

Appendix A



Annual Assurance Statement 2019/20

April 2019 to March 2020

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Introduction

This statement seeks to provide an accessible way in which communities, central government, local authorities and other partners may make a valid assessment of our Fire and Rescue Authority's performance for the financial year 2019/20.

Hampshire is a large county based in the South of England which covers an area of more than 1450 square miles. The county is home to a population of 1.85 million people dispersed across rural, urban and coastal areas. Rural Hampshire covers 83% of the county with urban areas accounting for the remaining 17%.

Hampshire is bordered to the West by Dorset and Wiltshire, to the East by West Sussex and Royal Berkshire and Surrey to the North. The county is bordered by the Solent to the south which is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world served by the commercial ports of Southampton and Portsmouth.

Hampshire is rich in history with national parks, significant places of interest and heritage sites of international importance. The cities of Southampton and Portsmouth are urban areas of growing populations with universities that are seeing significant growth in student numbers and accommodation requirements. The growth in industry around Winchester and Basingstoke highlights the changing landscape. Balanced with this are large numbers of remote villages with many thatched and listed buildings.

Hampshire is home to several significant military bases and ports. There are also several businesses that are classified as Control of Major Accidents and Hazard (COMAH) sites. These locations have specific plans in place to manage the risks they have on site. There is a large and diverse range of commercial and industrial elements across Hampshire with heavy industries, including Fawley oil refinery and BAE systems.

The county also has several major transport hubs including airports, ferry terminals, commercial ports, major motorways and several major hospitals, prisons and key infrastructure.

Our purpose is *Together we make life safer* for everyone in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and for our people. We work hard to educate people to take the right action to reduce the risk of fires and other incidents happening. But if they do occur then we ensure we have the best equipment and skilled people available to respond accordingly.

Over the last decade we have successfully driven down the number of fires and fire-related casualties to around half the level of 10 years ago. Despite of this we continue to look for more ways to improve the safety of people in Hampshire as we move towards 2021 and beyond. This is about more than just fire. We are also passionate about collaborating and working ever more closely with our partners and our communities to further enhance the safety of the county.

We believe in continuous improvement and constantly look to develop what we do for our communities, as well as ensuring that we provide value for money. To achieve this improvement, we encourage feedback from our communities, staff, partner organisations, and other professionals.

We gather information from members of the public after incidents and undertake a range of audits, evaluations and assessments, both internally and by external bodies. All of these are used to assist us to understand our strengths and weaknesses and inform our strategic assessment and Service plan.

We are very proud of our past performance; however, we will not stand still and are always seeking ways to deliver Public Value and value for money.

COVID-19 Response

In response to the emerging pandemic, in February 2020 we set up an Emergency Management Group to cover Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services. This group was set up to monitor the situation and ensure appropriate communications, advice and procedures are shared with everyone. As the situation escalated, on the 13th March 2020 the Emergency Management Group agreed to put a Pandemic Management Team together, including representation from a wide range of Directorates and teams, along with the following initial measures:

- **Restrictions to Control to support business continuity:** only Control staff and Control data team having access to Control, unless there is an operational requirement.
- **Safety at stations:** guidance provided to restrict non-essential events activities on station.
- **BA cleaning:** we moved immediately to weekly face seal testing on a Sunday for BA sets as per the current on-call staff position. Following the face seal test, personnel will perform a full station clean. At operational incidents, face masks will become personal for the duration of that incident and until a full station clean can be performed.
- **At incidents:** if someone shows symptoms at an incident, withdrawing to two metres and wash hands, notify Fire Control, as per current Operations guidance.
- **Critical Safe & Well visits:** only undertaking safety critical Safe & Well visits. Before conducting any visits, staff ascertaining if a person is in self-isolation and/or if they are showing any symptoms – persistent cough or high temperature – prior to the visit, over the phone (with the introduction of telephone risk assessments). If there are no symptoms a Safe & Well visit will continue, with a proactive approach to deliver all current outstanding referrals. If people are self-isolating and the visit is deemed necessary, then a full risk assessment being undertaken with Community Safety Officer's to decide the best course of action. The appropriate action being decided on a case by case basis, depending on the risks presented.
- **The creation of an Emergency Staff Cell:** to monitor the impact of staff absences in take action to mitigate any resourcing risks, where required.

On the 19th March 2020, the Local Resilience Forum for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight's Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) declared the Coronavirus outbreak a major incident. This enabled a multi-agency response, with the Fire and Rescue Headquarters hosting the Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC). In addition, many Officers were deployed into support roles of the SCC or chairing specific cells on behalf of the LRF, such as Logistics, Business Continuity and others.

We had already been providing a multi-agency response for a number of weeks, but the declaration moved us to the next phase of our well-rehearsed plans. This ensured all partners, which includes all the emergency services, could use joint-working arrangements to effectively manage, and where possible minimise, the impact of the virus on our population during these unprecedented times.

This in turn prompted a series of measures from us to maintain operational cover whilst increasing further protections to our staff including working from home arrangements for non-operational staff and utilising our new Office 365 platform to maintain business continuity with extremely effective results.

