

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting: Scrutiny & Audit Panel
Date: 31 January 2019
Title of Report: 2017/18 Statement of Operational Assurance
By: Mark Andrews, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Lead Officer: Richard Fowler, Assistant Director Operational Support and Resilience

Background Papers: Guidance on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue authorities in England, Department for Communities and Local Government May 2013.
 Statement of Operational Assurance 2016/17.
 Home Office Progress Report published 5 July 2016 on fire and rescue authorities' compliance with the fire and rescue national framework for England.

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Statement of Operational Assurance 2017/18

Implications

CORPORATE RISK		LEGAL	✓
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
FINANCIAL		POLITICAL	✓
HEALTH & SAFETY		OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES		CORE BRIEF	

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To present the Statement of Operational Assurance 2017/18 for approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The requirement to publish an annual Statement of Operational Assurance is contained within Section 4 of the Fire & Rescue National Framework for England. This report presents East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's sixth Statement of Operational Assurance for approval by the Scrutiny & Audit Panel.

It should be noted that at the September 2016 meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Panel it approved that future Statements of Operational Assurance should be included within the Annual Governance Statement. However, since that agreement, the Home Office are due to provide further guidance on the National Framework and specifically with regard to the format and content of future Statements of Operational Assurance. This was linked to the provision of a new independent inspectorate body for the fire and rescue service which is now in being and known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). It is worthy of note that the further guidance detailed above has still not be forthcoming and hence this Statement of Operational Assurance has only had a "light touch" update to the one published in September 2017.

- RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Panel is asked to:
- i. approve East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's Statement of Operational Assurance for formal sign-off by the Chair of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel and the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
 - ii. note that future year's Statement of Operational Assurance will be published in the format, and contain the detail, as required by the Home Office once the relevant guidance has been published.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 provides the statutory authority for the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, and requires fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) to have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions. In line with this, the Framework requires FRAs to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and, in doing so, they must publish an Annual Statement of Assurance.

2. **MAIN ISSUES COVERED BY THE REPORT**

- 2.1 The Statement of Assurance is seen by Government as an important measure that will ensure that FRAs provide local scrutiny arrangements and access to a range of information to help communities influence, and be assured of the robustness of, local delivery arrangements.
- 2.2 In May 2013 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued light touch guidance as to what should be contained in Fire Authorities' Operational Assurance Statements.
- 2.3 The responsibility for ensuring compliance with the framework transferred with the move of the FRS to the Home Office and, in July 2016, the Home Secretary provided their first report. The report states that '*The Home Secretary is satisfied that all are*

compliant, however there were some areas where practice could be strengthened'. She went onto say that further guidance on expectations would be forthcoming. The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) has also issued some guidance on the future direction of the reporting on Operational Assurance. Since July 2016 it has been announced that further guidance will be published but this is still awaited.

- 2.4 East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's Annual Statement of Operational Assurance has taken note of the original guidance, and update requirements of the 2018 National Framework Document with regard to additional content, and is attached as Appendix 1. Changes will be made to reflect any additional guidance issued in the future by the Home Office, and the newly created National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), and will be included in future year's statement.
- 2.5 This is ESFRS's sixth Statement of Operational Assurance and has been written in order to ensure compliance with the DCLG's original guidance document (now Home Office). The original guidance indicated what should be included in statements of assurance, but it allows FRSs the flexibility to tailor the format and presentation. The guidance states that 'it is for fire and rescue authorities to decide how to best present the information with their communities in mind'. It should be noted that the National Framework Document issued in May 2018 includes some additional areas to be reported within the Statement of Operational Assurance, including information on Reserves, Commercialisation, R&D and Trading.
- 2.6 It is proposed that future Operational Assurance Statements are written taking into account all new guidance issued as detailed above.

3. **LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT/NATIONAL/REGIONAL POSITION**

- 3.1 The requirement to publish an annual Statement of Operational Assurance is contained within Section 4 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, requires that Fire and Rescue Authorities pay heed to the requirements of the Framework.
- 3.2 The Statement of Assurance is used as a source of information on which the Secretary of State bases a biennial report under Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The last report, laid in July 2016, (no report received to date for 2018) reported that The Home Secretary is satisfied that all 46 Authorities are compliant, however there were some areas where practice could be strengthened. An extract from the report reads as follows:

The Home Secretary is satisfied that all are compliant, however there were some areas where practice could be strengthened and the Home Office will liaise with fire and rescue authorities to explore where further guidance in relation to this would be valuable. These include the consistency of approach on how fire and rescue authorities present their evidence and the information in support of their Assurance Statement; sign off by the Chair of the fire and rescue authority; the timing of revisions to integrated risk management plans; the provision of more information on how National Resilience requirements were being met; and the value of highlighting examples that could constitute best practice on assurance

statements such as including a table of the requirements of the National Framework with references to evidence showing how each requirement was met.

4. **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 **POLITICAL**

4.1.1 The production of the Statement of Assurance ensures that we comply with the requirements set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The DCLG guidance document (now Home Office) requires that the Statement of Assurance is signed off by an elected member of the relevant authority who is able to take responsibility for its contents. The guidance states that it is up to the individual authority to ensure that this is done by an appropriate person (or persons) who can approve it on behalf of the authority.

4.2 **LEGAL**

4.2.1 The production of the Statement of Assurance ensures that we comply with the requirements set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

5. **CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 The requirement to publish an Annual Statement of Operational Assurance is contained within Section 4 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, states that Fire and Rescue Authorities must pay heed to the requirements of the Framework; the publication of this Statement ensures we meet that requirement. As and when further guidance is made available from the Home Office and NFCC we will ensure that future reports comply with the detailed requirements.



East Sussex Fire Authority

Statement of Operational Assurance 2017/18

December 2018



East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Financial Arrangements	2
3. Governance Arrangements	3
4. Data Transparency	3
5. Operational Assurance and National Framework	4
6. Improvements to service delivery	16
7. Policing and Crime Act	26
8. Partnership Working and Collaboration	26
9. Trading	28
10. Performance Management	28
11. Assurance Statement by the Fire Authority	32

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government is committed to reducing red tape and eliminating bureaucracy. This freedom and flexibility comes with the requirement that we need to ensure we deliver our services in a responsible manner that provides accountability and transparency.
- 1.2 The Government requires us to provide information to our community on how your service is being provided. We must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show you how we are meeting our priorities through our plans as well as the expectations set for us in our legislative framework. To do this we have written our Statement of Operational Assurance.
- 1.3 In line with the requirement to streamline, additional information about the themes covered in this document can be found in various publications on our website. So as not to duplicate information, we have provided links to the appropriate pages for reference.

2. Financial Arrangements

- 2.1 We are responsible for ensuring that our business and the service provided to you is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 2.2 By law, we must publish our financial results by 31st July every year and this is called our 'Statement of Accounts'. It shows the annual costs of providing the service to you and is produced under strict financial guidelines. This is essentially, a technical publication, which provides a true and fair view of our financial position, our income and expenditure for the year and our assets and liabilities. Our final accounts for 2017/18, along with our audited or final accounts for previous years, are available on our website via the link below.
- 2.3 The Fire Authority's accounts are subject to external audit by Ernst and Young LLP. They independently review our accounts to ensure that they give a true and fair view, have been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance and that we use the Authority's resources economically, efficiently and effectively. The external auditor's Audit Results Report is also published in July each year and can be found using the link below.
- 2.4 For more information please see the financial pages of our website in the 'About us' section of our website or follow this link. <http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/financial-information/>
- 2.5 Reserves are an essential part of good financial management. They help authorities cope with unpredictable financial pressures and plan for their future spending commitments.

The Authority maintains two types of reserves

- general reserve: to manage the impact of uneven cash flows and risks, unexpected events or emergencies;
- earmarked reserves: sums set aside to meet known or predicted specific requirements.

The Authority's Reserves and Balances Policy is reviewed every year and is approved as part its budget papers and the five year Medium Term Finance Plan. It can be found via the following link:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/financial-information/>

It sets out how the level of the general reserve has been set (this is currently 8% of the Revenue Budget) and details of the activities to be funded from each earmarked reserve.

