



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Annual Statement of Assurance 2021-22



Devon and Somerset
Fire & Rescue Authority

16/08/2022

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1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (“the Authority”) recognises that good governance supports the setting of clear objectives, effective management of risk to delivery of their objectives, delivery of defined performance standards, accountability in the use of public money, continued public engagement and helps to deliver the Authority’s vision and defined outcomes for the community that the Authority serves.
- 1.2. The Authority is responsible for:
 - Ensuring that there is a sound system of governance in place.
 - Ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.
 - Meeting its duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
 - Preparing an annual governance statement in support of its Statement of Accounts in line with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015. This is an expression of the measures taken to ensure appropriate business practice, high standards of conduct and sound governance.
 - Publishing an annual Statement of Assurance as required by The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (May 2018). The statement should outline the way in which the Authority and its Fire and Rescue Service has had regard to the Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan) prepared by the Authority for that period. Each Authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters.
- 1.3. The Authority has agreed that the most appropriate way to meet both the National Framework and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 requirements is through the creation of one assurance report entitled ‘Annual Statement of Assurance’. The Annual Statement of Assurance details the approach for how the Authority has developed and applied its governance framework in accordance with statutory responsibilities.

2 Operational

Statutory Responsibility

- 2.1. The Authority functions within a clearly defined statutory and policy framework. The key documents setting this out are:
 - Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
 - Civil Contingencies Act 2004
 - Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

- Localism Act 2011
- Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018

2.2. In addition, other key statutes include:

- Local Government Act 1972
- Local Government Finance Act 1988
- Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- Local Government Act 2003

2.3. Within this statutory framework, the Authority has three main responsibilities: to determine a strategic policy agenda for its area; set a budget to fund delivery of the policy agenda; and to undertake scrutiny to ensure that intended outcomes are being achieved efficiently, effectively and in accordance with statutory requirements. The Authority creates the organisational capacity to 'operationalise' these responsibilities through the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (the Service), which is led by the Chief Fire Officer.

Planning, Performance and Continuous Improvement

- 2.4. For 2021-2022, the Authority's strategic plans were detailed in two key corporate documents: the [Integrated Risk Management Plan](#) and the [Fire & Rescue Plan](#) (with supporting strategies including the [Safer Together Programme](#)).
- 2.5. During 2021-22 work was undertaken to develop and consult on the [Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27](#) which will replace the Integrated Risk Management Plan from April 2022. The Community Risk Management Plan requires the Authority to determine and analyse the risks present within the communities that it serves and is the Service's statement to the public about how its Prevention, Protection and Response activities will address these risks.
- 2.6. The [Fire & Rescue Plan 2018-22](#) details the Service's strategic intent for improvement, and contains the Vision, Purpose and Values by which its staff are encouraged to operate. The plan focuses on six priorities: service delivery, people, value for money and use of resources, governance, collaboration, and digital transformation. As the period that this plan covers now approaches its end, a review is taking place of progress against it. This, along with the introduction of the new Community Risk Management Plan, will determine the shape of the next portfolio of change for Service Improvement.

- 2.7. In 2019, the [Safer Together Programme](#) was borne out of the strategic change and improvement projects identified as necessary for the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Fire & Rescue plans. The programme sets out the prioritised and sequenced work required to achieve the optimal balance between efficiency and effectiveness of the Service provided to its communities. The programme is governed by a programme board, chaired by an Executive Board member, with the constituent projects each having their own project boards and jointly governed by the Portfolio Steering Group and Portfolio Board as the governance of Service Improvement moves to a portfolio approach.
- 2.8. The Service's investment in a new web-based planning and performance management system (InPhase) has provided the opportunity to undertake a complete review of corporate planning. In addition, investment in a risk management software 'SharpCloud', has seen significant improvements in the way in which risk is assessed and mitigated. Alongside the development of the Community Risk Management Plan, these have improved coordination between objectives and outcomes. Development of the new systems continues but requires greater investment to realise their full potential. Once mature, it is anticipated that InPhase will be the focal point for strategic decision making and fostering a culture of performance-led, evidence-based thinking.
- 2.9. The Service continuously strives to improve. This is done in several ways, through horizon scanning for emerging risks and opportunities, to reviewing processes and policies to ensure that the Service is delivering in an efficient and effective manner and delivering value for money to its communities.

Operational Assurance

- 2.10. In accordance with the Authority's commitment to public and staff safety, the Operational Assurance team ensures that all learning submitted nationally is positively utilised to review current Service ways of working, implement Service improvements where necessary and to raise awareness across the Service. National and regional learning is fed in and out of the Service via several different pathways which include:
- National Operational Learning.
 - Joint Organisational Learning.
 - Coroner's Regulation 28 - Prevention of Future Death reports.
 - Health and Safety Executive recommendations.
 - Local Resilience Forum debriefing focus group.
 - South West Regional Operational Assurance Group.
- 2.11. The Operational Assurance team is a key stakeholder in a number of these groups which enables the Service to play a vital role in ensuring that all learning received drives positive organisational change in a timely manner. The team also strives to promote a culture where all internal learning and best practice, identified from a variety of activities linked to operational response, is shared, and communicated in a way that supports self-development and organisational improvement, including regular updates on internal social media, a dedicated intranet repository for employees to use, and via posters and printed media for stations.

2.12. A process has been developed to enable the effective management of identified learning and outcomes which is achieved through:

- Operational monitoring and feedback.
- Debriefing incidents and training exercises.
- National and regional learning.
- Audit and engagement with all key stakeholders within the Service.

2.13. The Operational Assurance team has adapted its working practices throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure a minimal impact on the Service's ability to capture and manage organisational learning and best practice.

Training and Development – Training Academy

2.14. The Service, through its Training Academy, has enabled the delivery of quality assured training to its staff to improve safety and overall effectiveness, which is underwritten by the ISO 9001 (2015) Quality Management Framework.

2.15. 2021-22 has been another challenging year dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Training is an essential activity, helping to keep staff and the public safe from harm. Following the initial lockdown in March 2020, the Training Academy introduced innovative ways of training and continued to deliver training throughout the lockdown period. The Training Academy then commenced a planned and phased resumption of face-to-face training, focusing initially on high-risk activities such as Breathing Apparatus, Incident Command and Driving.

2.16. The Service has put strict safety measures in place, supported by risk assessments, to make sure that all training venues are COVID-19 secure. This enabled other elements of training to be gradually re-introduced. As the country has moved in and out of lockdown, the Training Academy has strived to continue to provide as much training as possible, maintaining the overall focus on staff safety and welfare.

