



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee

Purpose: Approval

Date: **29 July 2022**

Title: **ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2021/22**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. The Annual Statement of Assurance ('Annual Statement') is a document that is required by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) to provide assurance to local communities and government on financial, governance and operational matters. Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority must publish an Annual Statement which is made accessible to all stakeholders to enable transparency of fire and rescue services in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.
2. This is the first combined Annual Assurance Statement since Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service launched on 1st April 2021 and is a summary of our compliance with statutory obligations through the delivery of a wide range of assurance mechanisms in place to identify risks, areas for improvement, and good practice to disseminate.

BACKGROUND

3. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, published in May 2018, sets out the reason for each Fire and Rescue Service to produce an Annual Statement:

"The statement should outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan – see 4.10 below) prepared by the authority for that period. The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters."

4. The Annual Statement is a retrospective review of the completed financial year. **Appendix A** contains the detailed Annual Statement of Assurance which has been structured, for the reader's benefit, to follow the Safety Plan priorities.
5. The format of the Annual Statement is not prescribed and therefore it is determined by the Fire and Rescue Service to demonstrate to local communities and partner organisations how it fulfils its statutory obligations and activities to make Hampshire a safer place to live, work and travel.

SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

6. The Annual Statement, through the Fire and Rescue Authority, provides assurance to the public on the Fire and Rescue Service's fulfilment of its duties and activities so *Together we make life safer*. Therefore, each of the headings within the Statements of Assurance are aligned to the Safety Plan priorities to demonstrate how we actively meet our statutory obligations using a robust Safety Plan.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no financial implications to the approval of the Annual Statements of Assurance as these are retrospectively looking back at the previous financial year rather than suggesting a future course of action.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

8. There are no impacts to assess as the Annual Statements are retrospectively looking back at the previous financial year rather than suggesting a future course of action.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. The Annual Statement is a legal obligation in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018.

RISK ANALYSIS

10. The Annual Statement is a legal obligation in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018. Therefore, failure to deliver a statement may result in litigation.
11. HMICFRS Inspection commenced in April 2022 and the Annual Statement is one of the documents required for their document review. Failure to deliver a statement may result in reputational damage following an area for

improvement identified by the Inspectorate. Likewise, the Home Office and HMICFRS routinely request and review these documents, so failure to produce and approve them may result in reputational damage.

EVALUATION

12. As there are no future changes because of the Statement, there is no requirement to undertake an evaluation. However, our Statement is written in line with guidance published by the Department of Local Government in 2014 and aligned to the revised National Framework in 2018.

CONCLUSION

13. The Annual Statements of Assurance for 2021/22 provides stakeholders with oversight of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's ability to deliver its core purpose that *Together we make life safer*, and therefore meet the requirements of the 2018 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance be approved by the HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee

APPENDICES ATTACHED

15. Appendix A – Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance 2021/22

BACKGROUND PAPERS

16. [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, May 2018](#)

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