3. Governance Arrangements

3.1 We are also required by Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which supports the Statement of Accounts. Good governance is about how the Authority ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. This statement assesses how effective our governance arrangements; risk management procedures and internal controls have been in helping us to deliver our services to the community and where they need to be improved. The AGS is reviewed annually by the Scrutiny and Audit Panel and a copy of the report they received for 2017/18 can be found at:

<http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/east-sussex-fire-authority/scrutiny-audit-panel/>

3.2 Copies of our AGS for 2017/18, together with statements from previous years can be found in the 'About us' section of our website on the 'East Sussex Fire Authority' page, under 'Corporate Governance'. Or alternatively follow this link

<http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/east-sussex-fire-authority/corporate-governance/>

4. Data Transparency

4.1 We comply with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. This means that certain data (such as details of procurement and the constitution) must be made available to the public and we do this via our website. We also provide data on the democratic running of the local authority including the constitution, panel minutes, decision-making processes, records of decisions and Freedom of Information requests.

4.2 For more information please see our website under About Us or follow the link below,

<http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/>

5. Operational Assurance – Legislative Framework Statutory Duties

5.1.1 The core functions of the Fire Authority are set down in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (“the Act”) which requires the promotion of fire safety; preparation for fire-fighting; protecting people and property from fires; rescuing people from road traffic collisions; and dealing with other emergencies such as flooding or terrorist attack.

Further details can be viewed by following the link below:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/pdfs/ukpga_20040021_en.pdf

5.1.2 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 fire and rescue authorities, through local and regional resilience forums where appropriate, must work in co-operation with other emergency services and agencies to ensure an effective response to a full range of emergencies from localised incidents to catastrophic emergencies.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/preparation-and-planning-for-emergencies-responsibilities-of-responder-agencies-and-others>

5.1.3 As a category 1 responder under the Civil Contingences Act 2004, we are required to formulate business continuity plans that ensure the continuation of our Priority Activities in the event of an emergency (an event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK).

5.1.4 A cross-service Business Continuity Group oversees the Service’s responsibilities in relation to business continuity and this is chaired by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

5.1.5 Ideally, we would be able to continue all our functions at ordinary service levels. In practice, this may not prove possible, and therefore we have agreed minimum levels of service that ensures our Prioritised Activities can be delivered so far as is reasonably practicable. These are:

- Responding to 999 emergencies;
- Delivering community & statutory fire safety;
- Supporting national resilience;
- All support functions that enable the above.

Further details on how we plan for emergencies can be found here:

<http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/planning-for-emergencies/>

5.2 National Framework

5.2.1 Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act requires a fire and rescue authority to have regard to the National Fire and Rescue Framework, produced by the minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, when carrying out its functions. The revised Framework issued in May 2018:

- must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;
- may contain guidance for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions; and
- may contain any other matters relating to fire and rescue authorities and their functions as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

A copy of the full Framework Document can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2>

5.2.2 The Fire and Rescue Services Act also makes it a statutory requirement for us to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). Our IRMP process forms a key component of our strategic programme and significantly contributes toward achievement of our vision and strategic aims. The process enables us to identify the risk from fire and other emergencies to our communities and direct our resources to the areas of greatest need, based upon local risk analysis. A copy of the current IRMP can be accessed by following this link:

<http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/community-risk-management/integrated-risk-management-planning/>

5.2.3 We incorporate Integrated Risk Management within our Medium Term Financial Plan to show the public the extent of the resources provided by the Fire Authority; the type of work we undertake; and where the future direction lies in terms of a reducing budget and the possibility of more demands being placed on services. In order to meet the savings target a number of proposals were agreed by the Fire Authority in 2014 in order to meet budget constraints as part of our 'Changing the Service, Shaping our Future' programme. These have now been delivered or alternative proposals agreed. More information can be found on our website follow the link in the 'About us' section to 'Changing the Service'.

The following link provides all of the relevant information regarding 'Changing the Service' proposals: <http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/changing-the-service/>

5.2.4 The Fire Authority is satisfied that it has met all the requirements in the National Framework document in terms of producing its Integrated Risk Management Plan.

5.3 Framework Report

- 5.3.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to lay a report before Parliament every two years, the last one was in July 2016, on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.
- 5.3.2 The latest report stated that: The Home Secretary is satisfied that all are compliant; however there were some areas where practice could be strengthened and the Home Office will liaise with fire and rescue authorities to explore where further guidance in relation to this would be valuable.

It should be noted that a report was due this year but to date no report has been received.

5.4 Mutual Aid and Resilience

- 5.4.1 Section 13 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act requires fire and rescue authorities to enter into reinforcement schemes with other fire and rescue authorities, so far as practicable, for securing mutual assistance. Section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act enables fire and rescue authorities to enter into arrangements for the discharge of their functions by others.
- 5.4.2 Under a section 16 Agreement with West Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire Authority provides a mobilising function in order for West Sussex County Council to discharge their functions under the Fire & Rescue Services Act. This Section 16 Agreement is currently under review due to West Sussex County Council giving notice to terminate the said agreement in 2021. A piece of work is underway to identify future operational strategies for the provision of a mobilisation and communications centre.
- 5.4.3 The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007 outlines the additional statutory duties enabled by section 9 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The new 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 and Urban Search and Rescue.
- 5.4.4 The Order complements the National Mutual Assistance Protocol, to which we are a signatory. This requires fire authorities to make a reasonable response to requests for assistance in relation to any large-scale emergency outside of their area.
- 5.4.5 To meet our responsibilities from the above legislation, we prepare emergency plans, train our staff in preparing those plans, and we undertake exercises to make sure they work. We also undertake operational debriefs of any large scale incidents that we attend within East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, as well as fully engaging with any national level debriefs for incidents that we have attended under the National Mutual Assistance Protocol. Lessons learnt from these debriefing events are fed back into the planning process as part of the review of our emergency plans.

- 5.4.6 The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles, JESIP, is a program that has delivered joint command training to commanders from the three emergency services in order to improve the way we work together at operational incidents with the aim of improving the outcomes for the general public and the organisation. Further work is ongoing to fully embed the principles into all our systems and procedures and to test and exercise jointly in realistic environments.
- 5.4.7 We provide a supporting response to specialist risks over the border such as Gatwick Airport and Shoreham Harbour in West Sussex and Dungeness Power Station in Kent. We also continue to support Kent FRS in assisting with the rescue of large animals. A Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and allows for a charging process that ensures cost recovery for such incidents over the border. We also assist other emergency services at any other incident where additional resources are required. This aspect of our work includes a Memorandum of Understanding with Sussex Police that enables our crews to assist the police with search activities. A recent addition to this strand of work is the introduction of a memorandum of Understanding on the use of Sussex Police Force's Drones. This is in partnership also with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and SECAMB.
- 5.4.8 The Brexit referendum vote for United Kingdom leaving the European Union (EU) occurred on 23 June 2016 with negotiations commencing 19 June 2017. The SRF will maintain a watching brief on the negotiations and developments and will work with MHCLG to ensure risks and plans are revised accordingly. The SRF will also be working with regional colleagues with major ports and roadways to consider the broader effect of the withdrawal process. Planning assumptions will consider a 'no deal' Brexit and government will be publishing technical notices setting out what business and citizens would need to do so they can prepare accordingly.
- 5.4.9 We also consider the risk to heritage sites, the environment and the continuing risk from terrorism. The National Risk Assessment is given careful consideration by the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) and the Service to monitor any new risks identified through these processes. The SRF is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the blue- light emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and other partners. These risks can affect the economy, cause disruption and impact on the day to day lives of our community and therefore understanding these risks within the County and the City provides a clearly defined baseline for us to develop our provision of service to the community we serve.
- 5.4.10 In March 2017 a team from the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF) conducted a Peer Review to evaluate the structure and processes of our SRF and whether they are being effective in the delivery of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Review covered key areas of Governance, Business Management, Risk Management and Community Resilience with an overall aim to identify areas of good practice and areas for development. The final report was received in October 2017 which outlined a number of areas of good practice as well as areas for improvement. Overall the report explained that there was clear enthusiasm for SRF from partners and that the role of SRF is well understood. Following receipt of the report the SRF has implemented an action plan as part of the

business plan to address the key findings and build on the successes identified by the review. The full report can be accessed through the following link