2.17. The Service continues to invest in new vehicles to assist in the delivery of training, such as two additional mobile Incident Command Training Vehicles which have received excellent feedback. The e-learning system continues to grow enabling students access to theoretical elements of training from a range of access points, for example tablets and laptops. This enables a greater focus on practical based training on drill night sessions.

2.18. The Training Academy introduced virtual face to face training delivered by Academy instructors when station drill nights were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This maintained competence with direct contact to Academy instructors and staff able to access from home.

2.19. The Training Academy also introduced 'Flexi Friday' where they host weekly Continuing Professional Development training for Station Managers and above in a range of subjects. This was well received and continues now that business has returned to normal.

Commitment to Health & Safety

- 2.20. The Authority recognises and accepts its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others who may be affected by its activities. To achieve this, the Service looks to meet all relevant requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (together with all other statutory provisions associated with it) and support staff in meeting their obligations under the Act and subordinate legislation.
- 2.21. Health, Safety and Wellbeing is a key theme within the People Strategy. The Strategy sets out key areas for focused work designed to achieve the aim of this element of the strategy. Progress towards achieving the aims is monitored via the People Strategy monitoring group. Preparation for the development of the 2022-2026 People Strategy has commenced.
- 2.22. Detailed health, safety and welfare arrangements are set out in Service policies developed to take account of relevant legislation and guidance, including the Health and Safety Executive's HS(G)65 methodology. The policies provide staff with relevant and comprehensive information on the risks they face, and the preventative, and protective measures required to control them. They also identify the roles and responsibilities of duty holders who have a responsibility to ensure that measures are implemented. Additional safe systems of work, risk assessments and guidance for staff have been developed and maintained to support staff during the Service response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.23. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the Service's Health and Safety Management procedures are in place; this includes proactive and reactive monitoring. The process includes air sampling on station of diesel engine exhaust emissions, legionella testing on Service facilities, provision of accident and near miss incident data to the Strategic Safety Committee for review, annual completion of premises Health, Safety and Welfare Assessment Report Forms, annual review of fire risk assessments for Service premises, COVID-19 Secure audits and a means to fully audit the Service's Health and Safety management systems.
- 2.24. Procedures are in place to report all safety events, allocate an investigator and where required make recommendations for corrective action to be completed. Functional and process issues were encountered with the software solution for reporting safety events, which impacted on the recording and management of safety event investigations as well as the ability to monitor accidents through trend analysis. A replacement Safety Event Management System to enable this process to work more effectively was implemented in February 2022.
- 2.25. Effective management of, and learning from, safety events also relies upon the right cultural conditions to support this. Cultural work continued to progress during 2021-22 through the 'Safe To' initiative, aimed at developing and supporting a positive culture of psychological safety. The work in this area will continue to develop and expand throughout 2022-23.

2.26. The Service's commitment to health and safety has been further enhanced through:

- Establishment of health and safety as an agenda item on the Executive Board meeting schedule which includes routine reporting following each Strategic Safety Committee meeting.
- Creation of a strategic thematic health and safety risk register which is monitored monthly and reported to the Strategic Safety Committee.
- Investment in additional resource for the Health and Safety team.

Environmental Management

2.27. On 23rd October 2020 the Authority supported the declaration of a Climate Emergency and agreed the [Environmental Strategy](#). Measures on the Service's environmental performance including the calculation of carbon footprint (scope 1 and 2) have been developed and will be reported in the statement of accounts.

2.28. A range of departmental activities have taken place to progress specific initiatives in the environmental action plan. An Initial Environmental Review was commissioned to support the Service's understanding of environmental legislation and compliance in relation to Service activities and the action plan will now be aligned to ISO14001. The Service will maintain and update its Environmental legislation and aspects register to capture the Service's interactions with the environment and its impact (inputs and outputs) as part of control measures for ISO14001.

Fleet, Equipment and Water Supplies

2.29. A Fleet and Equipment Strategy and Workstream are in place to deliver the two main investment projects which are currently in progress: the Fleet Capital Programme and the Asset Management Project.

2.30. The Service adheres to relevant legislation and the National Fire Chiefs Council Best Practice Manual for the maintenance of Fire Service Vehicles.

2.31. In 2020 the service upgraded its fleet management system as part of the asset management project and have planned the equipment management system upgrade for 2022.

2.32. Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act the Service has a duty to secure Water. Adopting the National Guidance Document for provision of Water for fire-fighting purposes (2017), the Service operates a risk-based approach for the 70,000+ hydrant management and maintenance requirements.

Collaborative and Partnership Working

2.33. The Service continues to strengthen its partnership working with other fire and rescue services, blue light services, local authorities, community groups and other organisations by working to common objectives at the local, regional and national level. The improvement of prevention and protection work is a major priority, and the Service also contributes to wider community objectives identified in Local Area Agreements where appropriate.

- 2.34. During the first half of 2021 the Service lent significant mutual aid support to Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service in the planning for, and delivery of, specialist response capabilities for the G7 Summit in Carbis Bay.
- 2.35. Collaborative working continues to grow through local partnerships and the South West Emergency Services Collaboration (SWESC). The SWESC Forum meets every six months and has set three regional priorities that will drive improvement at local (organisational) level. The DSFRA Chair leads this meeting, supported by DSFRS Chief Fire Officer who manages the arrangements. The Service continues to share good practice and to scope areas of joint improvement. The recent pilot for Community Responders (the dual role of a firefighter and special constable) is an example of innovative working where shared learning and comparison of benefits with other shared roles is undertaken.
- 2.36. In 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, a national Tripartite agreement was established between the Fire Brigades Union, The National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association. This was a strategic framework where a number of activities were agreed at a national level for local implementation. This included providing staff to support ambulance personnel, as well as to provide support through Nightingale hospital transfers, and to complete face-fit testing of personal protective equipment for other services and for care home staff. The Service also provided driver familiarisation training packages and driving assessments for ambulances to Service employees, and to those from other fire and rescue services.
- 2.37. Although the Tripartite agreement came to an end in 2021, the Service through an arrangement known as Operation Braidwood, continued to support South Western Ambulance Service by providing Firefighters to drive ambulances and support medical intervention; this is expected to continue until Easter 2022. DSFRS and South Western Ambulance Service are helping to create a collaborative legacy with the aim to save lives by working together.
- 2.38. The Service has successfully completed the trial of Community Responders which has resulted in making the shared roles permanent.
- 2.39. The Police and Fire Community Support Officer roles which were originally a trial, have been maintained in North Devon. The Service is seeking to expand this arrangement across a wider area.
- 2.40. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Service has provided support to the Local Resilience Forums, which included establishing a Strategic Community Support cell, and a volunteer co-ordination cell for Devon, Cornwall, and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum. The Chief Fire Officer represents fire and rescue services in the region at a regional strategic oversight group where various senior officers in the health, local authority, military and emergency services at local/regional level work together to improve the collective system, using the benefits of closer working during Covid to drive benefit post the Covid pandemic peak.

Co-Responding

2.41. The Authority has a formal partnership agreement in place with South Western Ambulance Service to provide a co-responder medical response (an initial medical provision to stabilise casualties in life-threatening emergencies prior to the arrival of the ambulance service). Work has commenced to review training, procedures, and equipment, with the goal of improving clinical governance as well as improving efficiency and effectiveness.

Civil Contingencies

2.42. The Emergency Planning Team is the primary means through which the Service meets the Authority's obligations as laid out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and elements of the Fire Services Act 2004.

2.43. Effective arrangements are in place to collaborate with partners through Local Resilience Forums and other national, regional and local networks dealing with resilience and emergency and contingency planning arrangements. This includes collaboration with the South West Malicious Risk Working Group, Counter-Terrorism Police South West, and other local and national constabularies (Devon & Cornwall Police, Avon and Somerset Police, British Transport Police and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary).

2.44. The Emergency Planning Team also works in close collaboration with the Service's National Interagency Liaison Officers Team in respect of risk, response and contingency arrangements for key events or sites of sensitivity (local and critical national infrastructure, hazardous materials etc).

National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers, Marauding Terrorist Attacks, Hazardous Materials and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Capability

2.45. In line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles, the National Inter-Agency Liaison Officer (NILO) cadre supports collaborative working with key partner organisations. NILOs provide specialist advice about the Service's operational capability and capacity to partners and supports both the planning for intelligence led operations and the response to dynamic incidents.

2.46. Whilst the national planning assumption is for a 'lite' Marauding Terrorist Attack team to be in place in Devon and Somerset, the Service leadership supported by the Fire Authority have increased capability above this minimum provision and has trained additional responders in both Plymouth as well as in Exeter to help improve attendance times and casualty outcomes.

2.47. This Marauding Terrorist Attack capability has been established to support specialist emergency service response alongside Police and Ambulance responders in response to a marauding terrorist attack incident within the Authority area or, under National Mutual Aid, to any other location within the UK as requested. The overall aim is to save life, and the two main strands of fire and rescue support during this type of incident are for casualty care and fire hazards management.

2.48. The Marauding Terrorist Attack capability is made up of two key groups, NILO qualified officers who would adopt the command role and Specialist Response Team Operatives. Both groups undergo specialist training for responding to the Marauding Terrorist Attack threat.

2.49. With strategic funding support from the Service, the Hazardous Materials capability has invested in a set of Raman (laser) and Infrared spectroscopy chemical identification equipment for the Service. This equipment will bridge the gap between the existing hazard classification field testing capability of hazmat advisers in the Service and the National Resilience Detection Identification and Monitoring capability that is hosted in the South West Region by Avon Fire and Rescue Service. This will enable swifter resolution of incidents involving unknown chemical substances and reduced disruption to the community.

National Resilience

2.50. The National Resilience Capabilities are comprised of several specialist capabilities which are funded by the English Government via lead Government department the Home Office and hosted within English Fire and Rescue Services.

2.51. The National Resilience Capabilities hosted by the Service are Urban Search & Rescue, High Volume Pumping, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (explosion) Mass Decontamination and Command & Control (Enhanced Logistics Support).

2.52. The Capabilities are managed and assured on behalf of the Home Office by the National Resilience Assurance Team, supported under a Lead Authority arrangement by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

Over the Border Mutual Aid Arrangements

2.53. Sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 allow mutual assistance arrangements to be agreed with neighbouring Services to improve resilience and capacity in border areas. The Authority has in place contractual agreements with neighbouring fire and rescue authorities for response to incidents requiring their support.

2.54. In addition to sections 13 and 16, there is a partnership agreement between the Authority and Dorset and Wiltshire and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Services to provide a common, networked mobilising system with the principle of ensuring that the response mobilised to an incident is always the nearest and most appropriate resource(s) based upon travel time and attributes (i.e. having the necessary skills or equipment) to deal with the incident. This Networked Fire Services Partnership (the Partnership) also has the benefit of providing business continuity so that in the event of one control room experiencing a high volume of calls or being unable to function, either of the other two control rooms can conduct all of their emergency business, including call handling, mobilising resources, and supporting incidents.

- 2.55. An Information Governance Partnership Group meets regularly to review the governance procedures that are required under legislation and monitor current and emerging risks to the information that the Partnership system holds. A risk remediation plan is in place to ensure that security risks are managed effectively and there is an annual IT health check for assurance. This supports the Authority's compliance with the Airwave Code of Connection, and the upcoming Emergency Services Network which is due to replace the Airwave service.
- 2.56. Subsequently the Partnership has committed to scoping further collaboration opportunities that will support all three Services in achieving increased effectiveness and efficiency as well as sharing and developing good practice with regards to staff issues.
- 2.57. The Partnership has a formal structure for the programme, continuing to explore areas such as Fire Investigation and future control arrangements.

Business Continuity and Resilience

- 2.58. The Service has a strategic business continuity policy which sets out the corporate business continuity management structure and goals for business continuity assessment, training and exercising. The Service also has a business continuity framework which details how it will respond to specific disruptions.
- 2.59. The Service has 36 tactical business continuity plans in place to ensure that it is prepared for a range of threats and challenges. Business continuity management processes are also undertaken so that the Service can continue the delivery of services following a disruptive incident.
- 2.60. The Business Continuity Manager is responsible for providing specialist advice and guidance on business continuity management issues, including the co-ordination, development, implementation and review of business continuity plans, processes and procedures.
- 2.61. The Service has a statutory responsibility to conduct business continuity as mandated in The Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Service embraces the principles of 'Plan, Do, Check, and Act' and aligns with aspects of the ISO: 22301 (Societal Security – business continuity management systems and requirements).
- 2.62. The COVID-19 pandemic business continuity event has provided the Service with the unique opportunity to review and ensure that all department and strategic plans pull in the same direction moving forward.

3 Governance

Code of Corporate Governance

- 3.1 The Authority has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / Society of Local Authority Chief Executives framework “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”. A copy of the Code is on the Authority’s [website](#) or can be obtained from the Clerk to the Authority. This Annual Statement of Assurance explains how the Authority has complied with the Code.
- 3.2 In addition to internal governance systems (including internal and external audit), the Service is inspected approximately every two years by a large number of inspectors who spend a significant amount of time in the Service, interviewing staff and examining data to inform their independent view. A report is produced which assesses the Service against three criteria: efficiency, effectiveness and people. This provides Fire Authority members with an external inspector’s view of performance (see more detail below).

