

# Appendix A



## Annual Assurance Statement 2021/22

April 2021 to March 2022

# Contents

Introduction .....	4
Summary .....	5
Governance .....	7
Combined Fire Authority (CFA) .....	7
Safety Plan .....	8
Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) .....	9
Risk Management .....	11
Our Communities .....	12
Prevent and Protect .....	12
Respond .....	14
Resilience .....	15
Collaboration .....	17
Our People .....	19
People and Organisational Development (POD) Strategy .....	19
Values and Behaviours .....	19
Health and Safety .....	20
People Performance .....	21
Public Value .....	22
Financial Management .....	22
Financial Performance .....	22
Transparency .....	23
Carbon Reduction .....	24
High Performance .....	25
Round 1 Inspection .....	25
COVID-19 Inspection .....	26
Round 2 Inspection .....	28
Fire Standards .....	28
Performance Management .....	29
Learning and Improving .....	29
Policy, Procedure and Guidance .....	29
National Operational Guidance .....	30
Operational Assurance .....	31

Service Learning .....	31
Audit .....	32
Assurance Programme.....	32
Feedback.....	33

## Introduction

This Statement seeks to provide an accessible way in which communities, central government, local authorities and other partners may make a valid assessment of our Fire and Rescue Authority's performance for the financial year 2021/22.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is a large Fire and Rescue Authority based in the South of England which covers an area of more than 1600 square miles. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is home to a population of just over 2 million people dispersed across rural, urban and coastal areas. Rural Hampshire covers 83% of the county with urban areas accounting for the remaining 17%. Whilst the overriding character of the Island is rural, about 60% of the Island's population live within the main towns of Newport, Cowes, East Cowes, Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin.

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

During the height of the summer season the population can double with visitors to the Island which causes a large volume of vehicles on the roads. It is estimated that, in non-pandemic times, around 2 million people visit the Isle of Wight each year. Newport is the largest county town by population (around 17,000) and is home to the Isle of Wight Council (IWC), St Mary's Hospital, courts and other public services.

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

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

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight also have several major transport hubs including airports, ferry terminals, commercial ports, major motorways and several major hospitals, prisons and key infrastructure.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Summary**

We are incredibly proud of what the Service has achieved over this last year – even with increased staff sickness – improving performance and/or returning to pre-Covid levels many areas.

Last year's Assurance Statement noted that the Service played a critical role within the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum (HIOWLRF) and its response to COVID-19 - for example, chairing the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) and hosting the Strategic Coordination Centre at our Eastleigh Headquarters; leading work around logistics, media activity and business continuity; and delivering additional activities, such as ambulance driving, hospital ICU care, the successful establishment of Basingstoke fire station as a vaccination centre, and detached and voluntary vaccinators. This support to partners continued into 2021/22 and we supported partners through a wide range of activities, including ambulance driving, falls and cardiac arrest response, vaccinating (over 150,000+ vaccines and an estimated 200 lives saved) at Basingstoke, and ongoing pop-up clinics at stations (over 2,800 vaccines since January 2022) while maintaining their operational response capacity. We have also delivered various Year 2 Safety Plan improvements; and demonstrated strong compliance against the new national Fire Standards and National Operational Guidance.

Our support to partners has also built and strengthened relationships across and outside the HIOWLRF. One by-product of this has resulted in the Secretariat of the LRF being relocated into HIWFRS and embedded into our Resilience Team. We also have new health partners that will be working from our Service Headquarters from summer 2022.

2021/22 has been a significant year of recovery and growth after the impact of COVID-19 on our workforce and our ability to provide core services. We have seen productivity rise across a range of services. There was a significant increase (29%)

in the number of Safe and Well visits we carried out, and we have undertaken detailed risk analysis and mapping using a wide range of internal and external data to support the introduction (on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022) of a new risk based Safe and Well programme. Excellent Protection work also continues with our High-Risk Residential Inspection, Risk Based Inspection and Local Based Inspection Programmes and we continue to exceed targets in licensing consultations, fire safety audits and building regulation consultations.

As we now emerge from the pandemic, we have seen a slight reduction to our incident volumes, but the balance of incident types has changed. Following the trend identified in the mid-year performance report of December 2021, we have seen a reduction in fires and Special Service Calls, but an increase in false alarms. However, there are early signs the cost-of-living crisis is impacting our demand, with a slight increase in domestic fires, particularly in the latter part of 2021/22 – we will continue to monitor, mitigate and manage this risk in the year ahead.

Furthermore, and as noted in the end of year performance report, we recognise that we have seen a reduction in on-call availability, increases in critical response times, and increases in fire fatalities and casualties. However:

- Our response performance is still below 8 minutes for critical incidents, remaining very strong compared to national benchmark data.
- Increases in casualties is owing to reduced lockdown restrictions, pandemic-related behaviour changes and emerging risk factors, such as post-pandemic health challenges, home-working and increased use of electrical devices, and rising energy/cost of living impacting behaviours. We will continue to monitor these closely and flow any data and insights into our ongoing strategic assessment and management of risk.
- Most casualties have slight (not severe) injuries or are treated on scene.