We continue to monitor the situation (and its impacts on our performance and risks) very closely ensuring that we capture lessons from our response whilst also planning our restoration and recovery. This will enable us to once again respond effectively should a second wave occur.

Governance

The Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) is a combined authority made up of 10 elected members who collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries in delivery of the Fire Service Act 2004. Our Fire Authority is made up of 8 Hampshire County Council members, 1 Portsmouth City Council member and 1 Southampton City Council member. The Authority delegates responsibility for a wide range of decisions relating to operational delivery to the Chief Fire Officer (or other officers). Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is the name given to the operational fire and rescue service led by the Chief Fire Officer. The Service staff and officers are employed by the Authority to deliver the day to day operational functions.

To support this, we have a Scheme of Delegation, Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations combined into the Authority's Constitution. The Constitution sets out in a single place and in clear language, how the Authority works with the Service and how it makes decisions.

For more details on our Constitution, please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/who-we-are/hampshire-fire-and-rescue-authority/constitution/>

To support our Constitution, it is essential for us to have an appropriate and robust governance framework. The framework operates with clear reporting lines and streamlines decision making. It also enables us to monitor the achievement of our priorities and to consider whether they have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective and efficient services.

As part of the framework we have several boards where decisions are made and performance managed. At the highest level we have the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority Committee meeting. This is a public meeting where all high-level decisions are discussed and made by the Authority, with the Authority supported by its Standards & Governance Committee, which includes 5 members and now meets quarterly. Before items are brought to the Authority they are first discussed by the Service in the Executive Group. This meeting is a crucial part of the governance framework and is supported by several sub-committees and group.

The details of our framework are presented in our Annual Governance Statement, which is an essential part of our financial Statement of Accounts. For more details of our Governance Statement, please see: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/statement-of-accounts/>

Combined Fire Authority (CFA)

In addition to our current combined Fire Authority, we are preparing to combine further with the Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority. This was agreed by both Authorities on 24th January 2019 and a combination order request was subsequently approved by the Home Office. This was then put forward for any parliamentary objections for a period of 40 days (COVID-19 lead to parliamentary delays) which concluded on the 1st May 2020 with no objections. Now the combination order is in place, the combination can begin from 1st April 2021.

The combination will enhance public safety, support and enable us to make life safer across the geographical areas and work to reduce risk for members of the public. This is the main driver for the initiative, which builds upon an existing partnership which has already delivered benefits across the communities served by both authorities.

There are many benefits that the creation of a new CFA will bring organisationally, both in terms of operational delivery and for the safety of our public.

The new CFA will be one organisation with a single purpose, *Together we make life safer*. Local accountability of the FRS on the Isle of Wight will transfer from the Isle of Wight Council into a larger Combined Fire Authority. This new governing body will have a single focus on fire specific issues for the Isle of Wight (and the other constituent authority areas), rather than a wider range of complex public services for the Council to consider.

A single organisation with a dedicated focus on public safety is better equipped to provide efficient and effective scrutiny around decision-making on fire and rescue related matters.

A new CFA will also create greater resilience, remove duplication, enhance capacity and ensure continuous improvement, whilst enabling a common approach consistently applied across a wider area. Such an approach will offer improved learning opportunities and greater scope for the sharing of specialisms across the area. This will all support improved public safety.

The business case for the proposal was approved by the Home Secretary, and a Shadow Fire Authority was established from April 2020, with a view to full implementation and 'Go-Live' of the new Combined Fire Authority for the areas of Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton in April 2021.

Prior to April 2021, progress towards the new Combined Fire Authority is overseen, managed and assured by the CFA Programme Board, which includes a wide range of Accountable Owners who are responsible for ensuring progress in preparatory and alignment activity. CFA Programme updates are also regularly provided to the Executive Group for additional assurance, and an external peer review of the Programme was also undertaken – with the recommendations considered by the CFA Programme Board and the Executive Group, with appropriate action taken in response to the review.

Policy & Planning

Up until the launch of the new Safety Plan on 1st April 2020, our aim was 'to make life safer'. To deliver on this aim we had a Service Plan that began in April 2015 and ended in March 2020. This was supported by several more detailed plans and strategies that have ensured we met our obligations to reduce risk through the delivery of cost-effective services.

Service Plan 2015 to 2020

Our Service Plan clearly laid out our vision to work smarter, be more efficient, and to make life safer for everyone in Hampshire. We looked to create safer communities through the strengthening of our Service. This was set out into nine overarching priorities:

Safer:

- Building Resilience
- Creating Safer Communities
- Responding to Incidents

Stronger:

- Assets & Money
- Communications & Engagement
- Knowledge
- Our People & Leadership
- Technology
- Working with Partners

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/plan/>

Under each priority there were a number of key deliverables that had been identified through an assessment of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These were regularly reviewed and annually reported to the Service Management Team (now the Executive Group) and the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority – with a final Service Plan close report produced for the Authority.

For more details on our final review against the key deliverables of the Service Plan, please see: <http://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=5593&Ver=4>

Safety Plan 2020 to 2025

As this Service Plan came to an end in March 2020 a new Safety Plan (covering both Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service) was developed in 2019/20 and launched on 1st April 2020 following approval by the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Isle of Wight Council.

