

Appendix A



Annual Assurance Statement 2018/19

April 2018 to March 2019

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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 2018/19.

Covering 3,770 square kilometres (1,455 square miles), Hampshire is the largest county in the South East of England and home to a population of more than 1.85 million people. Hampshire is one of the oldest counties in England with history that can be traced back more than 1,000 years. The geography of the county is mixed with both large urban areas, such as Southampton, Portsmouth, and Winchester, and an abundance of countryside.

Rural Hampshire covers 83% of the county with urban areas accounting for the remaining 17%. Not only is Hampshire home to cities and towns, coastal areas and rural landscape it is also home to two airports, two major motorways, two major ports and two national parks.

We are here to make life safer for everyone in Hampshire. 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 of this we continue to look for more ways to improve the safety of people in Hampshire as we move towards 2020 and beyond. This is about more than just fire. We are also passionate about collaborating and working ever more closely with our partners to further enhance the safety of the county.

We believe in continuous improvement 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 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 Service plan.

We are very proud of our past performance; however, we will not stand still and are always developing new initiatives and seeking ways to deliver the best services with greater value for money.

Governance

The Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is a combined authority made up of 10 elected members who collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries in delivery of the Fire Service Act 2004. Our Fire Authority is made up of 8 Hampshire County Council members, 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 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:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/who-we-are/hampshire-fire-and-rescue-authority/constitution/>

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 Fire and Rescue Authority 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 & 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.

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: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/statement-of-accounts/>

Combined Fire Authority (CFA)

In addition to our current combined Fire Authority, we are looking to combine further with the Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority. This was agreed by both Authorities on 24th January 2019 and a combination order request has been submitted to the Home Office. We are anticipating this combination to take place beginning April 2021.

This combination will enhance public safety, support and enable 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.

The new CFA, will be one organisation with a single purpose. Local accountability of the FRS on the Isle of Wight will transfer from the Isle of Wight Council into a larger Combined Fire Authority. This new governing body will have 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.

A new CFA would also create greater resilience, the removal of duplication, enhanced capacity and ensure continuous improvement, whilst enabling a common approach consistently applied across a wider area. Such an approach will offer improved learning opportunities and greater scope for the sharing of specialisms across the area. These would all support improved public safety.

The business case for the proposal has been approved by the Home Secretary. Our expectation is that a Shadow Fire Authority will be established from April 2020, with a view to full implementation and 'Go-Live' of the new Combined Fire Authority for the areas of Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton in April 2021.

Policy & Planning

Our aim is 'to make life safer'. To deliver on our aim we have a Service Plan that began in 2015 and will run until 2020. This has been supported by several more detailed plans and strategies that have ensured we met our obligations to reduce risk through the delivery of cost-effective services.

Service Plan

Our Service Plan clearly laid out our vision to work smarter, be more efficient, and to make life safer for everyone in Hampshire. We looked to create safer communities through the strengthening of our Service. This was set out into nine overarching priorities:

Safer:

- Building Resilience
- Creating Safer Communities
- Responding to Incidents

Stronger:

- Assets & Money
- Communications & Engagement
- Knowledge
- Our People & Leadership
- Technology
- Working with Partners

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/plan/>

Under each priority there were a number of key deliverables that had been identified through an assessment of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These were regularly reviewed and annually reported to the Service Management Team now the Executive Group and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

For more details on our progress against the key deliverables of the Service Plan, please see: <http://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=5593&Ver=4>

As this Service Plan comes to an end in March 2020 a new plan will be developed in 2019/20 with a revised methodology. We review risk regularly, so we can work out how to best protect our communities. Our plans and strategies are formed around the large amount of data we collate and analyse. This then informs our Strategic Assessment which adds context and detail to aid our planning process. We will then develop an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which identifies potential dangers that could affect communities and how we can address them. Our Service Plan will then give details of how we will achieve the strategy laid out in the IRMP.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

Our new IRMP is being developed in 2019/20 ready for the start of April 2020. This process will involve the new methodology as articulated above and will be undergoing a period of consultation with the public and our own teams, with the IRMP public consultation commencing in the autumn of 2019. This IRMP will be a joint IRMP with the Isle of Wight

Fire & Rescue Service as we establish greater alignment in preparation for the Combined Fire Authority.