<https://collaborate.resilience.gov.uk/RDSservice/home/161951/SRF-Peer-Review>

- 5.4.11 We also consider the wider risk assessments included within the SRF's Community Risk Register (CRR) to ensure that proposed changes to our service delivery complement, as far as possible, the strategies of other local responders and central government agencies. We make significant contributions to the preparation, planning and response to a wide range of events that are considered as part of the CRR. This analysis has enabled us to enhance our flooding capability by introducing a boat and swift water rescue team for responding to water rescues. This team is a declared asset and is available for response to local, regional or national flooding incidents. As well as being utilised in East Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove this team can be mobilised to any national flooding incidents. The team has not been mobilised out of county during the term of this report.
- 5.4.12 We also plan for, and occasionally respond to, incidents of such scale and/or complexity that local resources may be insufficient even when taking into account mutual aid agreements. As part of the National Resilience New Dimensions Capability Programme, the Government has provided Mass Decontamination Units (MDUs) and High Volume Pumps (HVPs) into the UK Fire & Rescue Service. The national capability consists of 28 operational MDU's, with 5 being located in the South East region, one of which has been allocated to us and is based at Eastbourne Fire Station. There are also 47 HVPs in England plus a further 3 in Wales, 3 in Northern Ireland and 4 in Scotland. Eight of the HVPs are located in the South East region including 1 on the Isle of Wight. One has been allocated to us and is based at Hove Fire Station. As well as being utilised in East Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove the HVP and crews can be mobilised to national flooding incidents. The team has not been mobilised out of county during the term of this report but have responded to incidents within the County including a large scrap yard fire in Hailsham and some major flooding at an underground skate park in Hastings.
- 5.4.13 Section 7(2) (d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires fire authorities to make arrangements for inspection of certain premises to obtain information. These inspections are known as 7(2) (d) visits. These visits assist in the maintenance of knowledge of the site, equipment and any particular hazards associated with the building. We use the 7(2) (d) visits together with any relevant data collection methods to assist in dealing with an incident, informing command decision making and ensuring public and fire-fighter safety. National guidance has been reviewed and incorporated into our current system to ensure that we continue to provide our fire-fighters with the most appropriate information to enable them to undertake their role in as safe a manner as possible.

5.5 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- 5.5.1 The Service will use a blended risk-based approach in delivering against our statutory duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as we strive to further reduce fire risk in the built environment. This blended approach will include business engagement, inspection and enforcement.
- 5.5.2 We will collaborate with our partners including supporting intelligence led thematic inspections and multiagency operations targeting immigration and modern slavery, to ensure the most vulnerable in our community are protected from exploitation.
- 5.5.3 We support economic growth and resilience of our local business communities by raising awareness of fire risk and engaging with responsible persons through a variety of initiatives including the development of Primary Authority Partnerships and delivery of Business Safety thematic engagement events.
- 5.5.4 We are currently developing Safer Living and Safer Care initiatives in partnership with the Care Quality Commission, to support the elderly and vulnerable to obtain safe and secure homes within a caring environment. This will be achieved through both inspection of premises and engagement with duty holders promoting the Person Centred Approach to risk, the installation of sprinklers and promotion of new technology such as social alarms.
- 5.5.5 We actively supported the NFCC Business Safety Week 10th to 16th September.
- 5.5.6 We continue to promote the Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 <http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/new-laws-for-landlords/>
- 5.5.7 The Business Safety functions will be delivered through a sustainable and adaptive structure that enables effective provision at all times of day. Services will be delivered by professional staff and operational crews supported through a competency framework informed by best practice and responsive to the requirements of the National Framework. Staff will respond to local risk through thematic based planning supported by exploiting new information technologies such as the rollout of agile working and new functionality offered through the upgraded Business Safety recording and operating system (CRM).
- 5.5.8 The Service continues to promote Primary Authority through and the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act (RES Act) and continues to highlight the benefits of active Primary Authority Partnerships in East Sussex to improve Fire Safety compliance and support business growth. Businesses trading across local authority boundaries, start-up businesses or a single business operating in East Sussex or the city of Brighton and Hove will be given the opportunity to enter into a legal Primary Authority relationship with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) in respect of the relevant function – Fire Safety.

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/primary-authority-scheme/>

5.5.9 The service continues to support the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety through the NFCC and implement the recommendations of Government's Building Safety Program.

5.5.10 We continue to promote the findings from our fire investigations so that risk assessments better identify sources of ignition and the benefits of active and passive protection <http://www.esfrs.org/black-museum/>

5.5.11 The Service has recently provided match funding to secure the installation of sprinkler systems in premises identified as posing a particular risk to occupants and / or firefighters and we promote sprinklers where opportunities present themselves. Working with our local authority partners the Service has recently installed sprinklers at Somerset Point in Brighton. This is a sheltered housing block consisting of 72 flats across 13 floors. A residential sprinkler system was installed throughout the block to all dwellings and common parts.

More detail on both these installations can be found by following the link below,

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/sprinklers/>

5.5.12 We recognise that in exceptional cases; where supported by evidence and it being in the public interest, there is a need to use an appropriate sanction where fire safety standards have not been maintained by a responsible person. Not only has this Service developed tools to ensure a consistent and appropriate use of prosecution and Simple Caution as sanctions, we have also developed the use of Informal Cautions, which the NFCC are looking to adopt nationally <http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/business-safety-enforcement/>

5.5.13 The service is a statutory consultee under a range of legislation and the Business Safety teams will continue to ensure they respond to consultations in a positive and timely manner as detailed in the Service response charter. Through an Assurance framework that is supported through engagement with partners and the public supported by the internal communications team we will safeguard the fairness of approach to our enforcement activities in line with the Concordat and Regulators Code reducing any unnecessary burdens on business owners whilst safeguarding those using those buildings.

5.5.14 The Central Business Safety support team will continue to build on the Business Safety engagement and initiatives library to enable local teams to deliver proactive and reactive business engagement activities increasing knowledge and understanding of fire safety in the business community. Typically this involves identifying opportunities to engage and explain the requirements of the Order at face-to-face events, with supporting material available on our internet site. Through the Business Rates funded initiative, the Service provides the "Safer Business Training" scheme to further support this work.

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/safer-businesses-training-programme/>

5.5.15 The Service will seek to distinguish between Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's) and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) in order to target both appropriately. The

Service will seek to reduce UFAS through awareness, engagement with the responsible person and finally policy review.

5.6 Prevention of Future Deaths

5.6.1 We have now created a newly defined and managed Operational Assurance (OA) process. It is overseen by the service Operational Assurance Manager who in turn reports actions to the service Operations Manager. Within this process we monitor many areas including outcomes from Fire Investigations (FI), outcomes identified within the National Operational Learning or Joint Operational Learning database, as well as recommendations from external enquiries including coroner reports and other investigations. Once per month the service OA manager will meet with the led FI and other interested parties to determine what new actions are priority and who will be allocated the task of implemented the recommended changes. This agreed list is then taken to the Operational Assurance Group for corporate oversight and governance. Exception reports are then sent to the Operations Committee chaired by the ACFO, who in turn will take any highlights to SLT and onward as required to the Fire Authority Audit and Scrutiny Panel.

