Q3 2024/25

Report by Chief Fire Officer

Summary

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) monitors and reports on organisational and operational performance against a Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) which includes review and scrutiny by the Elected Members at the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee (FRSSC).

The PAF includes monitoring of service performance against core measures that provide a strong indication of organisational performance directly aligned to the delivery of the Strategic Commitments i.e. Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This ensures the service is intelligence and evidence led and enables the service to react early when performance is not to the required level.

Appendix A of the report is the quarter three Strategic Performance Report for the purpose of scrutiny of the Executive's approach to performance. This report covers data from the period of 1st October 2024 – 31st December 2024.

Focus for Scrutiny

Members of the Committee are invited to consider and comment on the Core Measures detailed in Appendix A, designed to provide assurance concerning the delivery of the statutory functions of the Fire Authority. Key lines of enquiry include:

- Whether the report provides all the information necessary to enable effective and efficient scrutiny
 - Identify any issues needing further in-depth scrutiny relevant to the committee's portfolio area of responsibility
 - Identification of any specific areas for action or response by the relevant Cabinet Member
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Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 West Sussex County Council is the Fire Authority and is responsible for making sure West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) performs efficiently and in the best interest of the public and communities it serves.
- 1.2 As part of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) third round of full inspections, WSFRS was inspected in Q1 2024/25. This inspection contains an assessment of the service's effectiveness and efficiency, and how well we look after our people.
- 1.3 In October 2024, WSFRS received the outcome of this latest inspection, which recognised significant progress and highlighted improvements since the previous inspection in July 2022.
- 1.4 WSFRS received no "requires improvement" or "inadequate" ratings. Six areas were graded under a new criteria of "adequate", while five received "good" ratings. The cause of concern relating to people from the July 2022 report was removed.

On behalf of residents, Members are responsible for ensuring that WSFRS delivers excellent services and achieves outcomes as efficiently and effectively as possible. This involves the West Sussex County Council Fire Authority (WSCCFA):

- setting a high-level policy agenda (Strategic Objectives) for what the WSFRS should do and the outcomes it should achieve
 - setting a budget to fund delivery of the policy agenda
 - securing assurance that the budget is being spent wisely on delivering the policy agenda set by the authority.
 - Ensuring outcomes are delivered
- 1.5 In order to secure assurance, it is necessary for effective scrutiny to be an integral component of WSCCFA governance arrangements. Scrutiny is there to hold the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue to account concerning the decisions taken relating to WSFRS.
 - 1.6 The role of scrutiny is also to contribute to the development of solutions and ideas to support continuous service improvement. The Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee may need to be flexible in the way it scrutinises the service and the Executive's decisions. On occasions, Members may wish to 'drill down' on certain specific issues but still at a strategic level with the focus being the interests of all West Sussex residents and businesses.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The proposal information for this item for scrutiny is set out in the attached appendix (listed below). As it is a report dealing with performance management the assessments and implications are not required.

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Appendices

Appendix A FRS Scrutiny PAF Core Measures Report Q3 2024-25

Background papers

None