The current IRMP, due to end March 2020, sets out our goals to deliver some of the Safer priorities of the Service Plan and how we can best match our resources to the risks that face our communities. This involves:

- Identifying existing and potential risks to the communities within Hampshire;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of current preventative and response arrangements;
- Identifying opportunities for improvements and determine policies and standards for prevention and intervention; and
- Providing the resource requirements needed to meet these policies and standards.

To produce the IRMP for the future, we have, reviewed every angle of our Service including how we respond to incidents, how we can create safer communities and how we can help build community resilience. This extensive piece of work was called the Risk Review project.

This began in February 2014, the Service set out to review all the risks in Hampshire, including population demographics, businesses and crime levels. By September 2014 we had scenarios for change, which were then put to a cross-section of our staff for feedback. After gathering this data, we took this forward into the creation of our initial draft proposals. We looked to members of the Service, and their representative bodies, to give individual feedback and a view to the help shape the proposals going forward to the next phase. In 2015, we again put our proposals back to our staff so that they could understand how the process was developing. It allowed staff a further opportunity to have their say on the vision for the future of their local fire station.

The proposals were then reviewed by the Service Management Team and by our governing body the Hampshire and Fire Rescue Service Authority. Following the review, we entered a 12-week consultation period, beginning in September 2015, which gathered input and opinions from all of our key stakeholder groups from across the county. The consultation closed on 4 December 2015 and the proposals were then amended and approved by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority on the 24 February 2016.

In March 2016, the Safer Hampshire consultation was awarded a certificate of best practice from The Consultation Institute
(<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=12485>)

To view our IRMP please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=13820>

Following the outcomes of the Risk Review consultation, we set up a programme to deliver the improvements called the Service Delivery Redesign. This set out a number of work packages required to deliver the proposals. These were managed by an Integrated Delivery Board and regular updates are reported to the Service Management Team and now the Executive Group and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

Operations

Whilst our improvement activity is aimed at making life safer, it does so by adjusting the way we deliver our front-line services. Therefore, to ensure successful outcomes for our communities it is extremely important that we deliver the highest quality services.

Prevent & 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 have a well-developed 'risk based' inspection programme. Our Risk based inspection programme is aimed at delivering key messages to potentially high-risk business premises. We do this 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 aren't considered.

In 2018/19, we carried out 923 fire safety audits of business premise owners fire risk assessments and control measures to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Order 2005.

In addition to this, we provide business fire safety advice using the Primary Authority scheme. This gives businesses the right to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority. This enables us to deliver robust and reliable advice for a business to standardise fire safety across their sites, through our assured advice and recommendations.

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

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

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 & 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 & 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.

Our Safe & Well Falls Risk Assessment uses National Institute of Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, go direct to General Practitioners and establishes eligibility for our 'Safety through Education Exercise and Resilience (STEER)' course, by identifying vulnerable people and preventing harm.

Another tool in which we provide home safety advice is through our 'Safe & Sound' survey. 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 & Well visit may be required.

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

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

We also deliver a range of interventions through our Children and Young People Teams:

- 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 and educational website:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/kidzone-and-schools/>

Furthermore, our Arson Task Force take a lead on 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.

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 a number of locations including 51 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 county's fire stations consist of:

- 5 fire stations staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by immediate response firefighters.
- 38 fire stations with around the clock cover provided by on-call firefighters who live or work within four minutes of the station and respond at the time of an incident.
- 8 fire stations with 24-hour coverage, including both immediate and on-call firefighters.