In addition, the Service has a wide range of assurance mechanisms in place to identify risks, areas for improvement, and good practice to disseminate. Our overall internal audit opinion was 'reasonable' (the same assurance level as last year), which is testament to our extensive focus on risk-based internal audit planning and internal audit more widely.

Our Safety Plan, covering both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, was launched in April 2020 and sets our strategic priorities and specific in-year activity objectives to achieve our priorities over the five-year period, with the latest improvements (for Year 3 of the Safety Plan) approved by the Fire Authority in February 2022. There was, and continues to be, regular scrutiny of our progress in delivering Safety Plan improvements, with reporting internally, including to the Executive Group, and to the Fire Authority.

Finally, with the new Combined Fire Authority launched in April 2021, there has been a continued period of alignment into 2021/22. A huge amount of work has taken place to: align practices, policies, procedures and guidance; migrate systems; update equipment, and enhance our estate.

## Governance

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is a combined authority made up of 11 elected members who collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries in the delivery of the Fire Service Act 2004. Our Fire Authority is made up of 8 Hampshire County Council members, 1 Isle of Wight Council member, 1 Portsmouth City Council member and 1 Southampton City Council member. The Authority delegates responsibility for a wide range of decisions relating to operational delivery to the Chief Fire Officer (or other officers). Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is the name given to the operational fire and rescue service led by the Chief Fire Officer. The Service staff and officers are employed by the Authority to deliver the day-to-day operational functions.

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

For more details on our Constitution, please see:

[HIWFRA-Constitution-February-2022.pdf \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](#)

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

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

The details of our framework are presented in our Annual Governance Statement, which is an essential part of our financial Statement of Accounts. For more details of our Governance Statement, please see: [Information we publish - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Combined Fire Authority (CFA)**

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority was formally founded on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

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

There are many benefits that the creation of a new CFA will bring organisationally, both in terms of operational delivery and for the safety of our public; and in 2021/22 those benefits have already started to be realised with, for example, significant improvement to the Isle of Wight estate and performance reporting enhancements taking place.

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

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

The new CFA has also created greater resilience, removed duplication, enhanced capacity and ensured continuous improvement, whilst enabling a common approach consistently applied across a wider area. Such an approach offers improved learning opportunities and greater scope for the sharing of specialisms across the area. This will all support improved public safety.

The CFA Programme which oversaw the delivery of the combination had its last Programme Board meeting on May 2021, which, amongst other activity, formally reviewed a close report and reviewed lessons learned from the Programme, which have subsequently been recorded and shared. However, ongoing work continues to develop a single culture (linked to our shared values and behaviours) and to align all areas of the organisation.

## **Safety Plan**

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, a new combined Safety Plan was launched following approval by the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Isle of Wight Council.

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

For more details about our Strategic Assessment of Risk please see:

[Strategic Assessment of Risk 2019/20 \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://hantsfire.gov.uk)

The Service has developed a new, more interactive and dynamic Strategic Assessment of Risk that is updated regularly and will be used to inform the new Community Risk Management Plan (formerly known as Integrated Risk Management Plan) when it is developed. Phase 1 of the design of the new CRMP will start later in the autumn of 2022.

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

This has been available on our website since the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020:

[Safety Plan - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://hantsfire.gov.uk)

Subsequent in-year improvement activity has been undertaken, with the latest improvements (for Year 3 of the Safety Plan – 2022/23) approved by the Fire Authority in February 2022. There was, and continues to be, regular scrutiny of our progress in delivering Safety Plan improvements, with reporting internally, including to the Executive Group, and to the Fire Authority.

### **Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)**

To inform our Safety Plan, an IRMP was developed in 2019/20, with the Safety Plan publishing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. The development process involved a new methodology as articulated above and followed a period of consultation with the public and our own teams, with the IRMP public consultation commencing in the autumn of 2019. This IRMP was a joint one with the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service as the services had not combined at that point. That said, we were working with greater alignment in preparation for the subsequent Combined Fire Authority. This was the first joint IRMP to be produced in the country.

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

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

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

- You, our communities: Analysis of data on age profiles, health indicators and other factors that can impact levels of vulnerability. More information on how we do this is set out in this plan.
- The environment: Buildings in which we live, work, visit and stay. The infrastructure within an area including transport arrangements and our climate and weather which create their own risks and demands on the fire and rescue services.
- Local intelligence: Our staff and teams work and live within our communities and their local knowledge, understanding and information sharing through partnerships is invaluable. Fire Authority members also share some local intelligence with the Service, where applicable.
- Community and National Risk Registers: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service is a key agency within the Local Resilience Forum. Through that forum a community risk register is established which sets out high level risks or issues that need to be considered and planned for (including large scale events such as music festivals) to ensure our communities are prepared.
- Partners: We work closely with a wide range of partners both centrally at a strategic level and locally.
- Research: Ongoing research locally, nationally and internationally is constantly reviewed, and indeed many of our own staff undertake research, which informs our approach and understanding of risks and issues.
- Learning from each other: We constantly strive to learn from our own experiences and those of others. Lessons learned from incidents are shared nationally and internationally to inform our plans.

