



# East Sussex Fire Authority

## Statement of Operational Assurance 2018/19

April 2020



## **East Sussex**

Fire & Rescue Service

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## **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 2018/19, 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 provide value for money. The external auditor's Audit Results Report is also published in July each year and can be found using the link below.
- 2.4 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 sets out how the level of the general reserve has been set (this is currently 5% of the Revenue Budget) and details of the activities to be funded from each earmarked reserve

- 2.5 For more financial information about the Authority and copies of the documents referred to in this section go to our website at:

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

### **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 2018/19 can be found at:

<https://esfrs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=135&Year=0>

Copies of our AGS for 2018/19, 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](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:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/strategies-plans-and-performance-information/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:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/strategies-plans-and-performance-information/community-risk-analysis/integrated-risk-management-planning/>

5.2.3 Following the completion of the review of attendance standards commissioned in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2017-2020, the Fire Authority agreed in June 2018 new attendance standards as follows:

- include the call handling time as part of the new attendance standards;
- set an attendance standard for the 1st fire appliance with an 'on-station-response of 10 minutes 70% of the time;
- set an attendance standard for the 1st fire appliance with an 'on-call' response of 15 minutes 70% of the time.

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.

5.2.5 Work is now underway to prepare for our next IRMP which will be due in 2021. In order to ensure we have the best set of data and the most up to date intelligence on operational risk we will establish an Operational Response Review project to analyse every part of our operational capability in order to ensure we have a comprehensive

risk assessment based on historical incident data, the current county risk profile and any emerging risk profiles.

### **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 2018, 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 report stated that each fire and rescue authority in England had complied with the requirement to publish an annual statement of assurance. These statements provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in the National Framework.

In accordance with the above requirement, the Secretary of State was satisfied that every fire and rescue authority in England has acted in accordance with the requirements of the National Framework, and no formal steps have been taken by the Secretary of State since the last assurance statement in 2016 to secure compliance.

### **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 13 agreement ESFRS have a reinforcement scheme in place for our call handling with Cambridgeshire FRS, which provides resilience to our mobilising arrangements. ESFRS are in the process of entering into a section 16 agreement for our mobilising functions with Surrey FRS, which will be in place by 2021.

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 our neighbouring Kent FRS in assisting with the rescue of large animals. 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. We also provide a Sussex wide Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) response team that is made up of trained crews from East and West Sussex Fire & Rescue Services 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. 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 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.

5.4.11 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.

5.4.12 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 uses a blended risk-based approach in delivering against our statutory duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as we strive to continuously reduce fire risk in the built environment. This blended approach includes business engagement, partnership, inspection and enforcement.

5.5.2 We 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 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.
- 5.5.7 The Business Safety functions are 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 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. We now have 7 partnerships confirmed and are also now part of the Business Advice and Support Partnership (BAASP) which is a partnership of Regulatory Services across the South East covering Trading Standards, Fire Safety, Environmental Health and Licensing. BAASP shares knowledge, resources and expertise to provide the best support and advice for local businesses as part of the wider Primary Authority landscape.

<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 continues to actively promote sprinklers and continues to provide 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.

More detail on sprinklers 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.

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.

<https://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/introduction-to-business-fire-safety-course/>

5.5.15 The Service will seek to distinguish between Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's) and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UwFAS) in order to target both appropriately. The Service will seek to reduce UwFAS through awareness, engagement with the responsible person and finally policy review.

## **5.6 Prevention of Future Deaths**

5.6.1 We have a defined and managed Operational Assurance (OA) process 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 lead 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 The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team have been working on the objectives set out in the final year of the 3 year Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy, adopted by the Fire Authority in 2017.

5.7.2 Key deliverables in Year 3 of the Strategy were:

- Undertaking risk profiling across all areas of service delivery. This exercise supported data gathering which was used to inform the revision of the Service's Health & Safety Management System. The revision of the Health & Safety Management System was essential to ensure the Service is achieving and can evidence minimum statutory compliance with all relevant health & safety legislation.
- The final revision and adoption of the new Health and Safety Management System;
- The final revision and adoption of the new service Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy;
- Development of a 5 year Health & Safety Audit Plan informed by the findings of the South East Regional Peer Health & Safety Audit (led by Kent Fire & Rescue Service in June 2019), the HMIC FRS inspection and the internal station assurance audit programme, run in conjunction with the Operations Planning & Policy Team.
- Development of the next 3 year strategy for Health, Safety & Wellbeing from 2020-2023. The new strategy will continue to build on the 5 themes established in the 2017-2020 strategy:
  1. Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture
  2. Reducing Work-related Injury and Ill-health
  3. Fire Fighter Safety
  4. Contributing to the Future Health and Mental Wellbeing of all Employees
  5. Organisational Wellbeing

5.7.3 All of these key deliverables have been met and from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 the Service's new Health & Safety Management System, Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy, Health & Safety Audit Plan and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2023 will come in to effect.

