

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 23 September 2020

Subject: Our Plan 2020-24
Annual Report, Statement of Assurance 2019-20 and the Annual Equality Report

Report by: Callum Faint, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

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For: Discussion

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to present Our Plan 2020-24 and the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2019-20.

Recommendation

2. Members of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) are requested to:
 - a) Approve Our Plan 2020-24 and the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2019-20, and authorise the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer to make any minor amendments where necessary; and
 - b) Note the Annual Equality Report will be presented to the Authority at its meeting on 16 December 2020.

Executive Summary

3. Our Plan (attached at Appendix A) is our Corporate and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2020-24 and contains the 2020-24 IRMP proposals approved in February 2020 for implementation by the CFA.
4. The Annual Report for 2019-20 presents a review of the levels of performance that have been achieved during the previous financial year. The publication of the Annual Statement of Assurance is a statutory requirement required in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (both documents are attached at Appendix B).
5. Due to the vacation of a role, the recruitment timescales and the impact of Covid-19 the publication of the Annual Equality Report will be delayed and presented to the Authority at its next meeting on 16 December 2020.

Background

6. The Fire and Rescue Framework for England requires that every fire and rescue service has an Integrated Risk Management Plan. As in previous years this IRMP has been combined with the Service's Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan, known as 'Our Plan' contains the planning framework, the five strategies and the aims, outcomes and objectives of the organisation.
7. Delivery of the strategies is supported by individual District and Department Plans, progress against which is reported to the Senior Management Team and the Corporate Governance Committee.
8. The Fire and Rescue Framework also requires that a Statement of Assurance is published annually by all fire and rescue services. Its purpose is to provide assurance to their community and to Government on financial, governance and operational matters.
9. The CFA publishes an annual report every year, highlighting the previous year's performance and providing information on how it is meeting agreed aims and outcomes.
10. The annual report also contains a number of links to other documents or areas, including the Annual Governance Statement and will include the Annual Statement of Accounts when finalised. There are also links to various other activities and expectations (Operational, Fire and Rescue National framework, Health and Safety) confirming that the CFA complies with these areas in order to discharge all statutory duties.

Report Implications/Impact

11. Legal (including crime and disorder)

The production of an IRMP and an Annual Statement of Assurance are statutory requirements as detailed in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The statement of assurance must be signed by an elected member on behalf of the authority.

12. Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

The Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2019-20 incorporates a section on financial assurance.

13. Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)

Failure to publish a Statement of Assurance would not meet with the statutory requirements of the National Framework.

Publication of the Service's annual performance figures mitigates any organisational reputational risk and that of not meeting the Local Governance Transparency Code 2015.

14. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

The relevant departments will deal with any actions arising from performance or assurance outcomes.

15. Environmental

The documents will only be available in an electronic format unless hard copies are specifically requested.

16. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

Publication of these documents meets the aim of 'providing assurance' by ensuring that we have well-informed staff and communities.

Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix A – Our Plan 2020-24

Appendix B – Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2019-20.

Officers to Contact

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