To view the IRMP consultation document please see:

[Integrated Risk Management Plan 2019 Consultation \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://hantsfire.gov.uk)

Following the outcomes of the IRMP, we produced our Safety Plan that not only includes our priorities and commitments, but also takes consideration of our organisational risks and lists our organisational values. This Safety Plan was published on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

As mentioned above, work will shortly begin to produce our new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This will replace our existing plan in 2025. The plan will be produced in line with the recently approved CRMP Fire Standard (against which, as with all fire standards, we have undertaken assurance activity to ascertain our current position against the requirements of the standard). This CRMP will utilise our refreshed approach to the Strategic Assessment of Risk and use modelling to simulate potential scenarios for our future fire cover, ensuring our resources are allocated appropriately to the risks within - and around - our service boundaries.

The aforementioned new approach to the Strategic Assessment of Risk was delivered in 2021/22 and moves away from a static task and finish approach in 2019/20 to a more dynamic and live version using real time updates of data, analysis and horizon scanning. This information feeds into a system which can then generate and update live risks to be managed by the appropriate directorates and teams, as well as supporting our approach to risk management.

For more information about CRMP, please see the approved Fire Standard from the Fire Standards Board, as well as its associated guidance documents:

[Community Risk Management Planning | Fire Standards Board](#)

## **Risk Management**

Our Risk Management Policy drives a risk-based approach through directorates and teams to identify both external community and internal organisational risks.

We review the risks to our communities and undertake various responding and mitigating activities in accordance with the Fire Service Act 2004 and other associated legislation. These risks to communities, such as that of a fire or road traffic collision, are termed *Community Risk*. We also identify risks to our staff, assets, budgets, operations and change activity, which can have a significant impact on our ability to carry out our core functions and deliver our strategic objectives. This is termed *Internal Risk*.

Considering both the Community Risk and Internal Risk shapes priorities, which drive all the Organisation's activity. Risks are effectively managed by the Organisation through the implementation of various controls, examples being:

- Activities grounded in risk assessment, where service delivery decisions are supported by an evidence base
- Maintenance of risk registers
- Implementation of risk-based systems and processes, such as internal audit, impact assessments, the change management framework, organisational learning and risk evidenced business cases, policy and procedures
- Ongoing monitoring of statutory and regulatory obligations.

Where there is legislation in place for the management of specific risks, such as Occupational Health and Safety, this does not relieve the Organisation of its responsibility to comply with that legislation.

These risks are now managed through our new Risk Management tool which was launched in June 2021. All risks from organisational risks to station and team risks can now be tracked, monitored and escalated where appropriate, through this tool.

Each directorate is responsible for maintaining a Directorate Risk Register using this risk management tool. Any risks deemed to have a significant impact on the delivery of our Safety Plan priorities are escalated up into an Organisational Risk Register

which is managed by our Executive Group with progress routinely reported to the Fire Authority.

For more information on our Organisational Risk Register, please refer to Standards and Governance Committee minutes and papers, available at: [Agenda for HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee on Tuesday, 16th November, 2021, 10.00 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#) and the latest version of the Organisational Risk Register also was discussed at the July 2022 Standards and Governance Committee, please see here: [Agenda for HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee on Friday, 29th July, 2022, 2.00 pm | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Our Communities**

We work together to understand different community needs and deliver accessible, local services which build safer places.

### **Prevent and Protect**

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

In the workplace, this is the responsibility of the business owners, however, to support businesses we deliver a High-Risk Residential Based Inspection Programme, Risk Based Inspection Programme and a Local Based Inspection Programme.

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

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

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

- telling businesses what they need to do to comply with fire safety law;
- helping businesses carry out a fire risk assessment;

- helping businesses identify the general fire precautions they need to have in place;
- challenging all or parts of a fire risk assessment where concerns are identified; and
- taking further action if all the risks are not considered.

In 2021/22, we carried out 1,351 targeted fire safety audits (an increase of 126% compared to 2020/21 owing to the impact of the pandemic on our audit activity in 2020/21) of business premises owners fire risk assessments and control measures to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order 2005. To ensure we maintained our inspection programme during the COVID-19 pandemic we prioritised high risk premises with particular focus on high-rise buildings and those with potentially dangerous cladding.

In addition to this, our Fire Engineering and Consultation Team reduce risk in Hampshire to occupants and firefighters by working alongside a wide group of stakeholders to contribute to building regulation consultations that are received from building control bodies locally and nationally. In 2021/22, we carried out 1,859 Business Regulation consultations, which is an increase of 51% compared to the previous year, with 97% completed within the target time frame. We also delivered 711 Licensing Consultations (up 21% versus 2020/21), with 95% completed on time.

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

[The workplace - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk)

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

The overall volume of Safe and Well visits carried out in 2021/22 increased by 29% (up to 9,247 visits) compared to the previous year. Throughout 2021/22, we also undertook detailed risk analysis and mapping using a wide range of internal and external data, and various internal communication and engagement activity, to support the introduction (on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022) of a new risk based Safe and Well programme with Group and Station Based Activity Goals, which culminates with an overarching goal of delivering 15,717 visits in 2022/23.

Another tool in which we provide home safety advice is through the 'Safelincs' survey, available via our website: [Home Fire Safety Check - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk). This online tool takes individuals through a series of questions to assess potential risks and provide useful

information. If an individual is assessed to be at high risk, then a Safe and Well visit will be required.

