

# CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** FIRE AUTHORITY  
**DATE:** 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017  
**REPORT OF:** DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING  
**AUTHOR:** CHRIS ASTALL

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**SUBJECT:** ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2016-17

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## Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present Members of the Fire Authority with the Annual Statement of Assurance 2016-17.

## Recommended that:

- [1] Members approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2016-17 for publication on the Service's website

## Background

2. The Fire and Rescue National Framework (2012) requires fire authorities to publish an Annual Statement of Assurance (the Statement). The guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in July 2012 allows fire and rescue authorities considerable flexibility over the format of the Statement. One of the aims of the Statement is to provide an easily accessible way in which communities, government, local authorities and partners may make a valid assessment of how the service is performing.
3. The Statement outlines the significant financial and operational issues facing the Authority which need to be effectively managed and highlights areas where further improvements can be made to evidence compliance with the Authority's Local Code of Corporate Governance.
4. The Statement is intended to act as a 'signpost' document directing the reader to more detailed information which is published on the Service's website or other related linked sites.
5. A draft version of the Statement for 2016-17 was presented to the Governance and Constitution Committee in June 2017 for review and challenge prior to being presented to the Fire Authority.

## **Information**

### **Local Code of Corporate Governance**

6. CIPFA/SOLACE published a new framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' applicable to public sector organisations from 2016-17 onwards. As a result a revised Local Code of Corporate Governance, reflecting the new framework has been produced. A summary of the framework is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

### **The Compliance Process**

7. The Authority currently fulfils its financial and governance assurance requirements through the production and validation of the Annual Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) (which include associated controls, scrutiny, and audits). The AGS forms part of the Statement.
8. The Annual Statement of Assurance for 16-17 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. In the interest of transparency all compliance and assurance documentation and other relevant links and signposts will be accessible directly from the Service's website.

### **Financial Implications**

9. There are no significant financial implications other than staff time involved in research, evidence gathering and publication.

### **Legal Implications**

10. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2012) and the addendum published in 2014 sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities and introduces additional requirements concerned with governance in its broadest sense. The Framework requires the Authority to publish an annual Statement of Assurance.

### **Equality & Diversity Implications**

11. There are no differential impacts on any particular section of the community arising from this report. Any issues relating to the publication and communication of the publication have been considered as part of the full equality impact assessment carried out on the Corporate Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

## **Environmental Implications**

12. There are no specific impacts on the environment arising from this report.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

**Appendix 1** – Statement of Assurance 2016-17

**Appendix 2** – Revised Local Code of Corporate Governance Principles