

HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2016/17

Introduction

1. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2007) sets out a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plan and the requirements included in the Framework.
2. The content of the Humberside Fire Authority (HFA) Statement of Assurance is based upon the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Guidance on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England (2013).
3. In January 2016, governmental responsibility for Fire and Rescue transferred from DCLG to the Home Office.

Financial Assurance

4. The Authority places a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that its financial management arrangements meet the highest standards.
5. This is discharged through a number of key processes as follows:-
 - The Annual Statement of Accounts is produced in line with accounting Codes of Practice, is scrutinised by an independent Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, approved by the Fire Authority and audited by independent external auditors prior to publication;
 - Quarterly Management Accounts are distributed for consideration by the Corporate Management Team, the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the Fire Authority;
 - An independent external audit view is given on an annual basis as to whether the Authority is delivering a value for money service.

Governance Assurance

6. The Authority has an approved 'Local Code of Corporate Governance' in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for Corporate Governance.
7. The Constitution of HFA includes:
 - Committee Membership and Terms of Reference;
 - Scheme of Delegation to Officers;
 - Financial Procedure Rules;
 - Contract Procedure Rules;
 - Members' Code of Conduct;
 - Officers' Code of Conduct;
 - Protocol for Member and Officer Relationships;
 - Code of Corporate Governance.

8. An Annual Governance Statement is produced explaining how the HFA has complied with the code of corporate governance and also meets the requirements of regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

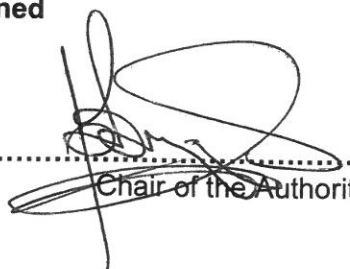
Operational Assurance

9. In accordance with the Service Business Planning Framework the Strategic Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2017/20 ensure three future years looking plans, linked to financial planning. The Strategic Plan and IRMP 2017/20 were approved by HFA in December 2016 following a six week period of consultation at an appropriate level.
10. The HFA Strategic Plan 2017/20 includes Strategic Objectives, Strategic Performance Indicators and Directors' responsibilities.
11. The IRMP 2017/20 takes account of the requirements of the National Framework (2012), providing a detailed assessment of the risks facing our communities and firefighters and the measures taken to mitigate those risks.
12. Mutual aid arrangements are in place with other services to provide resilience for large scale or complex incidents where additional resources need to be called on. HFRS actively contributes to national resilience and has made its assets available to support national emergencies.
13. Completion of the annual Operational Self-Assessment, measured against the LGA Toolkit. Verification of our self-assessment via Peer Audit will be arranged subject to clarification of the role of Peer Audit within the pending HMI environment.
14. An annual Customer Service Excellence Audit was conducted in February 2017. The Service has retained the Award for further 12-month period with no areas of partial, or non-compliance, identified by the audit.
15. An Annual Performance Report and Quarterly Performance and Risk Reports are scrutinised by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, before being reported to HFA.

Conclusions

16. The requirements placed upon HFA through the National Framework have been adequately met.

Signed


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Chair of the Authority


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Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive