



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

HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee

Purpose: Approval

Date: **27 September 2023**

Title: **Annual Assurance Statement 2022/2023**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. The Annual Assurance 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 and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) must publish an Annual Assurance Statement which is made accessible to all stakeholders to enable transparency. The Annual Assurance Statement is a retrospective look back at the previous year, therefore the statement presented to the Authority for approval today is for the period April 2022 to March 2023.

BACKGROUND

2. The Fire and Rescue National Framework published in May 2018 sets out the reason for each Fire and Rescue Service to produce an Annual Assurance 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 (eg. 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.”

3. The Annual Assurance Statement is a retrospective review of the completed financial year April-March. Appendix A contains the detailed Annual Assurance Statement, which has been structured to follow the Safety Plan priorities.

4. The format of the Annual Assurance Statement is not prescribed. Each Fire and Rescue Service can determine their own preferred way to compile the Annual Assurance Statement 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

5. The Annual Assurance 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 which result in *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

6. There are no financial implications to the approval of the Annual Assurance Statement. It is a retrospective look back at the previous financial year rather than suggesting a future course of action.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

RISK ANALYSIS

9. The Annual Assurance Statement is a legal obligation in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. Therefore, failure to publish a statement may result in litigation.
10. HMICFRS can use the Annual Assurance Statement as part of the inspection process. Failure to publish a statement may result in reputational damage. Likewise, the Home Office routinely request and review these documents, so failure to produce and approve them may result in reputational damage.

EVALUATION

11. A formal evaluation is not required for the Annual Assurance Statement as it is a retrospective look back at the previous year. Some activities

described within the Annual Assurance Statement may be subject to evaluation as part of their own process.

12. However, the Annual Assurance Statement is written in line with guidance published by the Department of Local Government in 2014 and aligned to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England in 2018. The Learning and Assurance team will ensure any changes to legislation result in an evaluation of the way the Annual Assurance Statement is complied.

CONCLUSION

13. The Annual Assurance Statement for 2022/23 provides stakeholders with oversight of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority's ability to deliver its core purpose *Together we make life safer*. The approval and subsequent publishing of the Annual Assurance Statement will meet the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service Annual Assurance Statement 2022/2023 be approved by the HIWFRA Standards and Governance Committee

APPENDICES ATTACHED

15. Appendix A – Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Annual Assurance Statement 2022/2023

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Contact: Stew Adamson, Director of Policy, Planning and Assurance
stew.adamson@hantsfire.gov.uk, 07918 887596