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

[At home - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/At-home-Hampshire-Isle-of-Wight-Fire-Rescue-Service)

We also deliver a range of interventions through our Children and Young People (CYP) Teams. These include:

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

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

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

[KidZone and Schools - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\).](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/KidZone-and-Schools-Hampshire-Isle-of-Wight-Fire-Rescue-Service)

CYP Schools Education, Cadets, Princes Trust and FireWise continued to deliver face-to-face or virtually. Our ICT capability and systems have supported the delivery of these programmes. Home learning pages within our KidZone on our website are also being kept up to date with new products for children, parents and teachers.

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

To view more information on arson reduction, please see:

[Reducing risk of arson - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/Reducing-risk-of-arson-Hampshire-Isle-of-Wight-Fire-Rescue-Service)

## **Respond**

We work hard to keep our communities safe through education and safety measures. However, we accept incidents will still occur, and in the event of a call to an emergency we have effective strategies in place to respond to numerous different types of incidents. We operate from several locations including 61 strategically positioned fire stations. Our fire stations are purpose built and located in cities, towns, and villages and are close to residential, commercial and industrial areas. Our frontline resources and fire appliances are spread across these stations according to the local risk factors.

The Service's fire stations consist of:

- 5 fire stations staffed 24 hours a day by firefighters based at the station;
- 1 fire station staffed 12 hours a day by firefighters based at the station and then the other 12 hours covered by on-call firefighters who live or work within four minutes of the station and respond at the time of an incident;
- 46 fire stations with around the clock cover provided by on-call firefighters; and
- 9 fire stations with both firefighter crews based 24 hours at the station and on-call staff cover.

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

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

In 2021/22, we attended 3,808 fires, 9,425 non-fire emergency ('Special Service Call') incidents (such as road traffic collisions) and 8,125 false alarms. In 2021/22, we were able to maintain an average critical response time of 7 minutes and 35 seconds which is comfortably below 8 minutes. Further information on our performance is outlined in our mid-year and end-of-year performance reports to HFRA, and now HIWFRA. For example, please see here: [Agenda for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority on Tuesday, 14th June, 2022, 10.30 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Resilience**

Emergency services are facing an increased variety of demanding situations such as that of the COVID-19 pandemic. Major incidents caused by natural disasters, industrial accidents and the threat of terror attacks are challenges that we need to prepare for at a national level. These incidents could potentially have an impact on our daily lives. For this reason, there is a need for high levels of preparedness by the emergency services and our communities, including improved ability to operate

effectively together. We hold many assets and deliver a response capability to any national incidents that may arise in support of this initiative.

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

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

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

Our support to partners has also built and strengthened relationships across and outside the HIOWLRF and one by-product of this has resulted in the Secretariat of the LRF being relocated into HIWFRS and embedded into our Resilience Team, we also have new health partners that will be working from Service headquarters from later in 2022.

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

[www.hampshireprepared.co.uk](http://www.hampshireprepared.co.uk)

As well as supporting our communities prepare for widespread incidents through the Local Resilience Forum, we also have an Island Resilience Forum to focus on specific risks that can affect us and our partner agencies on the Island. Through this partnership we have a programme of work, which is achieved through engagement with all internal departments and with our partners across the Island.

For more information on the Island Resilience Forum, which we also input into, as required, please see:

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/council/OtherServices/Emergency-Management/About-the-Emergency-Management-Team>

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

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

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

There has also been significant and ongoing focus, accelerated by the pandemic, on directorate and department business continuity planning – with plans across the Service being updated with support from the Service’s Resilience team, as well as ongoing (weekly, fortnightly and monthly – at different times) assurance reporting around business continuity.

## **Collaboration**

We work closely on a daily basis, with our blue light colleagues from other fire and rescue, police and ambulance services. We also have excellent relationships with our colleagues in Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council, and other local authorities and agencies across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We believe that through collaboration we can maximise the benefits of our collective offering to the public and therefore, *Together we make life safer.*

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

Furthermore, we have come together with three other fire and rescue services to form an innovative partnership that revolutionises the way the closest resource for an incident is identified and despatched. Devon & Somerset and Dorset & Wiltshire fire and rescue services joined Hampshire and Isle of Wight to form the Networked Fire

Services Partnership (NFSP), which means all of the services use the same technology in their Control centres. This allows us to be able to take 999 calls and mobilise appliances for each other, offering greater resilience and saving millions of pounds across the partnership. The integrated system allows the services to work together even more effectively, providing greater protection to the public and enhancing firefighter safety.

In addition to this, we deliver a co-responding scheme which launched in 2004 in partnership with South Central Ambulance Service. Co-responders are firefighters with training in basic life support including resuscitation and defibrillation, who attend life critical incidents such as cardiac arrest, anaphylactic shock, strokes and asthma attacks. Supporting our ambulance colleagues in this way helps to provide an immediate response to incidents across the county and relieves the pressure on ambulances. In 2021/22, we attended 4,776 medical co-responder calls with a further 525 red fleet or other medical response calls. We are the first fire service to hold clinical governance framework for our health-related work, which includes Immediate Emergency Care, Emergency Medical Response and Falls Response.