Our plans and strategies are formed around the large amount of data we collate and analyse. We also review risk regularly, so we can work out how to best protect our communities. This then informed our Strategic Assessment (of risk) which adds context and detail to aid our planning process.

For more details about our Strategic Assessment of Risk please see:
<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=96240>

Using this assessment, we then developed an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) in 2019/20, which identifies potential dangers that could affect communities and how we can address them. We then used the IRMP combined with the risks to our organisation, to pull together our Safety Plan following public consultation, which will be launched in April 2020.

This has been available on our website since the 1st April 2020:
<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/safety-plan/>

Integrated Risk Management Plan

Our new IRMP was developed in 2019/20. This process involved the new methodology as articulated above and followed a period of consultation with the public and our own teams, with the IRMP public consultation commencing in the autumn of 2019. This IRMP is a joint IRMP with the Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service as we establish greater alignment in preparation for the Combined Fire Authority and is the first joint IRMP to be delivered in the country.

We have purposefully set out our IRMP to firstly explain the current landscape and risks within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in the context of Places and People. We then explain how we plan to mitigate those risks. We call it integrated risk management planning because it brings together a range of ways we can help make you safer from fires and other emergencies. This starts by understanding the communities we serve.

In this plan we reflect on risks in the community which could make the public susceptible to harm. We focus on people and how their individual needs can be best served. We look at these alongside broader issues in our society such as how population changes and climate affect our communities, fires and our landscape. Bringing all these risks together we then use various analytical tools to work out how many fire stations, firefighters and specialist resources (equipment and teams) we need.

We look at what work we can do to prevent fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies by helping people adopt safer behaviours, and also what we can do to make buildings safer. We consider a number of key components to support our purpose of making Hampshire and Isle of Wight safer and use the following elements to build our risk management approach:

- You, our communities: Analysis of data on age profiles, health indicators and other factors that can impact levels of vulnerability. More information on how we do this is set out in this plan.
- The environment: Buildings in which we live, work, visit and stay. The infrastructure within an area including transport arrangements and our climate and weather which create their own risks and demands on the fire and rescue services.
- Local intelligence: Our staff and teams work and live within our communities and their local knowledge, understanding and information sharing through partnerships is invaluable.
- Community and National Risk Register: Hampshire and Isle of Wight fire and rescue services are a key agency within the Local Resilience Forum. Through that forum a community risk register is established which sets out high level risks or issues that need to be considered and planned for (including large scale events such as music festivals) to ensure our communities are prepared.

- Partners: We work closely with a wide range of partners both centrally at a strategic level and locally.
- Research: Ongoing research locally, nationally and internationally is constantly reviewed, and indeed many of our own staff undertake research, which informs our approach and understanding of risks and issues.
- Learning from each other: We constantly strive to learn from our own experiences and those of others. Lessons learned from incidents are shared nationally and internationally to inform our plans.

To view the IRMP consultation document please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=96122>

Following the outcomes of the IRMP we have developed the new Safety Plan that not only includes our priorities and commitments as set out in the IRMP but also takes consideration of our organisational risks. This Safety Plan was published on 1st April 2020.

Policy, Procedure and Guidance

In 2019/20 we launched a new Policy Framework following a significant review of our Service's policies. Our Policy, Procedure and Guidance (PPG)'s are documents that capture and define the way our organisations operate and how we deliver services and functions.

They ensure our people have the necessary reference tools required to do their job with the information presented and communicated in a way which is simple and easy to use which forms a safe system of work.

- Policies:
 - Are owned by the Service and provide the overarching authority by which the organisation delivers their operations or service's.
 - They are statements of the what and the why, ensuring the Service is compliant with legislation and are non-negotiable.
- Procedures:
 - Are owned by the relevant Directorate and support the policies in place.
 - They are subject to change and continuous improvement and clearly state what individual actions should be taken.
- Guidance:
 - Are owned by the relevant Directorate and provide our people with help and advice on how they can complete tasks.
 - The guidance is more general and can apply to either everyday business or operational incidents.

Other types of procedure or guidance includes:

- National Operational Guidance (NOG).
- Tactical Operational Guidance (TOG).
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- Additional Hazard Information Sheets (AHIS).

Operations

Whilst our improvement activity is aimed at making life safer, it does so by adjusting the way we deliver our front-line services. Therefore, to ensure successful outcomes for our communities it is extremely important that we deliver the highest quality services.

Prevent & Protect

Our main operational aim is to prevent incidents from occurring and protect people from harm should an incident occur.

In the workplace, this is the responsibility of the business owners, however, to support businesses we have a new Risk Based Inspection Programme and a Local Based Inspection Programme both developed and launched in 2019/20.

Our Risk Based Inspection Programme forms part of the Service's overall integrated approach to risk management for Protection activities, by prioritising buildings most likely to experience a fire, a potential occupant sleeping risk and those buildings most likely to have fire safety compliance issues. We use data to target these premises that have not been audited or where a premises is due for a revisit. Revisit dates of 1, 3 or 5 years are applied to premises by the inspector dependent upon the risk and levels of compliance found following an inspection. Some premises will not require re-inspection due to the high level of compliance and the low risk found within the building.