As well as our frontline fire appliances, we also have a number of 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. Specialist capabilities in Hampshire 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

In 2018/19 we attended 3,398 fires, 9,214 non-fire emergency incidents (such as road traffic collisions) and 7,230 false alarms. Further information on our performance is outlined in our mid-year and annual performance reports to HFRA.

Resilience

Emergency services are facing an increased variety of demanding situations. 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 National incidents that may arise in support of this initiative.

For more information, please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/civil-resilience/>

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 co-ordination 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.

For more information on our Local Resilience Forum, please see: www.hampshireprepared.co.uk

As well as supporting our communities prepare for wide spread incidents, 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 during periods of disruption and high demand.

Collaboration

We work closely, on a day to day basis, with our blue light colleagues from other fire & rescue, police and ambulance services. A formal executive board for blue light collaboration between Hampshire police, South Central Ambulance Service and HFRS coordinates 20 initiatives to deliver greater partnership working (i.e. the coordinated response to high risk missing persons). We also have excellent relationships with our colleagues in Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council, Isle of Wight Council. and other local authorities and agencies across Hampshire. We believe that through collaboration we can maximise the benefits of our collective offering to the public and therefore, Working with Partners is a key Service Plan priority for us.

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 & 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 best resource for an incident is identified and despatched. Devon & Somerset, Dorset, and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services joined Hampshire to form the Networked Fire Control Services Partnership, 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 2018/19 we attended 5,221 medical co-responder 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.

Our Senior Officers also lead the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) as their Chief Officers, in a unique partnership arrangement, the first of its kind in the country. We continue to work closely with IWFRS to find new ways of delivering services together more efficiently and support them in dealing with large and complex incidents. One of these ways includes handling 999 calls and mobilising IWFRS appliances through our Control centre. Further alignment will continue under these arrangements until April 2021, when our two Authorities combine.

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 Fire and Rescue Service
- Highways England

For more details please see:

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

We share many of our premises across these partners but most significantly we share our headquarters with Hampshire Constabulary. 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, reduce premise related costs.

Hampshire 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 and Hampshire Constabulary 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.

Performance & Assurance

Successful performance management relies on effective monitoring that drives informed decision making. Therefore, we ensure performance is appropriately reported and improvement actions are driven through transparent scrutiny. This starts at a local level with individual performance management supported by a personal development review process. Personal objectives are set against team plans which in turn support the Service Plan priorities.

Performance

Our strategic performance is reported to the Executive Group and to the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority twice a year. This report shows our progress against key performance indicators. These measures are made up of the Service-wide impacts, our response standard to critical incidents and other areas, including staff well-being. These measures help us focus our change activity across all our Service Plan priority areas. By 'Strengthening' the organisation we aim to deliver 'Safer' outcomes and the core measures are the impacts of those activities.

For more information on our performance reporting, please see:

<http://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=5593&Ver=4>

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) and they were tasked with providing an inspection programme to begin in the financial year 2018/19. To help us prepare for this inspection we employed a Group Manager to operate as our Service Liaison Officer and provided additional support from various teams across the Service.

Our first inspection took place in June 2018. The inspection looked at three overarching pillars which are supported by many diagnostics and more detailed sub-diagnostics. The outcome of the inspection, reported in December 2018, was as follows in terms of ratings:

- 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 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 full report, please see:

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

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 & Governance Committee on a regular basis.

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 a number of 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. We also have Station Commander Peer Reviews, where Station Commanders will visit other stations to assess their inventories, vehicles and their personal protective equipment. This is 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.

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 are able to 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 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 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 who also assist us in the development of future audit plans.

Details of our internal audits are reported to the Authority through our Standards & Governance Committee. This includes the progress of management actions resulting from observations of improvements required, which we monitor closely and also report on internally. Our overall assurance rating for 2018/19 was 'limited'.

For more details please see papers submitted to the Standards & Governance Committee, available at: <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=178>

Transparency

The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 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 1998 and future General Data Protection Regulations due to come into effect May 2018.