Building on our successful partnership arrangements with colleagues in Health, we also carried out a range of activities, as noted previously in this statement to support critical COVID-19 response activities.

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

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

For more details please see:

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

In addition to this, we also lead the Isle of Wight Road Safety, on behalf of the IWC and other partner agencies.

For more details please see:

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/fire-and-rescue-service/Road-Safety/About>

We share many of our premises across these partners but most significantly we share our headquarters with Hampshire Constabulary, and we also have new health partners that will be working from Service headquarters from later in 2022. By co-locating in this way, we hope to seek further opportunities for closer working and look to make efficiencies where possible. We also share many of our remote stations with

police and ambulance colleagues. Making use of our estates in this way helps all partners involved, to reduce premise related costs.

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

## **Our People**

We look after each other by creating great places to work and promoting the health, wellbeing and safety of our people.

### **People and Organisational Development (POD) Strategy**

In support of the new IRMP and subsequent Safety Plan that was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, we developed a new People and Organisational Development Directorate which is accompanied by a new strategic framework. This strategy encompasses the following areas and has built based on feedback from our staff through various surveys:

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

### **Values and Behaviours**

In addition to the launch of the new Safety Plan, we also developed a new set of Values that were published in the Safety Plan. These values were created by our workforce through a series of workshops and a staff survey to find out what matters to them. We worked with an expert partner who facilitated the sessions across both Services and a high proportion of our staff engaged in the process.

Through everyone living the agreed values across Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service, we believe there will be improved trust and leadership, and everyone will feel proud of our Service. In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, we believe in:

- Showing respect
  - Fairness, honesty and integrity in everything we say and do
- Supporting others
  - Listening and acting with compassion and empathy

- Everyone playing their part
  - Recognising the contribution we all make
- Reaching further
  - Inspiring and challenging ourselves and others

For more information on our Values, please see our Safety Plan:

[Safety Plan - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/safety-plan)

In 2021/22, we have now launched a supporting set of behaviours that underpin our Service Values. Our behaviours are the day-to-day embodiment of our values and all of them support all four of our values. They fall into five key groups that align with the National Fire Chief Council's Code of Ethics:

- Dedicated
- Openness
- Caring
- Empowering
- Inclusive

Our values and behaviours were co-designed with our staff through extensive engagement, and are integrated in various processes, including but not limited to recruitment, promotions, and personal development review (PDR) processes.

## **Health and Safety**

We have conducted active monitoring across the Service, incorporating business as usual safety and COVID management either by MS Teams, phone or in person. Our Health and Safety team has been carrying out a range of activity to support the Service, including, but not limited to:

- making Green Book Health and Safety induction available on Moodle;
- manual handling training has been produced for, and undertaken by, Green Book staff with a wider project covering all departments that have manual handling as part their role;
- there has been a DSE/Agile training/assessment roll out of a new platform to cover all of personnel that may not just work from an office, i.e. working from home, other areas of the Service or on the move;
- Health and Safety policy and procedures has been reviewed and aligned; and
- A new Health and Safety tool is currently being implemented to further support the Service.

Furthermore, our health and safety risk assessments have been reviewed by our internal auditors who assurance rated our activity as 'Substantial' (the highest audit rating) and an independent peer review by Kent Fire and Rescue Service who provided positive feedback.

## People Performance

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

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

We also monitor staff sickness through regular reporting and national benchmarking, with performance in this and other people-related areas regularly reviewed by our People and Organisational Development (POD) Directorate Board. We also monitor our operational establishment and vacancies at our Resource Management Team. This team considers all aspects of resource management and staff wellbeing to ensure teams are appropriately supported and to maximise our availability. This includes developing new and innovative ways of recruiting and maintaining on-call staff.

We believe having an inclusive, engaged workforce means better outcomes for our communities. We run various engagement activity, including with our staff network groups (FireOUT, FireREACH, FireABLE and FireINSPIRE) to understand and discuss the issues facing our staff, as well as regularly engaging – both formally and informally with representative bodies. The results of these, and other activity, help to shape our people strategy and provide our leaders with crucial insight into how we can better support and equip our teams.

The Executive Group and HIWFRA have received additional reporting and insights covering our people performance. This has included a focus on sickness, availability and health and safety data.

For more detail, please refer to our mid-year and end-of-year performance reports:

[Agenda for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority on Tuesday, 14th June, 2022, 10.30 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

A much wider range of people metrics, including but not limited to the following, are also regularly reviewed by our People and Organisational Development (POD) Directorate Board: the size and diversity of our workforce compared to previous years; sickness levels with an increased focus on mental health and our Employee Assistance Programme provision; fitness test performance; and qualifications and competency. We also carried out another two wellbeing surveys in 2021/22 (one shorter pulse survey and another full survey), to continually monitor the wellbeing of our staff and to see how this has changed since the 2020/21 survey. Responses to the second full wellbeing survey were encouraged by communicating to staff what had changed on the back of previous results – via a ‘You Said, We Did’ infographic.

A wider 'You Said, We Did' page on our Intranet Portal has also been developed and launched to communicate to staff what has changed in response to feedback they have provided on different service areas.