We also understand that premises present a risk to the organisation and to those in and around non-domestic premises due to a multitude of factors, such as 'sleeping risk', the previous history of business and contact with HFRS on enforcement issues. This understanding of risk forms a Locally Based Inspection Programme (LBIP). These operationally significant premises can be considered as those presenting issues for Protection, Prevention or Response. They are inspected by Locally Based Inspection Teams in priority order.

Using these two targeted programmes, we are then able to support businesses by:

- telling businesses what they need to do to comply with fire safety law;
- helping businesses carry out a fire risk assessment;
- helping businesses identify the general fire precautions they need to have in place;
- challenging all or parts of a fire risk assessment where concerns are identified; and
- taking further action if all the risks aren't considered.

In 2019/20, we carried out 1,328 fire safety audits (an increase of 37% compared to 2018/19) of business premises owners fire risk assessments and control measures to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order 2005. We also investigated 311 alleged fire risks reported to us from members of the public.

In addition to this, our Fire Engineering and Consultation Team reduce risk in Hampshire to occupants and firefighters by working alongside a wide group of stakeholders to contribute to building regulation consultations that are received from building control bodies locally and nationally. In 2019/20, we carried out 1,594 Business Regulation consultations.

To view more information on keeping safe at work please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/keeping-safe/atwork/>

To help mitigate the risk of fire in homes and the subsequent harm these can cause, our Firefighters, designated Community Safety Officers, Volunteers and partner agencies carry out 'Safe & Well' visits to our targeted risk groups. Recognising that our most vulnerable risk groups align with that of our partners in Health, we have tailored our traditional Home Fire Safety Check to include an intervention on slips, trips and falls as well other potential hazards that may affect our community's wellbeing. Our Safe & Well visits are primarily delivered to individuals who have been referred to us by our partners in Health, however, we also use historic incident data, demographic profiling tools and externally provided data sets to identify those who may benefit from an intervention.

In 2019/20, we carried out 8,689 Safe & Well visits in 2019/20, a significant, 38%, increase compared to the 6,293 in 2018/19. This increase would have been greater were it not for the COVID-19 outbreak, which resulted in Safe and Well visits having to be significantly downscaled to just cover safety critical visits to the most vulnerable. There has been a significant amount of work and engagement activity to drive up Safe and Well visit numbers; however, this work has been (and continues to be) clearly impacted by the COVID-19 situation, which commenced in the last month of the financial year.

Our Safe & Well Falls Risk Assessment uses National Institute of Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, go direct to General Practitioners and establishes eligibility for our 'Safety through Education Exercise and Resilience (STEER)' course, by identifying vulnerable people and preventing harm.

Another tool in which we provide home safety advice is through our 'Safe & Sound' survey. This online tool takes individuals through a series of questions to assess potential risks and provide useful information. If an individual is assessed to be at high risk, then a Safe & Well visit may be required.

To view more information on keeping safe at home please see:
<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/keeping-safe/loveyourhome/>

We also deliver a range of interventions through our Children and Young People Teams:

- Fire Education within schools;
- Princes Trust programme; and
- Range of children and young people initiatives (including fire cadets).

These initiatives seek to deliver fire safety information but also help build confidence and support wider social issues facing young people today.

We also provide interactive safety messages through our fun and educational website:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/kidzone-and-schools/>

Furthermore, our Arson Task Force take a lead on investigations post incident, to determine the cause of fires. To help secure convictions we have a full time Police Officer working within our team. This enables us to share timely information and effectively support the investigation through to its conclusion. We also have highly trained dogs who are a vital part of the investigation team and play a pivotal role in securing convictions. To prevent fire setters from reoffending we deliver a Fire Setters programme to educate offenders of the potential dangers and damage that can be caused by reckless behaviour.

Respond

We work hard to keep our communities safe through education and safety measures. However, we accept incidents will still occur and in the event of a call to an emergency, we have effective strategies in place to respond to numerous different types of incidents. We operate from a number of locations including 51 strategically positioned fire stations. Our fire stations are purpose built and located in cities, towns, and villages and are close to residential, commercial and industrial areas. Our frontline resources and fire appliances are spread across these stations according to the local risk factors. The county's fire stations consist of:

- 5 fire stations staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by immediate whole-time response firefighters;
- 38 fire stations with around the clock cover provided by on-call firefighters who live or work within four minutes of the station and respond at the time of an incident; and
- 8 fire stations with both 24-hour on-call staff cover and staffed by immediate whole-time firefighters.

As well as our frontline fire appliances, we also have a number of specialist capabilities which assist us in dealing with a variety of different incidents. Our specialist capability teams provide us with an enhanced range of equipment, skills and knowledge for dealing with a wide range of unusual and complex incidents. They can respond to emergency incidents within our county and, as part of a national mutual assistance arrangement, anywhere in the United Kingdom. Specialist capabilities in Hampshire include:

- Urban Search and Rescue Unit
- Water Rescue Units
- Animal Rescue Units
- Arson Task Force Unit
- Wildfire Units
- Environmental Units
- Marine Response Team
- Hazardous Materials and Detection, Identification and Monitoring Unit
- Water Carriers
- High Volume Pump
- Aerial Ladder Platforms

In 2019/20 we attended 3,714 fires, 10,696 non-fire emergency ('special service call') incidents (such as road traffic collisions) and 6,977 false alarms. Further information on our performance is outlined in our mid-year and end-of-year performance reports to HFRA.