5.6.2 Our Black Museum site also highlights fatal fires and includes lessons learnt with the issues around clothing highlighted under the following case <http://www.esfrs.org/black-museum/all-the-black-museum-cases/vulnerable-people-and-clothing-fires/>

5.7 Health & Safety Assurance

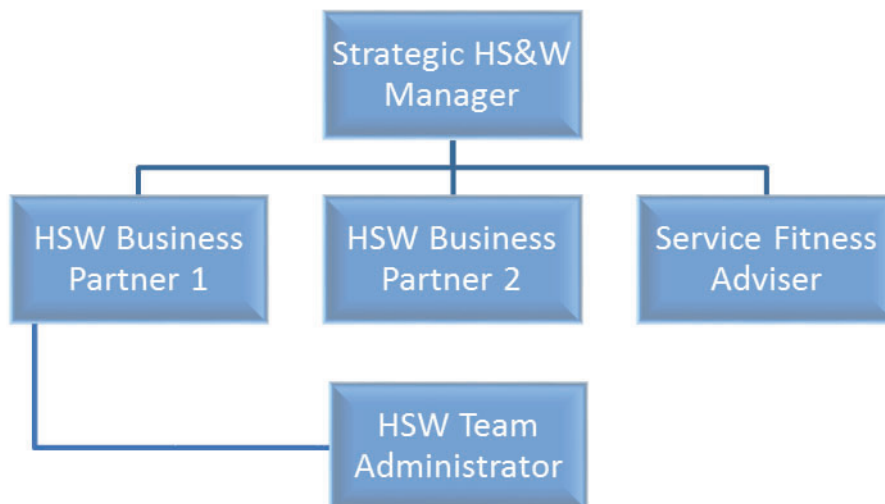
5.7.1 Many of the actions taken by the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team over the last year have been undertaken in order to close out the actions that were detailed in the Hereford & Worcester Peer Review Action Plan from 2016. A selection of these is detailed below:

The Restructure of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team to develop a staffing structure that supports the findings of the Hereford and Worcester Peer review.

The Service has adopted a business partner approach in order to:

- develop a more customer focussed delivery of advice and support from the central health and safety team;
- engender a change in the safety management culture of the organisation; and
- promote ownership and proactive management of health, safety and wellbeing risks within all areas of service delivery.

The structure for the new department is:



All recruitment has now been completed and the team are embedding the new business partner approach across the Service.

5.7.2 Development and delivery of the actions plans for Year 1 of the Service Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy, as reported to Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee. Key areas that the Year 1 Plan delivered included:

- Gap analysis of Service policies, procedures, risk assessment, training and communications on key areas of national research and learning e.g. contamination and occupational disease in firefighters.
- In collaboration with Operations Planning & Policy, a full revision of the station assurance /audit process to stimulate greater engagement and organisational/operational learning.
- Review of historical safety event and hazard report data to identify key trends and patterns in work-related injury and ill health.
- Revision and development of leading and lagging indicators.
- Integration of health & safety representation at key operational committees and working groups e.g. Ops Committee, Ops Assurance, AEPIG, OGIG, project boards, Estates Strategy, various sub-working groups e.g. light appliances, asbestos, blood borne viruses etc.

5.7.3 A review and reinvigoration of the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee to meet our statutory requirements to consult with representative bodies and to improve workforce engagement.

5.7.4 To complete the cycle of reporting on health and safety related matters, the Workplace Safety Representatives Group reports in to the newly structured Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee, which then reports on to Scrutiny and Audit Panel for corporate assurance.

- 5.7.5 The Health Safety & Wellbeing Team has started a full review of the Service's health and safety management system, with the intention of moving to a model of risk profiling across all areas of service delivery.
- 5.7.6 The Service are currently preparing for a South East regional peer audit using the new NFCC Health & Safety national audit tool. This will help to provide a measure of the changes and improvements made, to achieve greater integration of health & safety, since the Herford & Worcester Peer Review in 2016. This will also support the Service during the forthcoming HMIC FRS inspection in 2019.

5.8 Business Continuity.

- 5.8.1 ESFRS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that in the event of a service interruption, agreed Mission Critical Services (MCSs) will be maintained and normal services restored, as soon as reasonably possible. To ensure that this happens, it is Service policy to have in place robust business continuity recovery plans that are regularly reviewed and tested, and key staff appropriately trained to manage these procedures.
- 5.8.2 For a short-term disruption, Directorate Heads will lead on recovery arrangements. For long term/corporate level disruptions, a formal Emergency Management Team (EMT) will be stood up to manage the recovery; this will be overseen by a Strategic level manager. An EMT exercise took place in March 2016 and the lessons learnt are being incorporated into a revision of the business continuity plans. Further training and exercises are planned throughout 2017.
- 5.8.3 ESFRS Business Continuity Management process aligns to the requirements of the ISO 22301 Standard.

5.9 Incident debriefing & Organisational learning

- 5.9.1 East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service have implemented a new role of Operational Assurance Manager to assist in the implementation and embedding of Operational Assurance and further support organisational learning. This role is a Station Manager working within the Operational Support & Resilience department. Following this appointment, a review of current processes has taken place and the policies that outline this function have now been aligned to National Guidance to provide consistency, clarity and effectiveness. The Service now has a direct link to National Operational Learning (NOL) to ensure currency with National learning and share any learning identified within East Sussex as agreed suitable.
- 5.9.2 The Incident debriefing profile has a distinct identity and both historical and new learning has been communicated through various platforms including 'Assurance in Action' publications, which is vital in embedding the learning process. All new Level 2 officers and above shall be trained to carry out debriefs to add resilience and authenticity to the process.
- 5.9.3 The Service continues to carry out 'Incident Assurance' to support firefighter safety and assist in embedding changes in-line with National Operational Guidance, equipment changes and also local policy changes. The Operational Assurance process is linked

to various ESFRS departments to track and ensure end to end learning. The Service recognises there is more work to do to ensure this is fully embedded but it is noteworthy that we are in a stronger position and as such have been invited to take part in a National review of the Good Practise Guide due to having a forward thinking approach to National Operational Learning.

5.10 Operations Committee

5.10.1 To further support a robust operational assurance culture, the Corporate Management Team has recently agreed to the introduction of an Operations Committee. This committee will be chaired by the ACFO and will operate at strategic level and consider corporate operational assurance, operational readiness, performance, policy, practice and training. This will ensure that the Service is managing the oversight and delivery of all its responsibilities in respect of emergency response operations and has the necessary systems and policies to ensure adoption of good practice and compliance with statutory responsibilities. Furthermore, the Operations Committee will review operational performance including the outcomes of incident debriefs and reviews and the outcomes from the station audit and inspection programme.

5.11 Crime and Disorder Act 1998

5.11.1 As a “responsible authority” under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the fire and rescue authority has a statutory duty to work in partnership with key agencies in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships; these are required to carry out annual strategic assessments to identify current and possible future crime, disorder and substance misuse issues from sound evidence and analysis.

5.11.2 We believe that partnership working between local agencies is key to providing ‘joined up’ public services for local people and to ensuring successful outcomes at the lowest cost for taxpayers. Our structure is based on a borough command geographical arrangement with specific officers responsible for community safety partnerships in their area. In addition, our Inclusion and Partnership Manager is responsible for delivery of our partnership strategy and undertaking an annual review of partnerships to ensure we are achieving the desired outcomes for our communities.

5.12 The Localism Act 2011

5.12.1 The Localism Act takes as its starting point the existing statutory powers of fire and rescue authorities and then gives the Fire Authority the power to do:

- Anything they consider appropriate for the purposes of carrying out their functions.
- Anything they consider appropriate for purposes incidental to carrying out their functions.
- Anything they consider appropriate for purposes indirectly incidental to carrying out their functions.

5.12.2 It also added three new sections to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, which allows Fire and Rescue Authorities to place a charging policy in support of its

strategy to deal with unwanted fire signals received from automatic fire detection systems.

- 5.12.3 The charging power allows us a level of discretion in that we may decide not to charge at all, as is the case now, or we may charge different amounts to different groups of recipients when we respond to specific categories of calls. In May 2014, the Authority's Policy & Resources Panel endorsed an amendment to the existing policy for attendance to automatic fire detection systems. This allows for a standardised pre-determined attendance across Sussex in line with the regional ways of working.
- 5.12.4 During 2017/18 ESFRS attended 341 incidents of releasing persons from defective lifts – 4th highest in the country for this incident type. Work has also begun to examine the opportunities to reduce the number of emergency responses we make to defective lifts. The premise owner is responsible for the management of all utilities within a building and this includes lifts. Sufficient maintenance and servicing programmes should be in place so as to limit the number of breakdowns and thus the number of responses we get called to. The piece of work will include educational input with owners and if this is not successful consideration will be given to introducing a charge for responding.
- 5.12.5 In addition, the Service has also renegotiated a memorandum of understanding with Kent & Medway Fire Authority which sees the Service undertaking large animal rescues on behalf of Kent across a large area of Kent and for which the Service is able to charge.
- 5.12.6 Under section 38(1) of the Act we are required to prepare a Pay Policy Statement. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that the pay policy statement sets out the issues relating to the pay of the workforce and in particular the senior officers and the lowest paid employees. This ensures that there is the appropriate accountability and transparency of the salaries of our senior staff. The purpose of the statement is to provide greater transparency on how taxpayers' money is used in relation to the pay and rewards for public sector staff. . For more information please see the 'data transparency' web page under the 'Freedom of information' section under 'About us' on our website or alternatively use the following link. <http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/data-transparency/>

6. Improvements to service delivery during this year

- 6.1 **Service Delivery Review.** This project was set up with the aim of,
- Redistribute resources to improve the capacity of the service
 - Provide a structure that further supports effective collaboration and partnership
 - Support the increase in front line productivity; including HSV and Business Safety Audits

- Respond to the outcomes of the Grenfell incident by increasing the resources of Business Safety to ensure effective delivery
- Enhance the Services Welfare and Wellbeing offered to staff through the provision of effective preventative measures
- Encourage the appropriate devolvement and delegation of responsibility to ensure effective empowerment at each tier of the organisation
- Ensure the effective delivery, and ongoing maintenance, of the Support and Delivery Framework that is designed to maximise community return by prioritising critical services and activities and ensuring staff are supported to deliver these services.