Review of Effectiveness

- 3.1. The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness is informed by the work of senior managers within the Service who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, and by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.
- 3.2. The 2021-22 review identified the following key elements to the Authority’s governance arrangements:
 - (1) The Authority was constituted under the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2006. The Authority has strategic responsibility for discharging fire and rescue authority functions for the combined area with the day-to-day responsibility resting with the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers within the Executive Board.
 - (2) During the 2021-22 financial year, the Authority comprised 26 Members appointed by the constituent authorities (Devon County Council, Somerset County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council). In addition, an “independent person” is appointed as part of the Authority’s arrangements for dealing with standards issues in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. In June 2019 the Authority agreed to the appointment of a second independent person in line with recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life following its review of local government ethical standards.
 - (3) Following a governance review in December 2020, the Authority approved, at its annual meeting on 29 June 2021, a revised governance structure to operate going forwards. The main aspects of this revised structure are:
 - Resources Committee (7 Members)

- People Committee (7 Members)
 - Audit & Governance Committee (9 Members)
 - Community Safety Committee (7 Members)
 - Appointments and Disciplinary Committee (4 Members)
- (4) The Authority approves its Strategic Policy Objectives annually. The focus of the committees is to scrutinise and monitor Service performance in achieving the Strategic Policy Objectives in the areas for which the committees are responsible. The full terms of reference for all Authority committees can be found [here](#). The committee structure (including terms of reference) is subject to annual review but may also be amended in-year as required.
- (5) The Audit & Governance Committee operates in accordance with the CIPFA best practice guidance on audit committees. It provides an additional level of review and scrutiny of the Authority's internal and external audit arrangements (including consideration and monitoring of any reports and associated action plans), corporate governance and risk arrangements and financial statements (Annual Statement of Accounts). The Committee also has responsibility for discharging the Authority's member conduct arrangements as required by the Localism Act 2011 and monitors the operation of the Authority's strategy for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption and policy and usage in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Act 2000.
- (6) The Authority has [a constitutional governance framework](#) which includes the following documents:
- Members and Officers Accountabilities, Roles and Responsibilities
 - Standing orders
 - Financial Regulations
 - Treasury Management Policy
 - Contract Standing Orders
 - Scheme of Delegations
 - Members Code of Conduct
 - Protocol for Member / Officer Relations
 - Policy on Gifts and Hospitality
 - Scheme of Members Allowances
 - Corporate Governance Code
 - Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing" Code)
 - Strategy on the prevention and Detection of Fraud and Corruption
 - Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity

- (7) These documents, except for the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (which is a national document issued by the Government under Section 4 of the Local Government Act 1986), are subject to review at least annually and are updated as and when necessary to reflect legislative change, organisational change or best practice to ensure they remain up-to-date and fit for purpose.
- (8) The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that effective financial stewardship is in place across the Service in conducting the business of the Authority. The Authority's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the "CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government".

- (9) The statutory functions of the Proper Financial Officer (as per Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) and Monitoring Officers (as per Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) provide a source of assurance that the Authority's systems of governance and internal control are effective and being complied with.
- (10) The 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan sets out the resource required for independent assurance activity to be completed by the Service's Audit and Review Manager and the Authority's shared service internal audit arrangements with Devon Audit Partnership. The latter conforms to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit in public service organisations.
- (11) The Authority participates in the biennial National Fraud Initiative. The 2021-22 data matching exercise has been completed in full, with no fraudulent activity identified and just one irregularity. All matches reviewed and analysed have allowed the Service to update the Integra system to support a reduction in future potential data matches.
- (12) Based on the completed audit work, it is the view of Internal Audit that the systems in operation within the Service demonstrate a reasonable level of assurance. This means that there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
- (13) The 2021-22 External Audit provision was provided by Grant Thornton. The scope of the External Audit work includes the Accounting Statements, Whole of Government Accounts and a commentary on Value for Money arrangements. No significant issues have arisen to date from the External Audit work completed in 2021-22.
- (14) The effective management of risk is critical for the Service to ensure that it maintains services and continues to progress effectively towards achieving its strategic objectives. The risk management framework provides a structured way to deal with uncertainty which can help everyone in the Service to manage their area effectively.
- (15) The Service risk registers are populated and reviewed periodically. This process in turn informs the corporate risk register. Risks are only escalated to the corporate risk register if they cannot be managed or mitigated at department level. The Service risk management framework includes the risk escalation and de-escalation process that ensures that risks are considered at appropriate levels within the Service.

- (16) The corporate risk register is reviewed by Service management monthly (dependent on the level of risk) to ensure that risks to the Authority's strategic objectives and corporate plans are appropriately identified and managed. Horizon scanning has now been introduced into Service management review of the corporate risk register to support deep dive risk identification and assessment. The corporate risk register is presented to the Audit & Governance committee every six months.
- (17) The introduction of the SharpCould software solution has facilitated greatly enhanced risk visualisation which has led to greater engagement across the Service in the effective management of risk.
- (18) The Authority maintains comprehensive insurance cover to support its management of organisational risk. The Authority is a member of the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC), the mutual protection provider that has 12 fire and rescue authority members and has completed its fifth year of operations culminating in surplus being achieved every year since it was formed. This is a significant result for FRIC and shows what can be achieved when fire authorities collaborate in an innovative and mutually beneficial manner. The surplus generated can be retained to support further improvements, drive better risk management and deliver lower costs for FRIC's members. A performance management system has now been implemented to FRIC members which provides individual and membership claims performance.
- (19) The Service has a Strategic Safety Committee which meets quarterly to monitor the health, safety and welfare of employees as per section 2(7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. All representative bodies (trades unions) recognised by the Authority, i.e. the Fire Brigades Union, the Fire and Rescue Services Association, the Fire Officers Association and UNISON, are invited to sit on this committee.
- (20) The People Committee receives regular reports on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of the Service. These reports help the committee to monitor and scrutinise performance in these areas on behalf of the Authority.
- (21) The Health and Safety Manager attends the National Fire Chiefs Council Health & Safety meetings and chairs the regional National Fire Chiefs Council Health & Safety meetings.
- (22) A governance framework has been prepared for change management, which defines roles and responsibilities and outlines the methodology that will be applied as the Service adopts a centralised portfolio office approach to all requests for strategic change.