Resilience

Emergency services are facing an increased variety of demanding situations. Major incidents caused by natural disasters, industrial accidents and the threat of terror attacks are challenges that we need to prepare for at a national level. These incidents could potentially have an impact on our daily lives. For this reason, there is a need for high levels of preparedness by the emergency services and our communities, including improved ability to operate effectively together. We hold many assets and deliver a response capability to National incidents that may arise in support of this initiative.

For more information, please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/civil-resilience/>

To support our local communities, we are members of the Local Resilience Forum for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum comprises of local Emergency Service Responders (Police, Fire, Ambulance), Local Authorities, as well as associated businesses, organisations and voluntary sector representatives. Through the Local Resilience Forum, these organisations work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. For the last 5 years we have been the Community Resilience leads. This role includes:

- Strategic co-ordination of all Community Resilience activity in the Local Resilience Forum.
- Maintaining an overview of Community Resilience activity and expected outcomes.
- Coordinating activities and identifying Community Resilience opportunities.
- Ensuring key messages are produced by risk owners and integrated into Community Resilience interactions with individuals and communities.
- Ensuring engagement with communities is risk focused so the Forum is prioritising geographical areas or vulnerable communities by potential impact on them.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we have been heavily involved in the Local Resilience Forum's multi-agency Strategic Coordination Group, which is chaired by our Chief Fire Officer, Neil Odin – with the Strategic Coordination Centre based at our headquarters. Our teams have been working within the Tactical Coordinating Groups and in a number of LRF cells to effectively manage, and where possible minimise, the impact of the virus on our population during these unprecedented times. This includes providing cross-agency support to ensure operational cover can be maintained and critical services resume accordingly.

For more information on our Local Resilience Forum, please see:

www.hampshireprepared.co.uk

As well as supporting our communities prepare for widespread incidents, we must also ensure we have the necessary arrangements in place to maintain our service delivery. Our Service Resilience Team provide the Contingency Planning and Business Continuity for the Service. This programme of work is achieved through engagement with all internal departments and with our partners in the Local Resilience Forum to:

- Identify and assess risk within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- Identify mitigation to the risks in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (including Community Resilience).
- Produce individual department, service wide and Multi Agency response plans
- Undertake a programme of training and exercising at Operational, Tactical and Strategic levels.

This work enables the Service to meet its mission critical activities and still respond to the communities of Hampshire during periods of disruption and high demand.

Collaboration

We work closely, on a daily basis, with our blue light colleagues from other fire and rescue, police and ambulance services. A formal executive board for blue light collaboration between Hampshire police, South Central Ambulance Service and HFRS coordinates 20 initiatives to deliver greater partnership working (i.e. the coordinated response to high risk missing persons). We also have excellent relationships with our colleagues in Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council, Isle of Wight Council, and

other local authorities and agencies across Hampshire. We believe that through collaboration we can maximise the benefits of our collective offering to the public and therefore, *Together we make life safer.*

Hampshire borders with Wiltshire, Dorset, Berkshire, Surrey and West Sussex. As incidents arise, we assist other fire and rescue services working across the border and neighbouring fire and rescue services will also assist us. There are standard agreements in place to either support the neighbouring fire & rescue service resolve an incident or to attend the incident on the other fire and rescue service's behalf.

Furthermore, we have come together with three other fire and rescue services to form an innovative partnership that revolutionises the way the best resource for an incident is identified and despatched. Devon & Somerset, Dorset, and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services joined Hampshire to form the Networked Fire Control Services Partnership, which means all of the services use the same technology in their Control centres. This allows us to be able to take 999 calls and mobilise appliances for each other, offering greater resilience and saving millions of pounds across the partnership. The integrated system allows the services to work together even more effectively, providing greater protection to the public and enhancing firefighter safety.

In addition to this, we deliver a co-responding scheme which launched in 2004 in partnership with South Central Ambulance Service. Co-responders are firefighters with training in basic life support including resuscitation and defibrillation, who attend life critical incidents such as cardiac arrest, anaphylactic shock, strokes and asthma attacks. Supporting our ambulance colleagues in this way helps to provide an immediate response to incidents across the county and relieves the pressure on ambulances. In 2019/20, we attended 6,334 medical co-responder calls. We are the first fire service to hold clinical governance framework for our health-related work, which includes Immediate Emergency Care, Emergency Medical Response and falls response.

Our Senior Officers also lead the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) as their Chief Officers, in a unique partnership arrangement, the first of its kind in the country. We continue to work closely with IWFRS to find new ways of delivering services together more efficiently and support them in dealing with large and complex incidents. One of these ways includes handling 999 calls and mobilising IWFRS appliances through our Control centre. Further alignment will continue under these arrangements until April 2021, when our two Authorities combine.

