

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 5

MEETING: 14 DECEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE AND ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

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

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority (TWFA) Statement of Assurance and Annual Report (SOAAR) 2019/20 for Members' consideration and approval.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of the SOAAR is to inform stakeholders how the Authority performed during 2019/20, how much was spent, and what it was spent on. This document also meets the requirements placed on us by Government as part of the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018 ("the National Framework"), to prepare an annual Statement of Assurance.

'Every fire and rescue authority (FRA) must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions. Every authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework'.

- 2.2 The SOAAR is also a source of information used by the Secretary of State for their biennial report. Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament every 2 years on:
- a) the extent to which FRAs are acting in accordance with the National Framework; and
 - b) any steps taken for the purpose of securing that FRAs act in accordance with the National Framework.
- 2.3 FRAs are accountable for their performance and should be open to evaluation by the communities they serve and by publishing our SOAAR we are providing information to communities, government, local authorities and partners to enable them to make a valid assessment of the Authority's performance for 2019/20.

3 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE AND ANNUAL REPORT

3.1 The SOAAR includes the following content and makes reference to/signposts to relevant supporting documents:

- **Service to our community** - including an overview of our strategic plans, delivery of duties (supported by case studies) and operational assurance.
- **Our performance** - highlighting performance improvement, operational performance, corporate key performance indicators and Integrated Risk Management Planning.
- **How we meet the requirements of the National Framework** - evidence base to demonstrate how we fulfil the National Framework requirements.
- **Governance arrangements** - focussing on the governance framework Fire Authority set up, the review of effectiveness, data transparency code, fair processing / privacy notice and an overview of our corporate risks.
- **Financial assurance** - a summarised version of the Authority's Statement of Accounts with a focus on the key points arising from our stewardship of public funds in 2019/2020.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 There are no risks associated with publishing the SOAAR. We have worked closely with internal and external audit throughout the year on our financial and governance positions.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has no direct financial implications. The SOAAR contains a retrospective picture of expenditure in 2019/20.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report. The SOAAR contains a retrospective picture of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in 2019/20.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report. The SOAAR contains a retrospective picture of our approach to health and safety in 2019/20.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of the SOAAR
- b) Approve the SOAAR for publication.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Fire Authority Annual Governance Review 2019/2020
- HM Government (2004) Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Home Office (2018) Fire and Rescue National Framework