## **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 as detailed within the various Business Continuity Plans in place. 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 is planned for May 2019 to test the latest major loss of staff plans - the lessons learned will be incorporated into a final revision of the business continuity plan.
- 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 Operational Assurance has been embedded into Service policy to organisational learning.. 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 is communicated through various platforms including 'Assurance in Action' and 'core brief' publications, which are 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. The Ops P&P team will lead on any multi agency debriefs delivered via the Local Resilience Forum, with any multi agency learning progressed via the Joint Operational Learning (JOL) on line platform.
- 5.9.3 The Service has refreshed and is about to roll out a new and updated 'Incident Assurance' process 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 Practice Guide due to having a forward thinking approach to National Operational Learning.

## **5.10 Operations Committee**

- 5.10.1 To further support robust operational assurance and preparedness the ACFO chairs an Operations Committee which considers corporate operational assurance, operational readiness, performance, policy, practice and training. This committee ensures 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 reviews 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 Work has commenced to examine the opportunities to reduce demand and emergency responses we make to defective lifts and automatic fire alarms (AFAs). The premises owner is responsible for the management of all utilities within a building and this includes lifts and AFAs. Sufficient maintenance and servicing programmes should be in place so as to limit the number of breakdowns or false alarms 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 as 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 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:

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

## **6 Improvements to service delivery during this year**

6.1 **Service Delivery Review.** This project has now been fully embedded and has provided the following:

- A resource allocation that improves the capacity of the service.
- A structure that further supports effective collaboration and partnership.
- An increase in front line productivity; including the delivery of prioritised customer focused HSV and Business Safety Audits.
- Affording service plans to increase the development, retention and recruitment of resources of Business Safety to ensure effective delivery against the resultant outcomes of the Grenfell enquiry.
- Enhanced Welfare and Wellbeing to all staff through the provision of effective preventative and reactive measures and prompting both physical and mental health initiatives.
- Appropriate devolvement and delegation of responsibility to ensure effective empowerment at each and every tier and department of the organisation.
- Embedding the Support and Delivery Framework across the whole organisation improving community return and prioritising critical services and activities whilst ensuring staff are fully supported to deliver these services.
- Phase two of the Support and Delivery Framework has developed processes and documentation to improve the Professional standards across the Service this will focus on the NFCC standards, local delivery standards, referring to and embedding the principles of the NFCC Leadership Behavioural Framework.
- We are improving our talent management and succession planning by way of seeking alternative approaches to access managerial posts, developing promotional pathways that will secure effective leaders who truly reflect the modern Fire and Rescue Service and compliment and assure the NFCC Leadership behavioural framework, getting the right people in the right posts.

6.1.1 As a result of our staff survey we have fully embedded recommendations from our teams in terms of celebrating success, recognising individual skills and Service delivery models that mean we introduce procedures and response with full support and engagement from key stakeholders and end users.

6.1.2 We continue to evaluate and support improved collaborative approaches to recruitment of staff across the South East region ensuring efficient, effective and financially prudent methods of shared service training.



### 6.1.3 **Community Safety - Annual Assessment of Risk**

The Safer Communities Strategy details how the Service delivers and seeks to reduce risk in the community through its five prevention strands. We have further enhanced our approach to our annual strategic assessment of risk process by taking the group based assessment down to station level providing a truly local assessment of risk that takes full account of the demographic profile, utilising a significant number of data sets that build a detailed local picture of risk across our communities. This process has been recognised by the HMIFRS as good practice and our partners are using the information to assist with the own resource allocation.

### 6.1.4 **Engagement with Partners**

In support of the strategic annual assessment of risk the Service holds a focused engagement event inviting representation from its partners to identify and discuss their particular risk factors in order to further refine the holistic picture of risk within the community. The perceived risks within the geographical groups are discussed with partners and the strategic principles reviewed and agreed. Partners views help shape the activities and initiatives that the Service delivers very often with other partners. Seeking cost effective collaboration to deliver shared community awareness and reduction in risk continues to be a key focus.