- (23) The Protective Security Group was relaunched in September 2021. The Group sets the strategic blueprint for the Service's approach to security aligned to the HMG Security Policy Framework and oversees the thematic risk register and escalation to the Executive Board. The transformation of the Information Assurance Team into an Information Governance Team is progressing but has not fully been implemented due to ongoing risk-based priorities relating to the Service's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and demands on the ICT department. Records management is a critical area for the Service which has previously lacked clearly defined ownership. The new Information Governance Team is proactively taking steps to implement an Information Governance Framework that incorporates records management principles across the Service. Performance of critical compliance areas including responding to subject access requests and Freedom of Information requests, remains in place with a high level of compliance achieved.
- (24) Contract Standing Orders are, along with the Authority's other constitutional framework documents, subject to annual review and in-year changes as and when required. Guidance materials on procurement and contract management are available on the Authority's [website](#) and Service intranet for Service staff and contractors. The Service continues to be part of the National Fire Chiefs Council (fire) Commercial Transformation Programme as well as working on opportunities with our Networked Fire Service Partnership (see para 2.54).
- (25) The Procurement Team reviews third party expenditure and manage contracts above £20,000 in value. This is to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice, to ensure that the Authority can demonstrate value for money and deliver savings and efficiencies. The procurement team is actively engaged in wider collaborative national and local procurement initiatives. The Service's Head of Fleet and Procurement is part of the Local Government Association National Advisory Group for Procurement representing fire and rescue services nationally.
- (26) The Procurement team has been responsible for re-tendering the National Fire Chiefs Council's Emergency Response Vehicles framework on behalf of the National Fire Chiefs Council and the fire sector. The team is also responsible for ongoing contract management of the National Fire Chiefs Council's Respiratory Protective Framework.
- (27) Red One Ltd. was established in 2012 to allow the Authority to deliver commercial activities within the legislative framework that applies. This is a stand alone company that manages its own affairs whilst reporting to the single shareholder, the Fire Authority. It is not managed by the Service.

- (28) The Authority has taken legal advice to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and to ensure effective governance arrangements, which were enhanced in January 2018 by the appointment of independent non-executive directors. Governance arrangements were further enhanced in July 2018 by the adoption of revised Articles of Association, which strengthened the composition of the Board to include a mix of: Authority Member non-executive directors; independent non-executive directors; Service officer non-executive directors and company appointed executive directors.
 - (29) Corporate commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion are set out in the Fire & Rescue Plan and People Strategy, which address issues relevant to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace at each stage of the employee lifecycle, including attraction, recruitment, retention, development and progression. The strategy and plan also state how the Service will meet the needs of different communities and vulnerable people to reduce risk and align with the changes needed to support the Integrated Risk Management Plan and external inspection outcomes. The People Committee monitors progress of actions relating to the People Strategy, and particularly matters of diversity and inclusion, every three months.
 - (30) The Service has a process in place to ensure that potential equality impacts are identified and mitigated when preparing or reviewing policies and procedures. The process is called Equality Risks and Benefits Analysis (ERBA) and it helps the Service to deliver better services and working practices as well as ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. In 2019 the Service introduced a broader assessment of impact, the People Impact Assessment into which the ERBA is incorporated. Implementation of the People Impact Assessment includes wider impacts on people including data protection, health & safety and safeguarding. This process has been used extensively during the COVID-19 pandemic to support the Service's decisions in response and recovery. Mandatory equalities training has been reviewed and rolled out. The Service has now started work on increasing psychological safety including addressing identified levels of unwanted behaviour.
 - (31) The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion benchmarked the Service against Talent, Inclusion, Diversity & Equality and awarded the Service a Silver Award in July 2021.
 - (32) A plan to build understanding of, and integrate the core code of ethics into relevant processes has been developed. Ethics have been incorporated into a cultural communication and engagement campaign to be launched in March 2022. In addition, learning approaches to build capability in challenging unethical and inappropriate behaviour are being developed alongside work to embed ethics in recruitment and selection, policies and initiatives through People Impact Assessment and Leadership Development.
 - (33) The Service has not received any Whistleblowing alerts in this financial year.
- 3.3. The 2021-22 review by the Authority has concluded that there are good systems, procedures and checks in place to manage the Authority's governance arrangements.

How we measure and monitor our performance

- 3.4. The Service has a performance framework in place to ensure effective measurement and review of performance in a way that is meaningful and practical. This framework was reviewed in 2021 to align with the new performance management system and to reflect advances in smarter working.
- 3.5. The Authority and the Executive Board have set out 25 corporate performance objectives, aligned to its four strategic priorities. Each objective is supported by desired outcomes, defining what successful delivery looks like. Activity across the Service is monitored by a wide range of measures and indicators, with individual metrics potentially contributing to one or more objectives.
- 3.6. The Authority, committees, and the Executive Board are provided with high-level indicators and analytical reporting by exception, to ensure governance and oversight of service provision and performance.
- 3.7. Operationally, community-facing staff and their managers receive performance information specific to their roles and areas. Performance measures presented to operational staff are set against inputs, therefore influencing and focusing only on activity which supports and delivers the corporate objectives. Information at this level is dynamic and is presented in an easily accessible way, to facilitate timely management and intervention. These supporting measures also apply to non-operational roles, so that functions such as training, fleet and ICT are all reported on to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in achieving good performance.
- 3.8. Timely reporting of performance against plans and objectives is necessary to ensure a sustained focus on the aims and objectives that the Service sets itself to provide an efficient and effective service. Targets are set against the high-level objectives and are reviewed annually. These are set based on historic benchmarks, identified trends, comparison with other fire and rescue services and future aspirations.
- 3.9. The Service continues to invest in improving its performance measurement and reporting capabilities, to better exploit data and enrich the analysis and visualisation of information. Ongoing development of self-serve information will put relevant and actionable insight into the hands of Service leaders, enabling managers and staff alike to be better informed to carry out their work effectively. By presenting timely and relevant information to all staff, the Service seeks to promote an evidence-based and performance-led culture of continuous improvement and evaluation.

COVID-19 Pandemic

- 3.10. A temporary strategic, tactical and operational level command structure was implemented within the Service, to improve speed of decision-making, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The operational level consisted of cells with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, captured in a business continuity response governance document. A dedicated triage team was established to handle queries and direct actions to the most appropriate cells. Action tracking software was developed and implemented to enable visibility of outstanding and completed actions, and to assist with resource allocation.