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-we-are-performing/open-data/>

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:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us/freedom-of-information-application/>

Feedback

We also encourage feedback from our communities to help us improve our performance. Any issues raised are assigned 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 annual reports are discussed at our Executive Group meeting. For more details regarding feedback, please see: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us/get-in-touch/>

People & Organisational Development (POD)

Our People Strategy described what was required of our employees and aimed to meet the changing needs and expectations of society and future opportunities for Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. The role of the firefighter and indeed of the Service has dramatically changed over the years, we are no longer a one dimensional 'one size fits all' Service. The rate of change has particularly sped up in the last couple of years.

Following the HMICFRS outcomes and in support of the new IRMP and subsequent Service Plans that will begin in April 2020, we are going to develop a new People & Organisational Development Directorate which will be accompanied by a new strategy. This strategy will encompass the following areas:

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

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 at our Resource Management Group. This Group 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. In 2018/19 we launched a new campaign called '*Feel the burn*' which is focused around encouraging more females to apply for firefighter roles.

We believe having an inclusive, engaged workforce means better outcomes for our communities. We run annual conferences, staff cultural surveys and focus groups to understand and discuss the issues facing our teams. The results of these help to shape our People Strategy and provide our leaders with crucial insight into how we can better support and equip our teams.

Finance

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 worse 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 Fire and Rescue Authority. Progress reports monitor the outcomes of any income generation or cost saving improvements and are used to make appropriate adjustments to future budgets.

For more details on our budget for 2019/20, please see:

<https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/>

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 & corruption and a Register of Interest and a register of Gifts & Hospitality. These robust systems are used for identifying and evaluating all significant financial and operational risks to the Authority on an integrated basis. Performance against this framework is assessed using an Assurance Framework Survey, the recording and investigation of suspected incidents and a review from our Internal Auditors into directorship of external companies that the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority has made payments to. Based on these controls, no changes have been made to the strategy, which we have assessed to be working appropriately.

For more details please see: <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-we-are-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/financial-regulations/>

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 Fire and Rescue Authority every year:

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

Budget management during 2018/19 has allowed an underspend to be achieved at year end which will help to fund the Service priorities and enable the key changes required to make budget reductions at the same time as service improvements. 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. For more details of our Statement of Accounts, please see: <https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/how-were-performing/our-performance/budget-accounts-and-regulations/statement-of-accounts/>

Summary

2018/19 has been a significant year of activity with the introduction of the HMICFRS inspection programme. On the whole the outcomes of our first inspection were good but there were some clear areas of improvement that have been identified including one 'cause for concern'. With our restructured Service, including the new People & Organisational Development (POD) directorate, we continue to respond positively to these issues raised and make the necessary improvements.

Our approach to these improvements has begun at the highest level of the organisation by assigning each diagnostic that requires improvement with a Strategic Lead from our Executive Group. It will be their responsibility with the support of action owners primarily from our Chief Officers Group, to ensure that plans are delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner.

In addition to this, our overall internal audit opinion was 'limited'. This highlighted some concerns regarding some of our risk management controls within different areas of the Service. As part of our planning cycle, we will be implementing a new risk management framework following the delivery of our new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). We will also further develop our relationship with Internal Audit and make amendments to our controls in order to improve the overall and individual audit assurance ratings.

Our new IRMP, covering both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, will be developed in 2019/20 to be launched April 2020. This will set our strategic objectives which our subsequent Service Plans will aim to achieve over a five-year period. In addition to developing our new plans, we will also be reflecting back at our Service Plan 2015 to 2020 to see what benefits have been achieved and what lessons need to be carried forward into our new planning cycle.

Another key event in 2018/19 was the approval of a combined Fire Authority with the Isle of Wight by both the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Isle of Wight Council. This has now set in motion plans that are being developed to ensure alignment and a smooth transition come April 2021.