The project comprises of 19 Proposals that have been through a formal consultation process. All recommendations have been fully agreed and the final two are in the final stages of the consultation phase.

Several of the proposals have been actioned already and the remainder will be completed in time for a go live date of 1st Feb 2019.

6.1.1 We have conducted an in-depth staff survey of which the results have been analysed and actions being taken to respond to the negative outcomes of some of the questions.

6.1.2 We have run our 40th Wholetime Trainee Firefighter course. This consisted of 8 new recruits and it was the first such training course for 7 years. After 13 weeks of intensive training conducted at Maresfield, and at the Fire Service College in Moreton in Marsh, the new recruits were posted to stations across the county.

6.1.3 **Community Safety**

The Service's Community Safety Department has published its Community Safety Strategy 2018-21 in which it details how the Service will deliver its 5 prevention strands detailing the engagement with partners, the annual strategic assessment of risk, evaluation and associated thematic action plans.

6.1.4 **Engagement with Partners**

In preparation for the annual assessment of risk the Service holds an engagement event inviting representation from its partners to identify and discuss their particular risk factors in order to build a holistic picture of risk within the community. Partners' views are fed into the prevention strands and activities that the Service will deliver in the following year.

6.1.5 **Annual strategic assessment of risk**

A comprehensive report that includes risk factors from a wide range of partners that builds a broad picture of risk within the community. Included within this report are Killed and Seriously Injured on the road (Police data) and water (WAID), deaths associated with a wide range of health factors (excess winter deaths, obesity, smoking, and suicide) and other health related data such as dementia, fuel poverty

and loneliness. Fire data relating to homes and businesses; community resilience including flooding risk and pollution; anticipated urban and rural growth, changes in infrastructure and population changes. In the first year (2019) these are broken down to District & Borough level but from 2020 will be described at station ground level and will provide the opportunity for local managers to understand the risk associated with their area and to therefore determine the preventative tactics appropriate to address those risks.

6.1.6 Prevention strands:

Home/Fire: Home Safety Visits - The target of 12,000 Home Safety Visits / Safe & Well visits is based on risk profiling and capacity for the service to deliver and is currently divided equally between the Safe & Well Advisers (SWA) and operational crews across the Groups.

Appointments are made with clients through the central team and a screening process identifies clients with more complicated or complex needs and these are passed to SWAs to deliver.

Ops crews will undertake 7,000 visits a year and whilst these are usually more straight forward clients can be referred for a further visit by SWAs should additional assistance be required, such as the provision of sensory equipment. SWA's will continue to undertake a minimum of 5,000 visits.

Safe and Well visits: A further development of the Home Safety Visit that provides a holistic approach to wellbeing and safety within the home. As well as identifying the usual risk factors including overloaded electric sockets, smoking risks, slips trips and falls the Safe & Well visit incorporates wider health and safety issues such as fuel poverty, cold homes, scam mail and links the client to local voluntary services such as befriending, library, meals and community transport where appropriate. These visits are undertaken by paid staff and target clients considered to be at high risk due to their vulnerability which would include the elderly, people living at home, those with lack of mobility or sensory issues.

In addition to its Safe & Well Advisers ESFRS also employs two Safe & Well (S&W) Practitioners who support delivery of our GP referral scheme.

A monitoring framework is necessary for training and Quality Assuring HSVs by operational crews. The Support and Delivery framework will address this and provide the basis for continuous improvement.

The Care Act 2014 identified neglect and self-neglect as areas that Safeguarding procedures should be applied to. This is particularly relevant to the Fire & Rescue Service in respect to hoarding as it presents a significant fire risk. A multi-agency Hoarding framework Memorandum of Understanding has been developed for both the City and East Sussex to ensure a consistent approach and reduce risk.

Research and learning from other Fire & Rescue Services and the NFCC will continue to inform and influence the delivery of our prevention services. For instance; the NFCC Prevention Coordination Committee's report (April 2018) on reducing injuries and deaths by fitting additional smoke alarms in rooms that pose a higher fire risk due to the circumstances of the occupant. Whilst not yet fully supported nationally, the concept has been fully embraced within ESFRS and additional advice

provided to staff undertaking home safety visits supports the fitting of additional smoke alarms where appropriate.

6.1.7 Road Safety

The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) brings together teams from Sussex Police, East and West Sussex County Councils, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services, Brighton and Hove City Council, Brighton and Sussex University Hospital NHS Trust and Highways England. We believe that, together, we can continue to create a safer environment for all road users, significantly reducing life-changing injuries and fatalities.

Using the knowledge and experience within the partnership, we aim to provide advice and support to all road users across Sussex. We refine and develop strategies to promote road safety and to encourage everyone to consider how they use the roads and how everyone can become safer. Recommendations and guidance are offered to urge everyone to share the roads and to foster an attitude of safety for all on our roads.

ESFRS undertakes a range of preventative activities across the area, based on the road risk, both collaboratively through road safety partnerships (Wealden and Rother) and through single agency activities.

Safe Drive – Stay Alive: Our thought provoking show aimed at young people who are just starting out as drivers or independent passengers to consider the implications of their decisions before they do something. 16 – 24 year olds are the highest risk category to be killed or seriously injured on the road and road collisions pose the highest risk of death for this age group. The show brings together emergency workers and the families of young people lost to road death to seek to encourage the audience to make sensible decisions when driving or being a passenger.

The **ESFRS thematic Road Safety Action Plan 2018 - 21** identifies the road risks through location and road user type and identify the tactics available to staff and volunteers that are available through the ESFRS initiatives library as well as through the SSRP.

Road Safety prevention is overseen by our road (and water) safety coordinator based in the central Community Safety Team who is also the subject lead on the SSRP Programme Delivery Groups.

6.1.8 Water Safety

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service regularly deals with the consequences of water related emergencies which has a significant impact on our local communities. ESFRS has a statutory duty to identify risk under its obligation to undertake an Integrated Risk Management Plan and has identified a number of areas where the Service can work collaboratively with other agencies to implement our own initiatives to reduce risk as well as keeping the people who reside and visit East Sussex, Brighton and Hove safer.

Water Savvy, Water Safe (WS²) – is our Safe Drive, Stay Alive for water. East Sussex has been the county with the second highest number of accidental drownings (behind Cornwall) for a number of years with 16-24 year olds as the highest risk group. Similar to SDSA in presentation style our thought provoking show aimed at young people to consider the implications of their decisions before they either get in the water or risk falling into water due to the influence of alcohol or other

substances. 16 – 24 year olds are the highest risk category by age to be killed or seriously injured the water related incidents. For every drowning there are 8 life changing injuries. The show brings together emergency workers, volunteers from the RNLI and the families of young people lost to road death to seek to encourage the audience to make sensible decisions around water.

The **ESFRS thematic Water Safety Prevention Action Plan 2016 - 19** identifies our key water safety principles that will reduce the number of water related injuries and deaths.