- 3.11. The tactical team held regular meetings with all cell leads, at an agreed, variable frequency, as required. Throughout 2021-22 this frequency varied between daily and twice weekly. The strategic team met on a weekly basis, with representation also available at tactical meetings.
- 3.12. A Recovery Planning team was established, who met regularly throughout 2021-22. Their work was aligned with other members of National Fire Chiefs Council business continuity planning groups, and with other members of the Local Resilience Forums. The role of this team was to ensure that appropriate measures were put in place to enable the Authority to return to more standard ways of working without risking the safety of staff or the public.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

- 3.13. HMICFRS undertook its first assessment of fire and rescue services in 2018-19. The assessment examined services' effectiveness, efficiency and how well they look after their people. HMICFRS raised concerns regarding the fitness testing of staff as at that time the Service had stopped undertaking fitness tests whilst a trial of the national drill ground test was undertaken. HMICFRS wrote to the Service with a cause of concern and the Service implemented an action plan ahead of the required schedule.
- 3.14. The Service now has a physical fitness policy and three dedicated fitness advisors in post to support firefighters to attain and maintain the fitness standards that are required. The Service has also introduced fitness advocates who are existing operational staff that provide an additional fitness role to the Service and are qualified to a minimum of a Level 2 gym instructor.
- 3.15. With the introduction of a data management system the Service can now assure itself that fitness requirements are being met, reviewed, and evaluated. In February 2022 the Service reported a 98% pass rate compared to the previous 2021 data set of 82% for all 'in scope' employees.
- 3.16. In September - October 2021 HMICFRS conducted its second-round full inspection of the Service, with the final report published in July 2022. HMICFRS recognised the efforts that the Service has made through its improvement plans in embedding the Safer Together programme. The Service was assessed as Good across all five areas of the effectiveness pillar, which relates to how services are provided to the community. The Service was also assessed as Good for the overall pillar of efficiency, which is an improvement on the first inspection in 2019.
- 3.17. HMICFRS's assessment of the people pillar remains the same as at the previous inspection, Requires Improvement. HMICFRS was satisfied that the Service has made enough progress for the cause of concern related to fitness testing of staff to be discharged. However, a new cause of concern was raised related to culture and behaviour. Whilst the report recognises the commitment of the Executive Board and senior leaders to address this concern, more work needs to be done. An action plan to address this concern will be developed and submitted to HMICFRS by 31 August 2022; this links to the future improvements set out in section 5. Progress in delivering this action plan will be monitored by the Executive Board.

4 Financial Assurance

Statement of Accounts

- 4.1. It is a statutory requirement under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 for authorities to publish the financial results of their activities for the year. The 'Statement of Accounts', shows the annual costs of providing the Service and is determined by a Code of Practice published by CIPFA, which aims to give a "true and fair" view of the financial position and transactions of the Authority. The Treasurer is responsible for the approval of the Statement of Accounts prior to publication.
- 4.2. To meet the requirements of the regulations, the draft Statement of Accounts is published by the end of May with the final audited Statement of Accounts published once the audit process has been completed. The Redmond Review has recommended that the publication date be end of November.

External Audit Arrangements

- 4.3. On an annual basis, the Statement of Accounts is subject to external audit. Following a national procurement exercise, Grant Thornton was appointed as the external auditors for the South West region.
- 4.4. Grant Thornton is therefore responsible for the completion of the following assurance activities:
 - Audit of the 2021-22 financial statements.
 - Proposed opinion on the Authority's accounts.
 - Commentary on the Authority's Value for Money arrangements.

Internal Audit Arrangements

- 4.5. To support the external audit process, the Authority has a process for internal auditing. The Audit & Review Manager works with senior management teams to develop an Internal Audit Plan to be delivered across the Service. Devon Audit Partnership support delivery of the plan to deliver specialised key financial audits, to provide expertise that is not available internally or to ensure maintenance of auditor independence and objectivity for the area subject to audit.
- 4.6. Performance against the plan is reported to the Executive Board and the Audit & Governance Committee at scheduled meetings throughout the year. The plan was reviewed and prioritised according to corporate risk, to ensure that high-priority audit activity was addressed appropriately.
- 4.7. Agreed management actions are monitored through the Service's assurance tracking process alongside the outcomes of external audits and external reviews.

Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”)

- 4.8. The Regulations set out a legal framework for contracting public authorities to follow in securing a contract for works, supplies and services where the contract value exceeds set thresholds unless the contract qualifies for a specific exclusion as defined in the Regulations. The Regulations are not static but subject to change, driven by evolving case law. The Regulations reflect and reinforce the value for money focus of the Government’s procurement policy. Where the procurement process is not subject to the Regulations, the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal treatment, and proportionality apply.
- 4.9. The Corporate Procurement Manager is responsible for review of all third-party expenditure and ensuring that the Service processes conform to UK Regulations.

Data Transparency

- 4.10. The Authority complies with the Government’s ‘Local Government Transparency Code 2015’ for releasing public data. The following arrangements are in place:
- A Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
 - Publication of the annual statement of accounts
 - Publication of all expenditure over £500
 - Publication of all Government Procurement Card transactions
 - Publication of Procurement Information
 - Publication of land ownership
 - Publication of Trade Union facility time
 - Publication of a Pay Policy Statement including all senior employee salaries and pay multiple comparators
 - Publication of fraud investigations
 - Publication of Members’ allowances and expenses
 - Publication of External Audit reports
 - Publication of all committee reports (other than those where a statutory exemption for publication applies).

Financial Planning

- 4.11. Currently, the amount of Central Government funding is reviewed annually. To ensure that the Authority understands the potential risks regarding funding, a number of scenarios are published within the [Medium Term Financial Plan](#) demonstrating the possible funding position for the next 5 years. This is published alongside the underpinning: [Reserves Strategy](#); [Capital Strategy](#); and the [Safer Together Programme](#).

5 Future Improvements

5.1. The following areas for improvement remain our key areas of focus throughout 2022-23:

- Service policy management.
- Information governance to facilitate the easy location of accurate and up to date information when required.
- Aligning resources to risk and prioritising prevention and protection activity.
- Improving diversity across the Service including operational management and senior roles.
- Ensuring that the Service's planning processes integrate performance, projects and risk so that all activity is aligned to the strategic objectives, vision and purpose.
- Improving the integrity of data to support the effective implementation of the performance framework and the systems supporting this.
- The Service's processes and systems for the management of assets require improvement. This will continue with implementation of Phase 2 of the asset management implementation project in 2022-23.
- Further improving our People arrangements.