### 6.1.5 **Prevention strands:**

**Home/Fire: Home Safety Visits** - The target of 10,000 Home Safety Visits / Safe & Well visits is based on risk profiling and capacity for the Service to deliver and is currently divided 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 undertake 7,000 visits a year and whilst these are usually straightforward, clients can be referred for a further visit by SWAs should additional assistance be required, such as the provision of sensory equipment. SWA's continue to undertake a minimum of 3,000 visits. We have become far more effective at identifying the most vulnerable through partnership referral and this has led to an increase in the visits requiring two staff and the time that is needed to suitably respond to the needs of individuals. Although this has affected the number of visits undertaken by the specialist teams, the impact on reducing the risk to those most vulnerable has improved supported by the recent downward trend in accidental dwelling fires.

As well as identifying the usual risk factors including overloaded electric sockets, smoking risks, slips trips and falls our safe & well visits are designed to assist those visited with wider health and safety issues such as fuel poverty, cold homes, scam mail and link the client to local voluntary services such as befriending, library facilities, meal provision and community transport where appropriate.

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. The NFCC person centred approach is at the heart of our HSV policy.

**The ESFRS thematic home / fire safety action plan 2019 – 2022** identifies a range of fire related risks, including: accidental dwelling fires, fires in the open, deliberate fires, near miss incidents and fire related health risks developed in collaboration with health partners and delivered by operational staff, support staff and volunteers.

The **ESFRS thematic Fire/Home Safety Action Plan 2018 – 21** encompasses the work being undertaken by the Accidental Dwelling Fire action learning set and associated behavioural insights focus to ensure a holistic and connected plan designed to achieve the objectives of the strategy.

#### 6.1.6 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 (Lewes, 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.

### 6.1.7 **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 and Brighton & Hove safer.

**Water Savvy, Water Safe (WS<sup>2</sup>)** – is our Safe Drive, Stay Alive for water. Our collaborative water safety prevention work has helped reduce drowning risk. The County has moved from having the second highest number of drownings nationally to a figure that is average when compared to other counties.

16-24 year olds are the highest risk category by age to be killed or seriously injured following a water related incident which mirrors the road death risk group. Similar to SDSA in presentation style our thought provoking WS<sup>2</sup> presentation aimed at young people, prompts them to consider the implications of their decisions before they either get in the water or end up in the water due to the influence of alcohol or other substances.

The **ESFRS thematic Water Safety Prevention Action Plan** identifies our key water safety initiatives that are intended to reduce the number of water related injuries and deaths all of which are fully evaluated.

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.

### 6.1.8 Partnership working with health

It is fully recognised that a great number of those individuals that are at greatest risk to fire, road and water risk are as a consequence of poor mental or physical health.

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.

**Child Safety Equipment** and home safety advice commissioned service: the Service is currently delivering its second two year contract to East Sussex Public Health providing 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. In 2020 we extended the commissioned service to include some housing providers to reduce risk for families in temporary housing.

**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 Partnership and Social Engagement 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 Partnership and Social Engagement Plan 2020 - 2023** identifies current and future collaborative opportunities, particularly involving health partners as well our work with young people delivering Safety in Action, Fire Cadets etc; areas of work delivered by Ops crews, staff and volunteers.

### 6.1.9 Community Volunteers

ESFRS started its community volunteer scheme in 2009 and currently has 80 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 East Sussex and Brighton & Hove 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..

#### 6.1.10 Youth engagement

Youth engagement is undertaken across the service, often by operational staff, through locally organised activities such as football coaching and mentoring young people. Our iESE award winning 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.

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:

- 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'.
- Explore new opportunities to engage with all CYP to minimise loss of life, injuries and damage to property in our communities.
- Ensure an innovative and high quality of service by encouraging feedback from partners to allow evaluation and improvement of our resources and practice.
- 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.
- 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**.

Our 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.

- **Fire Cadets** – The first unit started in Eastbourne in January 2020 followed by Crowborough in February. The units will attract young people aged 14-17 years from across the community to join the pilot. The intention is to increase this to 6 cadet units, one in each East Sussex District and one in Brighton & Hove. The Cadet Cadre follows the National Fire Chief's Council fire cadet framework and is delivered by local fire staff and volunteers.
- **Safety in Action** - (SIA): 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. SIA won the iESE gold award for Fire Service Project of the Year in 2017.
- **Watch schemes** –The Watch scheme is delivered at fire stations by local operational staff and the central Education Team. First run at Eastbourne fire

station over the summer holidays, subsequent schemes at The Ridge in Hastings, Hove and Uckfield fire stations have been rolled out.

