



Committee report

Committee	AUDIT COMMITTEE
Date	26 JULY 2021
Title	ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2020/21
Report of	DCFO SHANTHA DICKINSON, DIRECTOR OF POLICY, PLANNING AND ASSURANCE

1. SUMMARY

The Annual Statement of Assurance is a document that is required by the National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services (2018) to provide assurance to local communities and government on financial, governance and operational matters.

The Isle of Wight Council's Annual Statement of Assurance is made accessible to all stakeholders to enable transparency of fire and rescue services. This statement covers the financial year, April 2020 to March 2021.

The format of the Annual Statement is not prescribed and therefore it is determined by the Fire and Rescue Service to demonstrate to local communities and partner organisations how it fulfils its statutory obligations and activities to make the Isle of Wight a safer place to live, work and travel.

2. BACKGROUND

The Fire and Rescue National Framework published in May 2018 sets out the reason for each Fire and Rescue Service to produce an Annual Statement of Assurance:

“The statement should outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (eg the Fire and Rescue Plan – see 4.10 below) prepared by the authority for that period. The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters.”

Appendix 1 contains the detailed Annual Statement of Assurance which has been structured, for the reader's benefit, to follow the Fire and Rescue National Framework structure. There is also specific coverage on the early response to the COVID-19 pandemic; the Safety Plan; the focus on policy, procedure and guidance; and other areas.

3. SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

The Annual Statement of Assurance, through the Isle of Wight Council, provides assurance to the public on the Fire and Rescue Service's fulfilment of its duties and

activities so that *Together we make life safer*. This is mirrored in the creation and content of our strategic priorities (contained within the new Safety Plan).

4. CONCLUSION

The Annual Statement of Assurance for 2020/21 provides stakeholders with oversight of the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's ability to deliver its core purpose that *Together we make life safer*, and therefore meet the requirements of the 2018 National Fire and Rescue Framework.

In addition to this, it highlights our initial response to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in February 2019 when we first set up our Emergency Management Group to oversee our response but also to work closely with our partners across our Local Resilience Forum.

5. RECOMMENDATION

That the Annual Assurance Statement for 2020/21 be approved by the Committee.

6. APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 – IWFRS Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21

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