## **Public Value**

We plan over the longer-term to ensure our decisions and actions deliver efficient and effective public services.

## **Financial Management**

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

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

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

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

For more details on our budget, please see our Authority report:

[Agenda for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority on Tuesday, 14th December, 2021, 10.30 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Financial Performance**

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

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

Each year our financial accounts are audited by an external body. Once approved by the external auditor our Statement of Accounts is published and contains more detail regarding our expenditure. As noted earlier in this Statement, despite the challenges of the past year, the Service delivered an underspend that will be contributed to reserves to fund future change and capital investment.

For more details of our Statement of Accounts, please see: [Information we publish - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](#)

Also, the Executive Group and HIWFRA, receive additional reporting and insights covering our financial performance. These are discussed at each Directorate Board with, as another example of our robust management of finances, an additional Financial Management Team meeting, held specifically to look at one of our largest areas of spend within our Operations Directorate. Each directorate then submits quarterly finance reports for review and scrutiny within the Executive Group.

Furthermore, there is a financial overview within the HIWFRA performance report, which includes CIPFA benchmark data and other information on where we are spending our money. The 2021/22 estimated HIWFRS cost per population is £39.42, which is close to the national average and HIWFRS are 9<sup>th</sup> highest out of 22 combined fire authorities who provided data. For more detail, please see here:

[Agenda for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority on Tuesday, 14th June, 2022, 10.30 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Transparency**

The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 is designed to ensure greater transparency of local authority data. In compliance with this code, we publish the following public data:

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

We ensure that the publication of any data complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

For more details please see: [Transparency - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/Transparency)

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

[Applications under the Freedom of Information Act - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/Information)

## **Carbon Reduction**

The Service has historically taken a proactive approach to reducing our environmental impact, not just in response to the Government's Climate Change Act, but predominantly to protect our communities and reduce the consequences of inaction, since the Service acts as a first responder to these extreme weather events. Significant analysis and work have been undertaken in this area as part of our extensive Carbon Reduction Strategy, which updates on this and associated activity, such as electrical vehicle charge points at our sites, being reported into the HIWFRA on an exception's basis. Sustainability also forms a core part of our wider design principles, which are a set of key expectations which govern any future investment in the estate, whether it be for small refits, large-scale refurbishments or complete new builds.

A stakeholder engagement process (approximately 30 workshops across all levels of the Service) was undertaken across all key areas to identify the key themes which have informed the Design Principles.

The design principles provide a consistent approach to design ensuring our buildings:

### **1. Support core Service functionality**

- To provide the facilities required to support our service delivery and continue to make life safer for the residents of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- Flexible offices to support collaborative working.
- Drop-in office space.
- Dedicated gym.
- Specialist training facilities strategically located around the county.

### **2. Enable partnerships and income generation**

- To make the most of our estate, providing spaces to enable collaborative working and deliver income to support our future financial position.
- Partner spaces - offices, storage, garaging, drop-in.

- Financially viable (site specific) income opportunities that align to our core values and community need – key worker housing, commercial/retail, pharmacy, GP surgery, library etc.

### 3. Provide a healthy and inclusive workplace

- To provide a safe and welcoming environment for all our staff and visitors.
- Clean and safe - dividing stations into zones to manage contamination risk.
- Multi-use rest and wellbeing spaces which are inclusive.
- Dedicated 'quiet spaces' also to be utilised as prayer rooms.
- Individual dormitory rooms for rest and personal space (where required).
- Support a diverse workforce – gender neutral toilets and showers.

### 4. Are physically secure

- To provide buildings which are secure and resilient to potential threats, while meeting our responsibility as a critical national infrastructure organisation.
- Dividing stations into secure zones with controlled access.
- Built to support community use with accessible, self-contained facilities for use by the public.
- Compliant with HMG Statutory Framework for physical security.

### 5. Are simple, robust and sustainable

- To use materials and technologies which offer longevity, are cost-effective, fit for purpose and energy efficient.
- Industrial finish, where possible to reduce costs.
- An efficient and practical construction form.
- Designed with energy efficiency and on-going maintenance in mind.
- Technologies embedded within the building (EV charging, digital).
- Embedded fire safety (sprinklers).

## High Performance

Our diverse teams are trusted, skilled and feel equipped to deliver a leading fire and rescue service today and into the future.

### HMICFRS Round 1 Inspection

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) remit was extended to include inspections of fire and rescue services in England. It is now called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). In 2018, they began inspecting fire services. To help us prepare for and comply with the inspection we have a Service Liaison Officer who is our Organisational Assurance Manager. The Service Liaison Officer represents Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service through regular engagement with the HMICFRS representative (Service Liaison Lead) in the collation of

information and the coordination of engagement visits and producing the Inspection schedule.

In summer 2018, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight fire and rescue services were inspected separately. These were some of the first inspections HMICFRS completed. As now, the inspections looked at three overarching pillars with eleven diagnostic questions, grading services (between outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate) for each. Reports for both services were published in late 2018 and both services received the following grades:

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

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

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

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

To see the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service full report, please see:

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

...and the following link for the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service:

<https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2018/isle-of-wight/>

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

There was a total of 65 actions (for Hampshire and Isle of Wight FRSs) against 21 diagnostics of the HMICFRS framework. As of March 2021, all actions had been completed.