The scheme aims to work with those young people who are struggling at school, at home, in the community, those that just need some time out to get their lives back together, or any young person who would benefit from intervention by ESFRS for a day a week over a period of 5 weeks.

During the five week course the young people take part in a combination of practical and classroom-based activities:

- Rescue techniques
- Using breathing apparatus
- Learning how to evacuate a building in the event of fire
- Using fire-fighting equipment
- Running out hoses
- Team building skills
- Heartstart
- Road Safety sessions
- Water Safety sessions

#### **6.1.11 Partnership Engagement**

Fire Authority has adopted the following definition of partnerships:

“Any joint arrangement, where the partners:

- Are other public and third sector organisations, supply partners, independent organisations or groups.
- 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.
- Accept the joint managerial arrangements to oversee their effective delivery.
- Plan and implement commensurately in relation to scale and to an agreed programme which may or may not involve joint staff or resources.
- 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.

We are in the process to **develop a partnership review framework** that will seek to ensure a consistent community benefit approach in evaluating which partnerships to resource and how.

#### 6.1.12 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.
- Support colleagues by reviewing initiatives.
- 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.
- **Safeguarding** – Manage the statutory safeguarding obligations.
- **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.
- **Fatal Fire and Serious Fire Related Incident Coordination** – Coordinate the review process and feedback on collective process at Safer Communities performance management meeting.



- **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.
- **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).

#### 6.1.13 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 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

The Home Office published an updated national Framework Document in May 2018. In addition the Home Office 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 May/June 2019. Reports from Tranche 1 inspections have been published which gives an indication of the areas of focus for the Inspectors such as operational effectiveness, culture, protection and use of resources. The outcome of our 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 its Medium Term Financial Plan and restated the role of its Efficiency Strategy in ensuring future financial sustainability. 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 and 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.

- 8.15 We have reviewed the way we purchase our insurance and moved from using brokers to purchase insurance from the market – as of 1 April 2019 we have joined the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) which is a mutual owned by 11 fire services which provides insurance and access to best practice on risk management. We expect both an improved service and savings of £188,000.
- 8.16 Following the approval of our new Estates Strategy in 2019 we subsequently reviewed our delivery model and the Authority has agreed to pursue a shared service with Surrey & Sussex Police. We are already sharing an Estates Manager and accessing a range of services from police colleagues on an interim basis. A project team is now in place to develop the partnership further. The partnership will help us to deliver our very ambitious investment and improvement plans for our buildings and to achieve our target of reducing the revenue costs of our estates by between 15-25%.

## **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 2018/19 were:

- Of the 11,000 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 seventeen years from 2001/02 to 2018/19 and our performance from last year, 2017/18:

**Table 1 – Performance results 2018/19**

Summary	2001/02 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	Reduction since 2001/02 =/- %	Reduction from 2017/18 to 2018/19 =/- %
<b>All fires, including chimney fires</b>	5,352	2,071	2,150	<b>-60%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Accidental Dwelling Fires</b>	783	502	510	<b>-35%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Primary Fires (fires in properties of value or involve more than 5 fires engines)</b>	2,821	1,133	1,195	<b>-58%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Secondary Fires (fires in derelict buildings, grass, heath, railway, straw, fence, bins etc.)</b>	2,321	819	863	<b>-63%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Deliberate Primary Fires</b>	1,393	247	255	<b>-82%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Deliberate Road Vehicle Primary Fires</b>	924	82	94	<b>-90%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Deliberate Primary Fires other than road vehicles</b>	469	165	161	<b>-66%</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Deliberate Secondary Fires</b>	1,984	502	450	<b>-77%</b>	<b>-10%</b>
<b>All Non-Fatal Casualties (in fire incidents)</b>	222	73	80	<b>-64%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Non-Fatal Casualties in fire incidents (excluding precautionary checks and first aid)</b>	152	42	44	<b>-71%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Automatic False Alarms</b>	5,962	4,602	4,464	<b>-25%</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>False Alarms due to Apparatus</b>	-	3,205	3,095	<b>-</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>Malicious False Alarms</b>	564	109	104	<b>-82%</b>	<b>-5%</b>

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 all fire category areas (with the exception of deliberate fires) fires in 2018/19 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 and click on the link for the Annual Plan 2019-20:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/strategies-plans-and-performance-information/>

## 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