5.2. The following new areas for improvement have been identified:

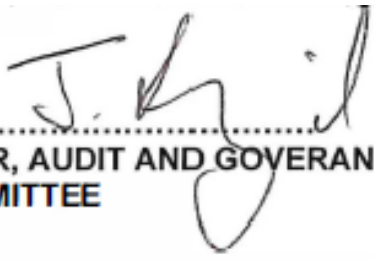
- An Information Governance Framework that incorporates records management principles needs to be implemented across the Service.
- The Service will need to respond to the requirements of the Environmental Act 2021 and other environmental legislation and work to achieve its plans to be carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon positive by 2050.
- The Service needs to ensure that it has the appropriate resource, capacity, structure, health and safety management framework and assurance systems to ensure compliance with its statutory health and safety duties and to ensure that all staff, both uniformed and non-uniformed, are able to be healthy and safe at work when undertaking their duties.

6 Conclusion

6.1. The Authority is satisfied that the issues identified above are appropriate and that steps are already in place to address the improvement areas identified in this review. The Audit & Governance Committee will receive updates on the implementation and operation of these improvement activities annually, through the updated action plan attached in Appendix A to this report.

6.2. Additionally, the Authority is satisfied that the systems and processes that are in place across the organisation fulfil the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Signed: 
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Signed: 
CHAIR, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE
COMMITTEE

APPENDIX A TO REPORT – ACTION PLAN

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Service Policy Management Improvements are required to ensure that the Service has an effective policy framework, effective document lifecycle management and compliance with the latest accessibility standards.</p>	<p>As part of the Microsoft 365 rollout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver new policy template repository with automated document management information reporting on the policy lifecycle. • Enable automatic publication of policies to the website to decrease the Freedom of Information response burden. • Implement an improved mechanism to store documents to enable easier location by employees. 	<p>Head of ICT</p>	<p>The new Policy Management Framework has been agreed, the system is being configured and will be delivered within 2022. The migration of policies into the new system will also be completed in 2022.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>
<p>Information governance The approach to information governance is driven at department level rather than taking an enterprise approach to how information is managed across the Service. This leads to difficulty for employees easily finding accurate and up to date information when required. This also impedes the ability to lead to smarter working practices.</p>	<p>As part of the Microsoft 365 (MS365) project, an enterprise wide approach to information management will be developed which will form the basis of the new Intranet.</p>	<p>Head of ICT</p>	<p>This work is progressing as part of the MS365 project, with a new information architecture designed and being implemented in the migration of file-shares and existing Intranet content to the cloud. An initial deployment of the new Records Management approach will be the new Policy Management System, currently under development by one of the Service's 3d party suppliers. This will provide a full lifecycle management approach to policies, including management information.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Aligning resources to risk and prioritising prevention and protection activity. We need to ensure that we allocate our resources for response, prevention and protection in a way that best reflects the risks to our communities, prioritising our prevention and protection work to prevent fires and other emergencies from occurring, but being able to respond when emergencies do happen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the decisions of the Fire and Rescue Authority with regards to the new Service Delivery Operating Model (SDOM) have been implemented. • Review the Community Safety Plan to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are being prioritised through our prevention work. • Review the Risk Based Inspection Programme to ensure that high risk buildings are being inspected and are compliant with legislation. • Review the Service Delivery strategic plan to ensure that resources are deployed to support efficiency and effectiveness of all response, prevention and protection activity. 	<p>Area Manager Service Delivery - Community Risk</p>	<p>The implementation of the Service Delivery Operating Model required a number of projects to be delivered, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of a new On Call Duty System - Review of the Wholetime Duty System - Closure of two fire stations - Removal of nine fire engines - Change eleven fire engines from 24 hour cover to night cover only - Introduce Roving Appliances <p>In terms of project management, all of these projects have now been closed and either completed or moved into business as usual for Service Delivery.</p> <p>Of the projects noted above only the introduction of Roving Appliances has failed to deliver a successful outcome at present. This is due to two main factors.</p> <p>Firstly, the main reason for considering Roving Appliances was to further support On Call Availability; this has been superseded by the successful roll out of the new On Call Duty System – Pay for Availability.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
			<p>Secondly, the ability to crew Roving Appliances was predicated on the latent capacity of the wholetime station based workforce; this has not been at full establishment until Quarter 4 2021/22 and therefore the Service has not had the staff to provide Roving Appliances in its original concept.</p> <p>Having absorbed the idea into business as usual the intention is to change the descriptor of this model to Roving Vehicles and place the emphasis on the delivery of more prevention and protection activity in rural and hard to reach areas using a combination of Wholetime and On Call staff. This will not require fully crewed fire engines and so better utilises all resources available to the Service.</p> <p>The Community Safety Plan has been reviewed to ensure that we continue to target the most vulnerable members of society by using a triaged approach. The review has also confirmed that there are a number of data sources within the organisation that require analytical support to assure the Service that the triage approach is working.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
			<p>The Risk Based Inspection Programme has been reviewed and implemented. This includes an updated definition of High Risk Buildings that reflects both likelihood and severity of a fire occurring at a particular location. In addition to this the Service completed the High Rise Building Risk Review on time as required by the Home Office in the wake of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.</p> <p>The Service Delivery Strategic Plan provides direction for all staff to support positive outcomes in regard to public safety. The plan takes a risk based approach to prioritising activity that enables staff to fulfil their roles by identifying key functions that enable the deployment of resources to support efficiency and effectiveness of all response, prevention and protection activity. Upon review the following areas are considered a priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workforce Planning - Training, exercising and standards - Capability 	