## **COVID-19 Inspection**

In addition to the normal inspection programme, the Home Office commissioned HMICFRS to carry out an inspection of every fire and rescue service to consider their response to COVID-19. Their particular focus was on:

- What is working well and what is being learnt
- How the fire sector is responding to COVID-19
- How fire services are dealing with the problems they face
- What changes are likely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

The inspection was conducted entirely virtually. Our inspection took place in October 2020. There was also, however, various information we had provided to them in early September in advance of the inspection.

Given our coordinated response, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service were inspected collectively. Following the completion of inspection activity, the inspectorate published a letter providing findings for every fire and rescue service alongside a national report.

The letter did not provide a graded judgement such as that provided against the normal inspection programme; but it did include various positive findings about our response to the pandemic – concluding that it was impressed by how the Service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively to fulfil its statutory functions, protect the public and support staff wellbeing.

It also identified, amongst other positive findings, that the Service had in place up-to-date plans that were sufficient to give an initial response to the pandemic. The Service reviewed these plans as it understood more about the risks it faced. It continued to carry out Safe and Well visits and do fire safety audits (although it did fewer of both face to face). It was proactive in offering support to others. All groups of staff did additional work, especially to support the local ambulance service. The work varied based on local demand across the two service areas and meant that the people of Hampshire and Isle of Wight were better supported through the pandemic.

The inspection also concluded that resources were well managed. It found the Service responded quickly to protect staff and support their wellbeing. Staff told HMICFRS the Service communicated well with them and used technology to help reach the widest staff audiences. The Service made extra efforts to understand individual needs of staff (particularly those who are at higher risk from COVID-19) and put in place tailored support.

However, the inspection did identify three areas of focus for us, which we focused on throughout 2021/22, partly within our programme of assurance activity:

- 1. determining how we will adopt for the longer-term, the new and innovative ways of working introduced during the pandemic, to secure lasting improvements.*
- 2. making sure all wholetime firefighters are fully productive, while continuing to minimise the risk of them contracting or spreading the virus.*
- 3. evaluate how effective our extra activities have been.*

To see the full COVID-19 Inspection letter, please see:

[COVID-19 inspection: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services - HMICFRS \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/covid-19-inspection-hampshire-and-isle-of-wight-fire-and-rescue-services/)

## **Round 2 Inspection**

The inspection programme was briefly paused following the outbreak of COVID-19 but was re-commenced again in January 2021. Having now combined Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service with the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service, the HMICFRS decided to move us from Tranche 1 to Tranche 3. This meant pre-inspection activity began in January 2022 and fieldwork three months later as part of an 8-week inspection. Pre-inspection activity involved a data return, a document return, and a self-assessment.

The inspection fieldwork for round 2 inspections has changed significantly from round 1. The most significant change is in the timetable, for which the original two-week programme has now been extended to 8 weeks with breaks between some of the weeks. This significant change was made to reduce the high-pressure burden of the inspection on services but also the inspection team. This also means that the inspection team can spend more time scrutinising each area with their diagnostic toolkits. While HMICFRS considers the same questions as Round 1, their approach is far more developed, learning lessons from their first inspections.

The findings of our round 2 inspection will be published in Winter 2022 alongside other Tranche 3 services. The Service will develop an action plan following the publication of the report, which will be developed and considered in conjunction with other activity to inform our subsequent organisational planning. The year 3 Safety Plan improvements, approved by the Fire Authority in February 2022, included the following focus to begin to implement the findings of the reviews we did in 2021/22 and our 2022 inspection by HMICFRS. For more detail please see here: [Appendix A.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Fire Standards**

As part of the reforms for fire and rescue services in England, the Fire Standards Board was created to introduce new standards to the fire sector. The intention being to help drive continual improvement across the services alongside the re-introduction

of inspection arrangements. The mission for the new Fire Standards Board is to oversee the development and maintenance of a suite of professional standards that set out “what good looks like”.

By the end 2021/22, there were 10 approved Fire Standards with many more in development. When a new Standard is being developed, we take a proactive approach by engaging with the consultation process. This gives us an early opportunity to review the proposed Standard and begin to assess our own organisation to identify any gaps. Once the Standard has been approved, we then add this to our Fire Standards Assurance tool where we are able to track appropriate actions to ensure we are compliant against the proposed Standard. This formed a core part of our assurance activity in 2021/22.

As noted in the end of year performance report, 10 national fire standards have been published, covering a wide range of areas, with a total 119 requirements (‘desirable outcomes’) underneath the 10 standards. The Service has undertaken a significant amount of assurance activity to assess our compliance with the standards, which has shown that we have ‘reasonable’ or ‘substantial’ assurance in 97% (116) of the 119 desirable outcomes.

For more information of the Fire Standards, please see:  
[Fire Standards Board](#)

## **Performance Management**

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

For more information on our performance reporting, please see below:

[Agenda for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority on Tuesday, 14th June, 2022, 10.30 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

[Information we publish - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](#)

Each directorate board also scrutinises its performance regularly, through a range of data and information, much of which is visualised and integrated through a wide range of interactive PowerBI performance reports. Some of these dashboards are available for the whole Service whereas others support performance management and monitoring in particular directorates, groups or teams. There is also integrated PowerBI reporting embedded into the aforementioned, refreshed approach to our Strategic Assessment of Risk.