We also seek to capitalise on our proven ability to reduce deaths and injuries in fires, by applying the same educational and experiential strengths to the road safety agenda as part of a partnership approach. We are proud to be part of the Hampshire Road Safety Partnership, made up of:

- Hampshire County Council
- Portsmouth City Council
- Southampton City Council
- Hampshire Constabulary
- Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Highways England

For more details please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/keeping-safe/ontheroad/>

We share many of our premises across these partners but most significantly we share our headquarters with Hampshire Constabulary. By co-locating in this way we hope to seek further opportunities for closer working and look to make efficiencies where possible. We also share many of our remote stations with Police and Ambulance colleagues. Making use of our estates in this way helps all partners involved, reduce premise related costs.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service's Human Resources, Finance and Procurement functions are delivered by Hampshire Shared Services. Shared Services also delivers services for Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Constabulary through an agreed partnership. The partnership continues to seek new members and grow its capability to increase resilience and deliver high quality services by combining expertise across a broad number of public sector services.

Performance & Assurance

Successful performance management relies on effective monitoring that drives informed decision making. Therefore, we ensure performance is appropriately reported and improvement actions are driven through transparent scrutiny. This starts at a local level with individual performance management supported by a personal development review process. Personal objectives are set against team plans which in turn support the Service Plan priorities.

Performance

Our strategic performance is reported to the Executive Group regularly, and to the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority committee twice a year. These reports show our performance across a wide range of Service area measures. These measures are made up of the Service-wide impacts, our response standard to critical incidents and other areas, including staff wellbeing. These measures helped us focus our change activity across all our Service Plan priority areas, and now of Safety Plan priorities.

For more information on our performance reporting, please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/>

Inspection

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) remit was extended to include inspections of fire and rescue services in England. It is now called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and they were tasked with providing an inspection programme to begin in the financial year 2018/19. To help us prepare for and comply with the inspection we have a Service Liaison Officer who is our Organisational Assurance Manager. The Service Liaison Officer represents Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services through regular engagement with the HMICFRS representative (Service Liaison Lead) in the collation of information and the coordination of engagement visits and producing the Inspection schedule.

Our first inspection took place in June 2018. The inspection looked at three overarching pillars which are supported by many diagnostics and more detailed sub-diagnostics. The outcome of the inspection, reported in December 2018, was as follows in terms of ratings:

- Effectiveness - good
- Efficiency - good
- People – requires improvement

The inspection identified many areas of good practice but also made several recommendations for areas that could be improved. There was one 'Cause for concern', which was as follows:

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service doesn't do enough to be an inclusive employer. We found signs of low morale in the workforce. People have little confidence that they will be treated fairly or that senior leaders have their best interests at heart. By June 2019 the Service should:

1. *Embed a programme to ensure that inclusion, fairness, equalities and professional development are priorities for the service;*

2. *Ensure that its recruitment activities are open and accessible to all of Hampshire's communities;*
3. *Treat employees according to their needs so they feel valued;*
4. *Ensure that each person's potential can be developed so they can perform to their very best;*
5. *Ensure that the chief officer team leads the programme, promoting the values of the organisation; and*
6. *Ensure that everyone knows how they contribute to the values.*

To see the full report, please see:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/frs-assessment-2018-19-hampshire/>

Following the publication of the report in December 2018, we were required to submit an action plan to address the 'Cause for concern' by 30 June 2019. Our action plan, which focused on more than just the 'Cause for concern' is monitored at the Executive Group and the Standards & Governance Committee on a regular basis.

There was a total of 41 actions against 21 diagnostics of the HMICFRS framework. As of March 2020, we have closed 40 (97%) of the 41 HFRS actions, leaving 1 overdue action that has been halted by the COVID-19 situation and should be closed by June 2020 when inclusion and diversity training is delivered virtually.

The next inspection was planned to take place week commencing the 28th September 2020, however, due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, HMICFRS (in liaison with the Home Office) decided to postpone all further inspection activity until further notice. HMICFRS's Service Liaison Lead does, however, continue to review the documentary evidence and data returns that we provided them with earlier in the year and engagement with the Service Liaison Lead continues to take place.

Operational Assurance

Our operational activities are supported by clearly defined policies and procedures. An Operational Assurance team work hard to capture lessons of our effectiveness and look to make improvements where possible. They do this using a number of key assurance mechanisms that test the performance of our operational staff but also test the effectiveness of Service policies and procedures.

One of the assurance mechanisms is Operational Assurance Assessments. This is where a Group Manager will visit a Station and run an operational exercise with the crew to assess their performance and address any areas of concern. Operational Assurance Assessments were due to commence from March 2020 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic these have been put on hold until further notice. These assessments are to ensure standards are being met and procedures being followed appropriately. These mechanisms also provide crews with an opportunity to feedback any improvements that could be made to policies and procedures. All this information is then assessed by the Operational Assurance Team and improvements made where required.