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Improving diversity across the Service including operational management and senior roles.</p> <p>There is a need to further develop contracts and career paths to support inclusivity ensuring that the Service has a workforce that reflects the communities that it serves.</p>	<p>Implement positive action such as direct entry (an NFCC project) supported by the 'Our Time' sponsorship programme.</p>	<p>Head of HR</p>	<p>The External to Wholetime and On Call to Wholetime recruitment processes were developed with this in mind. Continual monitoring of the recruitment process is undertaken to ensure that it does not inadvertently impact on certain groups in a way which means that they are less likely to succeed.</p> <p>The fitness standard set by the Authority does impact negatively on gender and age, but the Service keeps this under continuous review and all process changes are impact assessed (ERBA). Reasonable adjustments can be facilitated for individuals with underlying conditions so that diversity in ability can occur.</p> <p>The Service uses an external agency to draft all external adverts and to check internal adverts on request to ensure that they don't inadvertently put barriers in the way for people from under-represented groups to apply.</p> <p>The Service is preparing for a new cohort of women to start the 'Our Time' programme at the end of September 2022.</p> <p>Further initiatives are being developed.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Planning, Performance and Continuous Improvement In order to ensure that all activity is aligned to the strategic objectives, vision and purpose, the Service's planning processes need to integrate with performance, projects and risk.</p>	<p>The planning and performance management framework that is currently under development needs to be finalised and rolled out. This has been reworked to address the identified issue and we are in the process of purchasing a new system through the procurement framework. The new system is cloud based so will require connection rather than installation and will support the integrated approach, linking planning, performance, projects and risk as well as giving a much clearer view of performance against key objectives.</p>	<p>Area Manager Service Improvement</p>	<p>The planning and performance framework is subject to a further review to reflect changes to the number of planning documents created, to reduce the admin burden and ambiguity of the purpose of documents. The performance management system, InPhase, is in development, and is expected to take a further year to fully refine and embed. It is intended that the Head of Service Improvement will chair a new performance management meeting with relevant stakeholders once the product is sufficiently mature, which will direct responsibilities and actions down through managers, and elicit best practice back up from teams.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>
<p>Data integrity Work has commenced to redesign the performance framework and to procure a system to support this. To ensure successful implementation, work is required to improve the integrity of data and to ensure proportionate and robust controls on data to: promote valid data at the point</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the data requirements for the Service and where these are held. • Agree data owners. • Develop automated reporting. 	<p>Area Manager Service Improvement</p>	<p>The new corporate performance management system has been procured and is nearing initial rollout to service leaders. It will initially be populated using data manually extracted from source systems and keyed into the performance system. This interim state is likely to remain in some form for several months whilst data requirements for departments are established, and the necessary integrations with source systems are</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>of capture; maintain up to date, accurate records; enable the exploitation of external data sources, particularly in relation to location and premises data; and ensure consistency in reporting information.</p>			<p>developed. At this juncture, the system will then be able to directly consume a broadening range of data, supporting more effective generation of insight relevant to users' needs. It is anticipated that the demand for insight will grow, which will need to be met by a flexible and proportionate approach to data capture and usage. This flexible and proportionate approach is to be delivered via a number of corporate projects which are focusing online-of-business capture, whilst ensuring this capture meets the articulated needs of our performance framework. This allows an evolving approach to react to changing business need, with embedded oversight through our Information Governance function to assure that data is appropriately managed through the information lifecycle. The change projects are overseen by the Executive Board via the Portfolio governance structure allowing due priority and resourcing to be allocated to meet the needs of our performance framework.</p>	

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Safety Event Management Functional and process issues were encountered with the software solution for reporting safety events, which impacted on the recording and management of safety event investigations as well as the ability to monitor accidents through trend analysis.</p>	<p>Develop and implement an improved solution for the recording and management of safety event investigations</p>	<p>Head of Organisation Assurance</p>	<p>The new Safety Event Management system went live 15 February 2022.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Integrated Service Asset Register (Fleet and Operational Equipment) An integrated fleet and operational service asset register needs to be developed and embedded to ensure that all assets are effectively recorded and managed to provide consistent data to inform replacement plans and ensure operational assets are fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Operational Equipment review – complete. • Develop an equipment register to capture all legislative and manufacturer requirements for the different categories of equipment and their corresponding risk assessments - complete. • Implement Phase 2 of the asset management implementation project. 	<p>Head of Fleet & Procurement</p>	<p>Phase 1 (Fleet) systems is complete. Phase 2 (equipment) of the asset management implementation project is due to be complete October 2022.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>
<p>Strategic Policy determination Lack of a clearly defined strategic policy agenda.</p>	<p>Fire & Rescue Authority to set strategic policy agenda with professional advice and support from Service Officers.</p>	<p>Chief Fire Officer</p>	<p>At its meeting on 29 June 2021, the authority set its strategic policy agenda in the form of 12 strategic policy objectives that underpinned its four strategic priorities. The strategic policy objectives were reconfirmed by the Authority at its meeting on 21 February 2022.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Further improving our Efficiency, Effectiveness and People arrangements. We need to deliver our statutory duties, add value through improved community outcomes and create a workplace where all employees are able to perform at their best.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness and Efficiency: Improve the performance management framework to ensure that all activities are aligned to corporate priorities to reduce duplication of effort and to performance manage the Service. • People: Further to the external review of Human Resources and Organisational Development, identify key priorities and implement an improvement plan. • People: Implement the Safe To intervention throughout the Service so that people feel included and feel safe to speak up, to learn, to contribute and to challenge 	<p>Chief Fire Officer</p>	<p>The Service is in the process of implementing a new performance management system (InPhase). There are agreed corporate objectives with the Fire Authority who use the objectives to provide oversight to the officers who in turn have a number of strategic priorities. The Service has developed a performance framework which aligns all activities across the organisation up to the strategic priorities and corporate objectives. This enables objectives to be set within each department and team that directly contribute to the identified outcomes for the organisation.</p> <p>A revised management structure has been agreed to Co-Head the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HROD) department. A HR systems project has begun to move towards supporting the new People Services model, which will define business process improvements to align with system requirements. Work continues to fully establish the HR business partner model through a measurable customer charter and to redefine HROD as People Services.</p>	<p>Carry forward to 2022-23</p>

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
			<p>The Safe To intervention has been in the 'build 'phase of progress where artefacts, processes and policy have been designed to support a Just Culture, along with engagement to build understanding with managers and staff. The next 'Power Up' phase is about to be launched through an immersive communication, engagement and capability building programme. This phase links Safe To with our values and the Core Code of Ethics.</p>	
<p>Information Governance Framework An Information Governance (IG) Framework that incorporate records management principles needs to be implemented across the Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new role profiles to ensure that the IG Team is structured to support delivery of the IG Framework. • Undertake selection processes to appoint staff into new roles and develop individual development plans to achieve full competency in new roles. • Develop and implement the IG Framework. 	Head of ICT		New

Identified Issue	Action Needed	Lead Officer	Update	Status
<p>Environmental Strategy The UK has a legislative commitment to be net zero (carbon neutral) by 2050. The Service will need to respond to the requirements of the Environmental Act 2021 and environmental legislation. The Service response will need to mitigate against changing environmental threats.</p>	<p>The three main projects for carbon reductions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing electricity and gas consumption. • Introduction of vehicle telematics. • Alternatively fuelled vehicles and electric charging points. <p>The environmental action plan will need to identify the full scope of carbon emissions and work with our suppliers and departments to develop a comprehensive carbon neutral plan.</p>	<p>Head of Fleet and Procurement.</p>		<p>New</p>
<p>Health and Safety The Service needs to ensure that it has the appropriate resource, capacity, structure, health and safety management framework and assurance systems to ensure compliance with its statutory Health and Safety duties and to ensure that all staff, both uniformed and non-uniformed, are able to be healthy and safe at work when undertaking their duties.</p>	<p>Strategic health and safety improvement plan to be developed and implemented.</p>	<p>Head of Organisational Assurance</p>		<p>New</p>