## Learning and Improving

We have the support of policy and guidance with the freedom to use our discretion to do the right thing, learning from ourselves and others.

### Policy, Procedure and Guidance

Our Policy, Procedure and Guidance (PPG) documents capture and define the way our organisation operates and how we provide services and functions.

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

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

Other types of procedure or guidance includes:

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

### National Operational Guidance

National Operational Guidance is developed through the National Fire Chiefs Council in collaboration with each of the UK's fire and rescue services. Their aim is to provide a one-stop shop for good practice operational guidance that can be tailored to local needs. When new guidance becomes available, we assess the gaps in our own current guidance and then work to ensure that we adopt, adapt, and embed these practices in line with the National Fire Standards. Significant ongoing work and assurance activity will continue in 2022/23 in response to National Operational Guidance developments.

This is overseen by our Policy, Planning and Assurance directorate who regularly monitor our progress in policy development to ensure compliance. In addition to adopting any guidance, we also review any National Operational Learning or Joint Operational Learning to ensure we stay at the forefront of the industry. This includes making our own contributions to national learning by submitting our own operational learning to the National Operational Learning Group.

For more information please see:

[Homepage | NFCC CPO \(ukfrs.com\)](https://www.ukfrs.com)

## **Operational Assurance**

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

One of the assurance mechanisms is Operational Assurance Assessments. This is where a Group Manager will visit a Station and run an operational exercise with the crew to assess their performance and address any areas of concern. The assessments recommenced again in April 2021 following a break due to COVID-19 preventative measures. These assessments are to ensure standards are being met and procedures being followed appropriately. These mechanisms also provide crews with an opportunity to feedback any improvements that could be made to policies and procedures. All this information is then assessed by the Operational Assurance Team and improvements made where required.

To provide assurance at incidents we use Tactical Advisors, which attend critical incidents to support our crews. The role of the Tactical Advisor is to monitor the decisions being made by the Incident Commander and provide assistance if required. We have a post incident a debrief process, which also includes any significant events that could impact on our service delivery. Feedback is gathered from all those involved and the Operational Assurance Team will analyse any trends. This information is then presented back to the individuals involved to highlight any areas of performance and to discuss potential solutions. This leads to improvement actions at a policy level as well as the identification of possible risks that may occur again should similar incidents occur in the future.

## **Service Learning**

To further support the debrief process and to widen the potential opportunity for improvements, we launched a new 'Submit Learning' application in 2019/20. This tool enables any member of staff to provide feedback at any time on several different platforms including mobile phones and mobile data terminals in appliances. This enables us to capture real time feedback but also allow people to reflect on situations and feedback at a later time. The tool has been designed to gather

feedback in other areas across the Service, such as lessons learned from project delivery or feedback on HR related investigations.

This is now supported by a Service Learning intranet page which holds key tips and lessons from all our learning. We also have here, a section for 'You said, We did', to help close the loop of actions taken in response to staff feedback.

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

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

## **Audit**

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

Details of our internal audits are reported to the Executive Group and the Authority through our Standards and Governance Committee. This includes the progress of management actions resulting from observations of improvements required, which we monitor closely and report on internally – with members of the Chief Officers Group accountable for the delivery of actions. Our overall assurance rating for 2021/22 was 'Reasonable'; which is a continued improvement compared to previous years. Furthermore, we have seen an improvement in the number of open and overdue actions throughout the course of 2021/22; and continue our positive relationship with SIAP (based on a Memorandum of Understanding between HIWFRA and SIAP).

For more details please see papers submitted to the Standards and Governance Committee, available at: [Agenda for HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee on Friday, 29th July, 2022, 2.00 pm | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Assurance Programme**

In 2021/22, we continued to deliver our Assurance Programme which is a series of assurance activities to ensure services are delivered effectively. To ensure

assurance activities are independent and objective, we have adopted the 'three lines of defence' model which is essential to the overall framework of control:

- The first line of defence can be described as the day-to-day management processes and controls that teams or directorates have in place, including performance management.
- The second line of defence is the governance and oversight arrangements that exist and are specified within clear and signed-off terms of reference for decision-making bodies, such as the Directorate Boards and the Executive Group and the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA).
- The third line of defence is the independent assurance obtained from Internal Audit and third-party assurance providers, such as HMICFRS.

In respect of second line and third line assurance activity, we carry out a range of evaluations, assessments and externally led reviews that are commissioned by Service directorates to provide additional assurance in targeted areas. These reviews are based on a range of quantitative and qualitative data and include key findings, an overall conclusion, and recommendations for improvement. In 2021/22, we carried out an evaluation on the Shared Services Partnership to ensure the services we receive are delivering value for money, as well as undertaking a wide range of other assurance activity. In total, the 2021/22 assurance programme completed 12 assurance activities, such as a Building Risk Review Outcomes evaluation, self-assessment against the NFCC Workforce Maturity Models, and an external review of our People Strategy carried out by external consultant.

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

## **Feedback**

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

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us/get-in-touch/>