



Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Decision Report

Report reference number: 036-023

Government security classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022 - 2023

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Service wide / Countywide

Report by: Emily Cheyne, Assistant Director

Date of report: 5 September 2023

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1. Purpose of the report

To gain the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC's) approval of the publication of the ECFRS Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-2023.

Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plan and the requirements included in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Fire and rescue authorities are accountable for their performance and should be open to evaluation by the communities they serve. Information on their performance should be accessible, robust, fit-for-purpose and accurately report on effectiveness and value for money. One of the aims of the Statement of Assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, Government, local authorities, and other partners may make a valid assessment of their local fire and rescue authority's performance.

2. Recommendations

That the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner approves for publication the final version of the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-2023 appended to this report.

The report can also be viewed via the direct link here: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/5f287c58-87e2-4b3d-a4c0-6c51547ce0dd>

3. Benefits of the proposal

The publication of the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-2023 provides valuable public information about the performance of the service over the financial year. It ensures that performance data and information is in the public domain and has been scrutinised by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. The publication also ensures the PFCC complies with their statutory obligation to produce a Statement of Assurance.

This year progress has been marked against the priorities in the service's current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which will help our communities and partners understand what has been achieved over the life of the Plan and what needs to be included in the service's future Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The CRMP is due to go out to first stage public consultation in October this year. Progress has also been aligned to the Integrated Risk Management Plan as part of our preparation for His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection. HMICFRS will specifically be looking for evidence of what we have delivered against our IRMP.

4. Background and proposal

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions. Every fire and rescue authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework. For PFCCFRAs such as Essex, this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and is called the 'Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance'.

The statement outlines the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard during the year to the National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan prepared by the Authority for that period (most notably the Fire and Rescue Plan). The Authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. This is provided primarily through the Statement of Accounts 2022 – 2023, which is linked to the Statement of Assurance.

The statement uses annual performance and other data that has already been presented to the Continuous Improvement Board (CIB) and approved by the Service Leadership Team and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

A variety of presentational options were considered, and the current format was used following careful consideration of what would be most accessible and transparent for the public, taking into account previous feedback from the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. It is the same format which has been used previously.

Accessibility

The document has been designed and written to be accessible.

All acronyms are explained. The font sizes meet accessibility requirements, images are labelled, pages are numbered, and the colours meet the contrast requirements.

Specific sections of the report will be used for press releases and social media updates and also as standalone text on the website www.essex-fire.gov.uk

6. Strategic priorities

The Statement of Assurance reports on the progress of the service against its statutory obligations and the priorities set out within the Fire and Rescue Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan.

7. Operational implications

The publication of this report has no direct operational implications.

8. Financial implications

This decision has no direct financial implications.

9. Legal implications

The decision will ensure that the PFCCFRA complies with their legal obligations as set out above.

10. Staffing implications

This decision has no direct staffing implications.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

12. Risks

There are no risks associated with this decision.

13. Governance Boards

This report has been processed via the due governance process of:

Service Leadership Team Strategic Meeting - 22 August 2023

PFCC Strategic Board - 13 September 2023

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel (as set out in legislation and within the PFCCFRA's Constitution) – 28 September 2023

There was also a **Police, Fire and Crime Panel workshop** to talk through Statement of Assurance ahead of the document being submitted on 7 September 2023.

Following endorsement by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, the Statement of Assurance will be published.

14. Background papers

Appendix A - Annual Report and Statement of Assurance

Decision Process

Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

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Sign: 

Date:.....28/09/2023.....

Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

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Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority’s (“the Commissioner’s”) Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer

Sign:



Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 28 September 2023

Chief Finance Officer

Sign: ...



Print: Neil Cross

Date: . 28/9/23.

Step 3 - Publication

Is the report for publication? **YES**

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'none' if applicable)

None

If the report is not for publication, the Monitoring Officer will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Step 4 - Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Of Decision Sheet | NO |
| 2 | Of Appendix | NO |

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

N/A

Date redaction carried out:

If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: Print:

Date signed:

Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

I agree / do not agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: (PFCC / DPFCC)

Print: Roger Hirst PFCC Date signed: 05/10/2023