The delivery of our Water Safety Principles is overseen by the Water (and Road) Safety Coordinator whose role is to promote, train and encourage staff and volunteers to deliver preventative activities, represent ESFRS both nationally and regionally within the Fire & Rescue Service and to work collaboratively with other water safety partners.

6.1.9 Health Safety

ESFRS has embraced the principles of 'Fire as a Health Asset', a national consensus between the National Fire Chief's Council, Public Health England and National Health England to utilise the Fire Service in the support of the delivery of health outcomes.

ESFRS has developed consensus statements with Public Health and NHS in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove identifying a number of themes for the service to support. These include smoking cessation, obesity, falls and frailty, dementia, suicide prevention.

Making every contact count will be supported across the service through the enhancement of the Home Safety Visit to be known as the Safe & Well Visit.

In addition to the fire safety elements of Home Safety Visit effective delivery of Safe & Well visits depends on the quality and range of health elements that are incorporated into the client engagement.

It is essential that the quality and range of the health element of the S&W visit is monitored for both accuracy and effectiveness. It is intended that this will initially will be achieved through a coordinated approach provided by the central team. S&W visits will incorporate a number of elements, which will be reviewed annually, or as advice from health partners dictate.

The focus will continue to be on those groups below but the intention will be to further explore the possibilities to reduce risk in related health areas following consultation with partners and trade unions:

- Falls and frailty
- Disability, including dementia
- Obesity
- Smoking cessation

An initial coordinated approach from the central team will ensure that:

- Suitable and sufficient training is provided taking into account the target audience of fire fighters,

- Resources are readily available in a number of formats. These will include up to date information that relates to the appropriate geographical area
- A single point of contact is available for advice, guidance and referrals as teams achieve confidence and competence.

The innovative **GP Referral Scheme** provides for GPs to send ESFRS details of patients whom they consider at high risk of an unelected hospital admission. Our Information Sharing Agreement allows contact details of patients to be shared *without consent* for a Home Safety Visit to be offered. In addition to identifying potential fire risks these visits provide an opportunity for staff to identify risks within the home environment that might cause or contribute accidents, identify the potential to fall and to identify those who are frail and would benefit from an early intervention by health professionals. In early trials the scheme has reduced the number of clients who have been admitted to A&E and reduced repeat visits to their GP's. Whilst still being evaluated for its effectiveness this scheme is being rolled out across the service area in both Brighton & Hove and East Sussex.

Child Safety Equipment and home safety advice commissioned service: the Service has been awarded a second two year contract by East Sussex Public Health to provide child safety equipment and home safety advice to a small number of families considered to be at high risk of accidental injury to children aged 0 – 2 years. East Sussex has a high number of admissions to hospital for accidental injuries to children and this contract sees the provision of safety gates, fire guards, blind cleats, bath mats and carbon monoxide alarms. Targeting up to an annual number of 350 of the estimated 1,000 eligible families the service, in conjunction with the 0-5 Accident Prevention Board that ESFRS chairs, is working towards reducing the number of accidental injuries suffered by babies and young children.

Sussex Recovery College - Working in partnership with Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust, the NHS Trust that provides mental health services across Sussex, ESFRS has developed a session within the **Recovery College** annual prospectus, to provide fire safety advice within the home to service users, their carers and professionals. Being piloted in Eastbourne and Hastings this innovative scheme will eventually be delivered across the Service area and offered to anybody with mental health needs through this popular annual prospectus. The aim of the sessions is to increase fire risk awareness and provide guidance and information about staying safe within the home.

Restart a Heart – An extension of the national campaign developed in conjunction with South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust to deliver CPR in schools across the Service area.

In addition, through the *Health Coordinator* we will ensure that there are consistent links with health partners to ensure that the health element of the S&W visit is matched to the work of wider health partners and that evaluation of outcomes from the visits are recorded and shared with the relevant partners. The **ESFRS thematic Health Action Plan 2018 - 21** identifies fire related health risks developed in collaboration with health partners and delivered by Ops crews, staff and volunteers.

6.1.10 Community Volunteers

ESFRS started its community volunteer scheme in 2009 and currently has 100 volunteers from across the service area. Management of the scheme is undertaken by Coordinators working within the central Community Safety team.

Our key community volunteering priorities are:

- To ensure volunteering is an integral part of ESFRS and that volunteer activities contribute to ESFRS reaching more members of the community and making ES and B&H a safer place
- To ensure volunteering is a worthwhile, rewarding activity for our volunteers and that volunteers are involved in the decision making process.
- To be inclusive and open, enabling as many people as possible to access our volunteering opportunities.
- To work in partnership with other organisations who also have a community safety ethos.
- To be creative and imaginative in our approach to volunteering, to best serve the needs of promoting community safety.
- To ensure we have the necessary systems and resources in place to best support our community volunteers and the communities we serve

An **ESFRS Volunteer Action Plan** provides a focus to teams and illustrates the value volunteers bring to the community and ESFRS.

In addition to the supportive role that volunteers undertake with operational crews in station open days and other events, incident training and exercises the volunteers are involved in the Personal Resilience Project; a scheme whereby volunteers support vulnerable members of the community who have been subject of a Safeguarding alert or similar issue that has detrimentally affected their ability to live unsupported. Over up to 6 sessions volunteers meet with clients to rebuild their trust and self-confidence, provide information on community events and services and generally provide a befriending service.

6.1.11 **Youth engagement** - Youth engagement is undertaken across the service, often by Ops Crews, through locally organised activities such as football coaching and mentoring young people. Our Safety in Action programme is a collaborative approach providing the opportunity for young people aged 10 to 11 years to experience risky scenarios in a safe environment.

Road safety interventions such as **Safe Drive, Stay Alive, and Water Savvy, Water Safe WS²** are delivered by the Water and Road Safety Coordinator alongside Ops Crews and community volunteers.

The three dedicated Education Team staff members within the central Community Safety team undertake the majority of the school and college engagements. A number of further engagements are undertaken by staff members from Ops Crews.

The Education Team undertake the provision of the Juvenile firesetters scheme known as Firewise, work with partner agencies under the Troubled Families agenda and support the delivery of the developing 'Watch' schemes, activities within fire stations targeting challenging young people.

The ESFRS Strategic Aims of the Education Team are:

- o Equip Children & Young People (CYP) with the knowledge, understanding and skills to keep themselves, their families and their communities' safe, supporting ESFRS achieve its aim of 'safer communities.'
- o Explore new opportunities to engage with all CYP to minimise loss of life, injuries and damage to property in our communities.
- o Ensure an innovative and high quality of service by encouraging feedback from partners to allow evaluation and improvement of our resources and practice.
- o Widen the scope of our provision, to respond to the changing needs of the Service, and to develop innovative schemes of working to increase the opportunities for engagement with CYP.
- o Fully integrate the Education Team within all areas of the Service to encourage and support staff and volunteer interaction with CYP

These strategic aims are delivered through the **Education Team thematic action plan 2018-21**.

The soon to be published Children and Young People's Engagement Policy outlines the aims and objectives of our wider engagement with CYP and provides clarity on the engagement that we should, and should not, undertake and details the support that is available to staff and volunteers as well as a list of the activities that are currently being delivered.

6.4.12 **Safety In Action**

The Service now coordinates safety in action events across all 5 East Sussex Districts and Brighton & Hove reaching over 6,000 primary school age children including those in the independent sector and home educated. SIA provides the opportunity for every year 6 pupil to experience dangerous or risky incidents in a controlled environment under the supervision of experts in the field. These scenarios include railway, personal safety, water risk, electricity, road safety, environmental dangers and fire. SIA has been assessed by RoSPA who have stated that the events provide lifelong high quality learning for children.

6.1.13 **Partnership Engagement**

East Sussex Fire Authority has adopted the following definition of partnerships:

"Any joint arrangement, where the partners:

- o Are other public and third sector organisations, supply partners, independent organisations or groups
- o Agree to co-operate, share, or agree or contract or deliver commissioned services with the Fire Authority or ESFRS to deliver defined outputs that achieve clearly defined outcomes
- o Accept the joint managerial arrangements to oversee their effective delivery
- o Plan and implement commensurately in relation to scale and to an agreed programme which may or may not involve joint staff or resources
- o Create new organisational structures or processes to achieve joint goals, separate from their own organisations

- Identify and mitigate, where possible against risks of achieving successful outcomes and identify and maximise possible benefits
- Ensure effective evaluation takes place to monitor overall and relative resource inputs, and outcomes
- Have agreed in advance effective arrangements and criteria for ending the arrangements including the implications on staff involved, services affected and beneficiaries of the partnerships.”