To provide assurance at incidents we use Tactical Advisors, which attend critical incidents to support our crews. The role of the Tactical Advisor is to monitor the decisions being made by the Incident Commander and provide assistance if required. We have a post incident a debrief process, which also includes any significant events that could impact on our service delivery. Feedback is gathered from all those involved and the Operational Assurance Team

will analyse any trends. This information is then presented back to the individuals involved to highlight any areas of performance and to discuss potential solutions. This leads to improvement actions at a policy level as well as the identification of possible risks that may occur again should similar incidents occur in the future.

To further support the debrief process and to widen the potential opportunity for improvements, we launched a new 'Submit Learning' application in 2019/20. This tool enables any member of staff to provide feedback at any time on a number of different platforms including mobile phones and mobile data terminals in appliances. This enables us to capture real time feedback but also allow people to reflect on situations and feedback at a later time. The tool has been designed to gather feedback in other areas across the Service, such as lessons learned from Project delivery or feedback on HR related investigations. This additional development is planned for 2020/21.

Our Operational Assurance Team also support multi-agency exercises as part of our contingency planning and business continuity. By assessing the effectiveness of these exercises, we are able to identify ways of working more effectively with our partners and make the necessary plans to ensure that should a major incident occur, we are able to deal with them accordingly.

We also contribute our learning to the National Operational Learning Group. This Group provide National Operational Guidance to support a common approach across fire and rescue services. We provide our technical expertise to help shape this guidance, which is regularly reviewed and widely adopted. For more details on the National Operational Learning Group, please see: <https://www.ukfrs.com/>

Audit

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, control systems, accounting records and governance arrangements. Internal audit plays a vital role in advising Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority that these arrangements are in place and operating effectively. Our internal audits are carried out by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) who also assist us in the development of future audit plans.

Details of our internal audits are reported to the Authority through our Standards & Governance Committee. This includes the progress of management actions resulting from observations of improvements required, which we monitor closely and also report on internally. Our overall assurance rating for 2019/20 was 'adequate'; with significant improvement compared to 2018/19. More specifically, we have seen an improvement in the number of open and overdue actions throughout the course of 2019/20; and continue our positive relationship with SIAP (based on an Memorandum of Understanding between HFRS and SIAP, which was agreed in 2019).

For more details please see papers submitted to the Standards & Governance Committee, available at: <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=178>

Evaluations

The Service's Performance and Assurance Directorate carries out a range of evaluations that are commissioned by Service Directorates to provide additional assurance in targeted areas. These evaluations are based on a range of quantitative and qualitative data, and include key findings, an overall conclusion, and recommendations for improvement. In

2019/20, the Performance and Assurance Directorate carried out evaluations in the following areas:

- Promotion processes
- Whole-time recruitment.
- Safe & Well visits.
- Feedback mechanisms

Individual Directorate Boards are responsible for recommendations, with overall evaluation findings and recommendations (and the response to them) discussed regularly at the Integrated Performance and Assurance Board.

Transparency

The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 is designed to ensure greater transparency of local authority data. In compliance with this code, we publish the following public data:

- Expenditure exceeding £500
- Procurement card transactions
- Procurement information:
 - Contracts register
 - Tenders
- Local Authority Land
- Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations
- Organisation chart
- Trade Union facility time
- Senior salaries
- Constitution
- Pay multiple

We ensure that the publication of any data complies with the Data Protection Act 1998 and future General Data Protection Regulations due to come into effect May 2018.

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-we-are-performing/open-data/>

We also facilitate the request for any additional information through a well-managed Freedom of Information request process. For more details on how to make a request for information please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us/freedom-of-information-application/>

Feedback

We also encourage feedback from our communities to help us improve our performance. Any issues raised are assigned an investigating officer who carries out a comprehensive investigation to determine the cause and recommend any remedial actions. Learning from this feedback is exceptionally important to us and reports exploring performance and data in this area are discussed at our Executive Group. For more details regarding feedback, please see: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us/get-in-touch/>

People & Organisational Development (POD)

Following the 2018 HMICFRS inspection, and in support of the new IRMP and subsequent Safety Plan that was launched on 1st April 2020, we have developed a new People & Organisational Development Directorate which is accompanied by a new strategy framework. This strategy encompasses the following areas and has taken into account feedback from previous cultural surveys:

- Inclusion and Diversity.
- Culture, Values & Behaviours.
- Health and Wellbeing.
- Workforce transformation and engagement.
- Learning and Development.
- Leadership and Management.

People Performance

We strive for excellence through delivering outstanding training and support people to achieve their full potential. Developing a skilled workforce begins with recruitment, training and development programmes, leading into our Maintenance of Competence Scheme. We ensure our staff competencies are regularly assessed and core competencies such as safe working at heights, the use of breathing apparatus and applying incident command are assured at an appropriate competent level.

To ensure all our operational staff are fit to carry out their duties we undertake two fitness assessments every year. This includes an output test and either a multi-stage fitness test/bleep test or a Chester treadmill test.

We also monitor staff sickness through regular reporting and national benchmarking at our Resource Management Group. This Group considers all aspects of resource management and staff wellbeing to ensure teams are appropriately supported and to maximise our availability. This includes developing new and innovative ways of recruiting and maintaining on-call staff.

