

**MEETING: FIRE AUTHORITY 13 DECEMBER 2021**

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**SUBJECT: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2020/21**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO  
THE AUTHORITY) AND THE FINANCE DIRECTOR**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority's 2020/21 Statement of Assurance (SOA) for Fire Authority consideration and agreement to publish.
- 1.2 The SOA 2020/21 has been presented to the TWFRS Governance Committee November 2021 meeting and received agreement to progress to full Fire Authority for approval.
- 1.3 Within the Foreword to the SOA is a clear statement that the Service believes, based on the evidence that it is operating within the parameters of good governance and in accordance with all regulatory requirements and guidance.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Each fire and rescue authority (FRA) in England is required to provide sufficient assurance they are acting in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 (National Framework).
- 2.2 Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament every 2 years on:
  - the extent to which FRAs are acting in accordance with the National Framework; and
  - any steps taken by them for the purpose of securing that FRAs act in accordance with the National Framework.
- 2.3 The SOA is a source of information used by the Secretary of State for production of their biennial report.
- 2.4 By producing a SOA, the Fire Authority provide information to communities, the Government, local authorities and partners, which allows them to make a valid assessment of our performance during 2020/21.

### **3. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

- 3.1 The SOA is a 'look-back' document, which provides information on the Authority's financial, governance and operational performance during 2020/21, and includes details of how the requirements of the National Framework are met. The SOA provides information and evidence to demonstrate compliance with the National Framework and signposts to supporting documents.

### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The SOA does not present any risks to the Authority as it demonstrates appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The publication of the SOA supports the Authority to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, providing value for money to the public. The SOA has no direct financial implications and contains a retrospective picture of expenditure in 2020/21.

### **6. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of the SOA. The SOA contains a retrospective picture of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of the SOA. The SOA contains a retrospective picture of our approach to health and safety.

### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Fire Authority is recommended to:
- a) Note the contents of the SOA.
  - b) Agree that they are satisfied that the SOA properly and accurately reflects the risk environment and good governance arrangements of the fire and rescue service.
  - c) Progress the SOA for public publication.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- HM Government (2004) Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Home Office (2018) Fire and Rescue National Framework
- TWFR (2021) Annual Governance Review 2020/21