

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 26TH APRIL 2023
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2022-23

Purpose of Report

1. To present Members with the Statement of Assurance 2022-23 for approval.

Recommended: That Members

- [1] Approve the Statement of Assurance 2022-23, authorising the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive to make any updates/final changes to the document before it is published.

Background

2. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 (the Framework) requires fire and rescue authorities to publish a Statement of Assurance (the Statement).
3. The Framework says that the Statement should:

“...outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard... to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan ... prepared by the authority for that period. The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters.”
4. The guidance on the Statement indicates that existing assessment processes might feed into the Statement in order to avoid duplication and the draft Statement contains a summary of, and links to, various other documents.
5. The Governance and Constitution Committee will consider the draft Statement of Assurance 2022-23 on 19th April 2023 and Members will be notified of any changes/improvements suggested by the Committee.

Information

6. The Statement of Assurance for 2022-23 is attached to this report as Appendix 1. It has been prepared in accordance with national guidance. It includes sections on financial assurance, governance and operational assurance. It also outlines the way in which the Authority has had regard to the Framework. There is also a section on His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

7. The guidance about the preparation of a statement suggests that where authorities have already set out relevant information that is clear, accessible, and user-friendly within existing documents they may wish to include extracts or links to these documents within their statement. The Statement includes extracts or links to many of the existing key documents and policies such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan, the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.

Financial Implications

8. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

9. Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 the Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. Paragraph 4.6 of the current Framework requires each fire and rescue authority to produce an annual Statement of Assurance.
10. The Statement will be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State's biennial report under section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
11. The Statement should be signed off by an elected member of the Fire Authority who is able to take responsibility for its contents. The Chair of the Authority will be asked to sign the Statement, together with the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive. They formally declare that they are satisfied that the arrangements are adequate and operating effectively and meet the requirements of the Framework.

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. There are none.

Environmental Implications

13. There are none.

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APPENDIX 1 – STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2022-23