Partnerships and integrated working require a culture of shared ownership and common working arrangements across organisational and professional boundaries. In so doing, the Fire Authority has endorsed ESFRS to take a full and active role in:

- Strategic, regional, function partnerships provided, in each case, the agreed business case/evaluation process has been followed and the appropriate manager has signed it off as an effective, viable, and appropriately resourced partnership
- Shared services partnerships provided they have been the subject of appropriately Member approved business cases and contractual arrangements; and supply partnerships that follow the requirements set out in Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, the Procurement Strategy and related ESFRS policy guidance.

Once the annual Assessment of risk is embedded and the resulting targeted initiatives are being undertaken across Brighton & Hove and East Sussex the intention is to **develop a partnership review framework** that will to seek to ensure a consistent community benefit approach in evaluating which partnerships to resource and how.

6.1.14 Supporting Structure

The Central Community Safety function provides the following support to assist the delivery of community safety initiatives by staff and volunteers:

- Management of the **Initiatives Library** – A comprehensive library of resources that staff and volunteers can draw down from the Intranet providing physical resources, pull up banners, leaflets, giveaways etc as well as tip sheets and guidance on the effective deployment of the resources, media and social media message templates and an evaluation template to assess the effectiveness of the engagement. (i.e. The open day pack, behavioral insights tools)
- Support colleagues by reviewing initiatives specifically in respect to:
 - Effectiveness by the area in which initiative was undertaken
 - Effectiveness of the evaluation criteria
 - Effectiveness of engagement with target group in developing initiative through evaluating EIA and seeking support from I&D.
- Provide **feedback at annual assessment** – The focus being on the effectiveness of the initiatives employed.
- Coordination of **best practice** – Provide advice and guidance to staff and volunteers by pulling together best practice nationally and locally from Government, other FRS’, partner organisations and the third sector
- **Evaluation** role – Determine the effectiveness of activities and provide advice and support to secure better outcomes

- o **Safeguarding** – Manage the statutory safeguarding obligations
- o **Annual assessment of risk** – Co-ordinate the delivery of the identification of risk from fire and other harm through an inter-agency approach at District and Borough level
- o **Fatal Fire and Serious Fire Related Incident Coordination** - Coordinate the review process and feedback on collective process at Safer Communities performance management meeting.
- o **Continual development of collaborative practice** - Identify further opportunities to reduce risk of harm within, the SLT agreed, prevention work streams prioritised by the findings of the ‘**Annual Assessment of Risk**’ findings
- o **Initiative Support** - Provide critical central support in enhancing performance in high priority areas (i.e. Accidental Dwelling Fire (ADF) Action Plan and associated ADF action learning set)

6.1.15 Safer Business Training

Utilising funding from Business Rates pooling fund the Service offers a one day course to small and medium sized businesses to provide training and advice on risk assessments to assist businesses to comply with the legislation and ensure the continuing safety of their staff and customers. The aim of the course is to reduce the number of businesses that may be at risk of enforcement action and increase fire risk assessment skills to reduce the risk of fire to the business and community.

6.2 Internal Audits and Assessments

6.2.1 East Sussex County Council’s Internal Audit provides our internal audit service, independently assessing the effectiveness of our governance, risk management and internal control arrangements. Internal Audit supports the role of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel. An annual internal audit plan is agreed by the Scrutiny & Audit Panel following consultation between the Senior Leadership Team and Internal Audit about the risk priorities and the results of this work is then reported back to the Panel. Individual reports on our systems are evaluated by internal audit and include recommendations to enhance controls, and then action plans are developed to address and implement audit recommendations. The results of these internal audit reviews and the Head of Internal Audit’s Annual Opinion are reported to the Scrutiny and Audit Panel.

6.2.2 Operational Assessment

The Fire and Rescue sector has a strong and long standing commitment to sector led improvement. As part of this, the Chief Fire Officers Association developed the concept of Operational Assessment (OpA) in 2009, in partnership with the Local Government Association and the Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser. Information on our last assessment undertaken in January 2014 can be found in the ‘About us’ section of our website on the ‘East Sussex Fire Authority’ page, under ‘Planning and Performance/ Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge’.

The Home Office published an updated national Framework Document in May 2018. In addition it has established Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire & Rescue Services as an independent inspection regime. Currently our operational preparedness, policies and procedures are being reviewed ready for our inspection as part of Tranche 3 in spring 2019. The outcome of that inspection will be detailed in the next Operational Assurance report.

6.3 Station Audits

6.3.1 The Station audit programme is designed to support the continual improvement of our front line delivery services in terms of effectiveness, compliance with service operational and administrative procedures but above all, to ensure that the operational preparedness and safety of crews remains a priority. The purpose of the audits is to ensure that the current levels of knowledge and skills of crews on stations is benchmarked against current policies and procedures to ensure that operational preparedness and firefighter safety is maintained to a high level.

6.3.2 Areas to be audited are determined through a collaborative approach involving all the relevant managers and is led by Operational Planning and Procedure (Ops P&P) and Safer Communities on an annual basis.

Audit areas include:

- Areas of improvement in relation to firefighting, rescues and hazardous materials identified through the Ops Assurance process.
- Fire Investigations
- Health and Safety including thematic sampling.
- Training planning, delivery and recording.
- Risk information gathering and environmental responsibilities.
- Station security, Business continuity and resilience.
- End of month returns.
- Relevant areas from HMI inspections.

6.3.3 The audit team will give verbal feedback during the station audit followed by a report which is sent to the Group and Station Manager responsible for the workplace that has been audited and a copy to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer. The report will contain the rating scored against each examined area.

6.3.4 It is the responsibility of individual workplaces to review the report and produce an action plan that will identify how improvements will be made along with time scales.

7. Policing and Crime Act

- 7.1 The Government remains committed to “finish the job of police reform”. The Policing and Crime Act will support the transformation of the fire and rescue service by:
- Enhancing local accountability of the fire and rescue service by enabling directly elected PCCs to take over the governance from Fire and Rescue Authorities where a local case is made.
 - Driving efficiency and better value for money by facilitating closer collaboration between all three emergency services and maximising the ability of chief officers to make best use of their workforce.
- 7.2 The Sussex PCC has considered a business case for a change in local governance of both East & West Sussex Fire Authorities and determined, at this time, not to seek any change.

8. Partnership working

- 8.1 East Sussex Fire has a Collaboration Framework document that outlines our collaborative intention for how we will work with a wide range of partners, placing great emphasis on selecting the right partners in order to best serve our communities.
- 8.2 To ensure collaboration is in the public interest, ESFRS will work within this collaboration framework to provide confidence and assurance to any future collaborative workings.
- 8.3 The document provides the high level framework and principles within which ESFRS can assess, progress and review collaboration activities.

Intention: ESFRS will seek opportunities to collaborate with partners that enable us to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the services we deliver to the communities in East Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove.

- 8.4 The Service currently has in excess of 50 collaborations. Some of these collaborations have been moved into a business as usual model, where as some are still in the scoping and development stage.
- 8.5 The Collaboration Priorities set out in the Framework provides an overview of the collaborations the Assistant Directors believe to be the priority for 2018 - 2021 and therefore should be reported to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Fire Authority’s Scrutiny & Audit Panel on a quarterly basis. This does not mean that other collaborations will not be developed or worked on during this period.
- 8.6 In February 2018 the Authority approved the Medium Term Financial Plan and in September 2017 approved the Efficiency Strategy. These documents clearly identified that collaboration would be one element contributing to both the financial savings and a balanced budget moving forward required by the Authority.

8.7 Therefore, all collaborations will be required to identify where efficiencies can be made in the early development stages of a collaboration and then a follow-up piece of work will be undertaken once the collaboration 'goes live', by the relevant Assistant Director, to demonstrate how the efficiency has been realised.

