

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No: 7**

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING: 23<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013**

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**SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present the Annual Report 2012/13.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The purpose of the Annual Report is to inform our stakeholders how we did during 2012-13, how much we spent and what we spent it on. This document also meets a new requirement placed on us by Government as part of the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2012, to prepare an annual Statement of Assurance:

***‘Fire and rescue authorities must provide annual 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 Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance’.***

One of the principal aims of the statement of assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, Government, local authorities and our partners may make a valid assessment of our performance.

## **3 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

3.1 The guidance states that “ the Statement of Assurance 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 Act 2004”.

3.2 The contents of the document should include as a minimum;

- the statement of accounts
- an annual governance statement
- details of how the Authority meets the requirements of the National Framework
- details of consultation on strategic plans including the IRMP
- assurance regarding operational competence

- consideration to the principles of transparency (set out in the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency)

3.3 Where relevant information is already set out in a clear, accessible and user friendly way within existing documents, it is acceptable to include extracts or links to these documents within the Statement of Assurance.

## **4 HOW WE PERFORMED**

4.1 We set targets to enable us to monitor our performance enabling us to achieve our vision of 'creating the safest community'. By monitoring our performance we are able to see how we are progressing towards achieving our strategic goals.

4.2 2012/13 was a good year for performance. We attended almost 15,000 incidents and maintained our average response time of just 5 minutes. For the first year ever in Tyne and Wear no one lost their life in an accidental house fire – we believe we are the only metropolitan fire and rescue service to have achieved this to date. We also achieved a 35% reduction in deliberate fires and a 12% reduction in primary (property) fires recording our lowest ever figures. More details about our performance are set out in the report.

4.3 Under the Government's Spending Review we are facing significant reductions in the grant we receive from the Government. This creates a huge challenge in continuing to tackle community risk with fewer resources. Although this will be difficult, our committed workforce will continue to focus upon positive outcomes for the communities we serve.

## **5 LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The first Statement of Assurance is required to be produced and published in the financial year 2013/14 and annual thereafter. It should be signed off by an elected member of the Authority.

## **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **7 STRATEGIC PLAN LINK**

7.1 The Annual Report directly relates to goal four; 'to deliver a modern, effective service, ensuring value for money with staff who reflect the communities we serve'.

## **8 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The report provides information that is accessible to all.

## **9 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no Health and Safety implications associated with this report.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

11 This report has been prepared to provide assurance on our finances, governance and operations throughout 2012/13.

## **12 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to:

- a) Review the content of this report
- b) Approve the document for publication, subject to Authority approval

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Guidance on statements of assurance for fire and rescue authorities in England – DCLG May 2013
- CFOA Circular 2013-10: Annual Statement of Assurance