We believe having an inclusive, engaged workforce means better outcomes for our communities. We run annual conferences, staff cultural surveys and focus groups to understand and discuss the issues facing our teams. The results of these help to shape our People Strategy and provide our leaders with crucial insight into how we can better support and equip our teams.

Finally, in 2019/20, the Executive Group and HFRA have received additional reporting and insights covering our people performance. This has included a focus on: the size and diversity of our workforce compared to previous years; sickness levels with an increased focus on mental health and our Employee Assistance Programme provision; fitness test performance; and qualifications and competency. For more detail, please refer to our mid-year and end-of-year performance reports.

Finance

The Authority has an excellent track record in financial management and in staying ahead of the curve in response to a sustained period of austerity that has had a major impact on the public sector.

Medium Term Financial Planning on a mid to worse case scenario basis has enabled us to put savings plans in place that have not only successfully balanced the budgets over a period of six years but have also provided surplus resources to fund the cost of transformation and improvements in support of the Service Plan deliverables. It also includes funding arrangements for the maintenance of our vehicles, equipment and estates.

Our Medium-Term Financial Plan is regularly updated and reported to the Executive Group and the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority Committee. Progress reports monitor the outcomes of any income generation or cost saving improvements and are used to make appropriate adjustments to future budgets.

For more details on our budget for 2020/21, please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/>

In addition to this, it is important that public money is used well and appropriately managed. We do this by using proper accounting practice within our own set of Financial Regulations. This means that when we plan our budget or require additional funds, there are protocols to give appropriate scrutiny on how public money is to be used and to ensure there is clear justification to do so. This includes policies and procedures in place for the prevention of fraud & corruption and a Register of Interest and a register of Gifts & Hospitality. These robust systems are used for identifying and evaluating all significant financial and operational risks to the Authority on an integrated basis.

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-we-are-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/financial-regulations/>

Financial Performance

Ensuring that funding is appropriately accounted for is vital for all public sector organisations. Our financial performance is reported to the Executive Group and the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority every year:

<http://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=5594&Ver=4>

Budget management during 2019/20 has allowed an underspend to be achieved at year end which will help to fund the Service priorities and enable the key changes required to make budget reductions at the same time as service improvements. Each year our financial accounts are audited by an external body. Once approved by the external auditor our Statement of Accounts is published and contains more detail regarding our expenditure. For more details of our Statement of Accounts, please see: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/statement-of-accounts/>

Finally, in 2019/20, the Executive Group and HFRA have received additional reporting and insights covering our financial performance. Each Directorate submits quarterly finance reports for review and scrutiny within the Executive Group. Furthermore, using the mid-year and end-of-year performance reports as another example, these have included additional

focus on: expenditure compared to forecast levels and previous years, and our reserves position.

Summary

2019/20 has been a significant year with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in the final quarter of the year. This unprecedented situation has given rise to a challenge faced by all emergency responder agencies to ensure that they can keep communities safe.

The Service has a wide range of assurance mechanisms in place to identify risks, areas for improvement, and good practice to disseminate. As the 2019/20 end of year performance report noted the number of incidents we have responded to and the number of non-fatal casualties have decreased when compared to last year, and our on-call availability has improved. We have also made positive improvements in our prevention and protection activity, and in our learning from operational incidents. However, we have further to improve in these areas, which, like many parts of the Service have been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to monitor, and develop our understanding of, the impact of COVID-19 on our Services – and will provide additional detail on this in subsequent reports; as well as additional information on how we are performing against the new Safety Plan.

It is also vital to understand the performance of other areas across the Service, including in terms of people, finances and corporate services. Unsurprisingly, given the COVID-19 situation at the back-end of this financial year, our average sickness went up slightly – with the greatest increase in Green Book staff. Separately, we have seen the diversity of our workforce improve in the last year – with ongoing focus in this area as part of the People & Organisational Development (POD) framework. In terms of our finances, we are currently forecasting an underspend of around £0.2 million in 2019/20; however, the latest Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts that the budget will be broadly balanced for 2021/22; and our reserves are estimated to reduce by 53% to £14.3 million by March 2023, primarily owing to capital investment.

Furthermore, our overall internal audit opinion was ‘adequate’ and when reviewing the findings and assurance ratings of individual audit reports there has been a significant improvement compared to 2018/19. Previous year’s audits highlighted some concerns regarding some of our risk management controls within different areas of the Service. As part of our planning cycle, we will be implementing a new risk management framework (supported by a suite of policy, procedure and guidance) following the launch of our new Safety Plan. We will also further develop our relationship with Internal Audit, and make amendments to our controls in order to maintain and improve the overall and individual audit assurance ratings.

Our new Safety Plan, covering both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, was launched in April 2020 and sets our strategic priorities and specific in-year activity objectives to achieve our priorities over the five-year period. In addition to developing our new plans, we will also be reflecting back at our Service Plan 2015 to 2020 to see what benefits have been achieved and what lessons need to be carried forward into our new planning cycle.

Finally, with the forthcoming new Combined Fire Authority, the activity of the CFA Programme Board, its accountable owners, and workstream leads (and assurance of this activity) will be a crucial part of our preparations for April 2021.