8.8 This again, will be reported to both the SLT and the Scrutiny & Audit Panel.

Each initiative has been assessed to identify its current status as follows:

- Established: The initiative has become day-to-day business. It has clear structures and process, which give confidence it is embedded in the ongoing work of all of the emergency services involved. Work is well developed and opportunities being exploited whilst further work is being actively considered.
- Partially Established: Elements of the initiative have become day-to-day business, or the whole initiative has been delivered but only within a limited geographic area. There are no established plans for further development.
- Initial Work Only: The initiative is at the scoping or pilot stage.

8.9 In response to the Home Offices reform charge, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) have created a strategic committee tasked with harnessing our national buying power, under a category management approach. This has enabled an unprecedented level of data sharing, collaboration and transparency, which will drive significant aggregation of demand. National 'Basket of Goods' benchmarking exercises have already identified areas of spend and common suppliers, which can be targeted both as an individual FRS and as a Sector.

8.10 The new ESFRS Procurement Strategy is designed to support partnering and collaboration by aligning our categories directly with the national agenda, aggregating spend through effective collaboration or by sharing services on common goods and services. Pre-procurement activity and sourcing strategies underpinning the category approach, will enable us to identify & target any opportunities for collaboration either nationally, locally or both, ahead of going to market.

8.11 In terms of pre-existing arrangements, ESFRS are pro-active participants in national and regional contracts across varied categories, which include; fire appliances, light fleet, PPE, workwear, cutting equipment, smoke alarms, utilities, consumables, stationery and premises maintenance.

8.12 ESFRS have recently entered into a collaborative partnership to deliver occupational health. Building on the success of the existing collaboration between the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex, this partnership now includes ESFRS and Surrey FRS, delivering the services together in order to:

- drive quality and efficiency
- ensure greater assurance of clinical governance for the service

- enhance staff well-being and reduce staff absence
 - enable the parties to discharge their statutory duties more effectively
 - ameliorate the impact of reduced budgets and meet savings targets
- 8.13 Alongside South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust, Surrey CC, Surrey Police, Sussex Police and West Sussex CC, ESFRS are founding members of the Integrated Transport Function Project, to deliver a resilient, sustainable joint capability that enables the parties to purchase bulk fuel at the best possible price and to provide shared access to this, using a more efficient standardised system, at reconfigured bulk fuel sites across the Surrey and Sussex region.
- 8.14 Officers are also involved in a partnership project focussing on fire investigation and how greater benefit and effectiveness can be drawn from this crucial element of fire and rescue work. ESFRS are the lead authority in an agreement with Kent and West Sussex to overhaul the way we investigate fires, share data and learn from the resulting trends of fire incidents across the region.

9. Trading

- 9.1 We do not undertake any form of trading so have nothing to report under this subject.

10. Performance Management

- 10.1 To help us improve in the right areas and demonstrate progress, we use performance management. This helps us to:
- Focus on our priorities.
 - Set targets aimed at improving services and measure progress.
 - Identify and tackle poor performance.
 - Be accountable to our communities.
 - Help ensure we provide value for money.
- 10.2 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meet at least once a month to discuss strategic and policy issues and to monitor and determine service and financial plans into the future to ensure that we meet our statutory duties.
- 10.3 The service to the public is then delivered by two directorates, Service Planning & Assurance and Service Delivery, and their main responsibilities are:

Service Planning & Assurance

- Training & Assurance
- Resources
- Planning & Improvement

Service Delivery

- Safer Communities
- Human Resources & Organisational Development
- Operational Support & Resilience

10.4 The Authority's priorities are articulated in our purpose and commitments and contained in our planning documents. We produce a number of separate plans, all of which outline how we intend to deliver our services:

- Our Medium-Term Plan sets our longer-term direction and sets out how we intend to deliver our services based on community risk and needs and the resources available to us.
- Our Annual Plan summarises what we've done over the last year, as well as what we intend to do over the following year
- Each Directorate, Borough and Station has a more detailed local Action Plan that sets out their activities against our aims and objectives.
- The final step is the appraisal process where objectives are set for each employee. The links between the plans form the "golden thread" that ensures that everyone in the organisation is working towards the same goals and that priorities will be achieved.

10.5 The start to effective performance management is business planning which translates high-level objectives into management actions linked to performance measures. Staff are able to see where their work area fits into the overall strategic direction of the Authority, what the targets are to be achieved in the year ahead and how their contribution fits into vision, purpose and commitments.

10.6 On a monthly basis performance results are produced by Borough and Station. Any major variances are investigated to ascertain the cause and commentary is provided by the responsible officer. The reports are then presented to the Fire Authority for monitoring and further scrutiny purposes.

10.7 We also have clearly defined priority areas in which we concentrate our efforts. Each year we revisit them to ensure the targets remain appropriate. Our priority areas for 2017/18 were:

- Of the 10,000 Home Safety Visits undertaken at least 90% should be delivered to our vulnerable community.
- Number of accidental fires in dwellings should reduce
- Ensuring accidental dwelling fires are confined to the room they started in on 94% of occasions.
- A 32% reduction in automatic fire alarms.
- The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence for all staff should not exceed 7.5 days.
- An increase in the number of inspections in high risk premises

10.8 The Government set all Fire Authorities 10 year targets from 2001/02 The following table shows our reductions in performance over the sixteen years from 2001/02 to 2017/18 and our performance from last year, 2016/17.

Table 1 – Performance results 2017/18

Summary	2001/02 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	Reduction since 2001/02 +/- %	Reduction from 2016/17 to 2017/18 +/- %
All fires, including chimney fires	5,352	2,064	2,069	-61%	0%
Accidental Dwelling Fires	783	538	501	-36%	-7%
Primary Fires (fires in properties of value or involve more than 5 fire engines)	2,821	1,184	1,132	-60%	-4%
Secondary Fires (fires in derelict buildings, grass, heath, railway, straw, fence, bins etc.)	2,321	746	819	-65%	9.8%
Deliberate Primary Fires	1,393	267	247	-82%	-7%
Deliberate Road Vehicle Primary Fires	924	98	82	-91%	-16%
Deliberate Primary Fires other than road vehicles	469	169	165	-65%	-2%
Deliberate Secondary Fires	1,984	419	502	-75%	20%
All Non-Fatal Casualties (in fire incidents)	222	86	73	-67%	-15%
Non-Fatal Casualties in fire incidents (excluding precautionary checks and first aid)	152	37	40	-74%	8%
Automatic False Alarms	5,962	4,560	4,602	-23%	1%
False Alarms due to Apparatus	-	3,211	3,205	-	0%
Malicious False Alarms	564	130	109	-81%	-16%

10.9 We have achieved impressive reductions from our baseline results through the hard work and dedication of all our staff. From our targeted community safety work undertaken by our fire-fighters on stations and our Community Safety Department, to our Business Safety Teams delivering important advice and enforcing fire safety regulations, to all our staff in support and professional roles, all play a part in making our communities safer.

10.10 We have experienced an increase in secondary fires in 2017/18 compared to the previous year, this increase reflects the national trend and work is currently underway, both nationally and locally, to determine the cause and reasons for this.

10.11 Further information on performance can be found in the 'About us' section of our website under 'Planning and Performance. Or alternatively follow this link <https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/strategies-plans-and-performance-information/annual-plan/corporate-plan-2018-2019/corporate-plan-on-a-page>

11.0 Assurance Statement by the Fire Authority

Good governance is about running things properly. It is the means by which the Fire Authority shows it is taking decisions for the good of the communities we serve, in a fair, equitable and open way. It also requires standards of behaviour that support good decision making - collective and individual integrity, openness and honesty. It is the foundation for the delivery of good quality services that meet all local people's needs. It is fundamental to showing public money is well spent. Without good governance Fire Authorities will struggle to improve services.

From the review, assessment and on-going monitoring work undertaken and supported by the on-going work undertaken by both Internal and External Audit and other external assessments, we have reached the opinion that, overall, key systems are operating soundly and that there are no fundamental control weaknesses.

It should be noted that future Statements of Operational Assurance may be presented in a different format and we are awaiting further detail from the Home Office regarding their requirements.

We can confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, that this statement provides an accurate and fair view.

Date

Date

Councillor

Dawn Whittaker

Chairman of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel

Chief Fire Officer

