

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Samantha Burton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Ged Edwards, Planning and Performance Manager, on 01743 260208.

1 Executive Summary

This report summarises the progress made to date against the improvements contained in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Improvement Plan 2024/25.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress made on the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan.

3 Background

In accordance with authority delegated to it by the Fire Authority, the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee will consider the draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 which is likely at its December 2024 meeting.

The Statement of Accounts contains, as an appendix, a statement as to how effective the Authority's various systems of internal control have been in governing the risks, to which the Authority is exposed. This is known as the Annual Governance Statement or the AGS. Areas of the system of internal control that had been identified as requiring improvement were listed in the AGS and an action plan was developed to ensure that these improvements are progressed during the coming year (the AGS Improvement Plan 2024/25). This Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress, which the Service makes against the Plan.

4 Monitoring Progress against the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25

A copy of the AGS Improvement Plan 2024/25 is attached as an appendix to this report; progress against each of the planned activities is also included in the appendix.

As is the case with most plans, the activities included within it are often subject to change. This can be as a result of changes in the external environment that guides the work, as well as the internal environment that dictates whether the Service has the capacity to achieve its stated objectives. To ensure there is control over any slippage, the officers responsible for delivering this work must obtain approval from the Service Management Team (SMT) or Service Programme Board (SPB), if they require any variations to the current Plan. Such variations will also be reported to this committee.

5 Conclusions

The Committee is asked to note the progress made on the 2024/25 AGS Improvement Plan.

6 Financial Implications

Any significant budgetary implications, brought about by the improvements proposed in the Improvement Plan, have already been considered, either as part of the Fire Authority's budget planning process or within each Department's business planning process.

7 Legal Comment

The AGS is a legal requirement under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom and must be included in the Fire Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

9 Appendix

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25.

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25

| Area of Review | | Improvement Required | Lead Officers | Internal Board reported to | Progress to date |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| People/ On-Call Sustainability | 1 | Implement the actions identified in the On-Call Sustainability Review through the delivery of the On Call Sustainability Project. | Alec Thomas | New Ways of Working Board (NWOW) | <p>The project manager role has now ceased as a dedicated role and the lead officer continues with key areas with other remaining areas being allocated to other roles as agreed at last OCSP board meeting. Each element is reportable to suitable governance.</p> <p>On-call contract briefings are complete, and this moves forward to consultation with a target date of January 2025 to implement.</p> <p>Alerting devices were delivered on 02/09/2024 with a roll out through drill night testing and issuing to staff through early September for most staff.</p> |
| People | 2 | Implementation of fitness support facilities via the refurbishment programme. Feasibility Study (station fitness provision) to be reviewed following the introduction of stand-alone facility at Baschurch. | Marc Millward Chris White | New Ways of Working Board (NWOW) | <p>The fitness structure is now completed at Baschurch and is proving popular with staff with reported high usage. It is too early to confirm whether the structure is beneficial purely for fitness improvement compared to other stations however this will become apparent at the end of the year when all fitness tests will be completed.</p> <p>The remaining 5 stations identified as in need of improved facilities (PR, BC, AL, MY and HO) remain unchanged. Evaluation of new BS facility to take place before committing to implementing the same facilities at these 5 stations.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Many stations (including Telford Central) have requested further funding for additional fitness equipment. The Fitness Group has been re-activated to explore future/additional fitness equipment provision. |
| Process | 3 | Through the Service Programme Board continue to replace paper-based processes with streamlined electronic workflows. | Sally Edwards | Systems Governance Group (SGG) | Further recruitment is still required to build capacity for delivery of large projects such as C&C implementation. A 2 year fixed term position for a Systems Engineer has been agreed to support the implementation of the C&C. The position is still vacant following an unsuccessful recruitment campaign. Other vacancies includes the appointment of a Business Analyst and a Developer so that electronic processed can be introduced for greater efficiency and productivity. |
| Systems/ Infrastructure | 4 | Continual improvement of network security to a standard for adopting the implementation of the Emergency Service Network that guards against cyber threats and minimises disruption to daily operations. Enhance the workflows in Fire Service Rota (FSR) to incorporate as many pay elements as possible so that | Sally Edwards Alec Thomas Marc Millward | Service Management Team (SMT) On Call Sustainability (OCS) Board | Proof of concept is planned for September/October following completion of Telford there is now capacity to schedule this in. Security awareness online training has been procured and will align the launch of the revised and updated Security Policy. Further pay elements within FSR will require internal capacity to support these improvements, those beyond banded contract changes will require capacity from area command to identify elements and progress, decision at OCSP board. Banded contract development is in progress for January 2025 implementation. This will be from the HR system with FSR tracking performance from that source. |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | manual processes are removed. | | | |
| Building Facilities | 5 | <p>Deliver the property capital schemes.</p> <p>Introduce improvements to station access and security at all SFRS sites.</p> <p>Review training facilities across the estate and consider feasibility study outcomes.</p> | <p>Andrew Kelcey</p> <p>Sally Edwards</p> <p>Mark Price</p> | <p>New Ways of Working Board</p> <p>Systems Governance Group</p> <p>Service Programme Board</p> | <p>Telford works are basically complete, with snagging and other works continuing.</p> <p>The training team are starting to consider longer-term facility requirements based on a previous feasibility study and a new assessment of needs. Following this a formal business case will be prepared.</p> <p>The modular fitness assessment facility is in use at Baschurch and being evaluated.</p> <p>Quotations are being obtained to complete window and door security works across the estate.</p> <p>A presentation is planned for Programme Board in September with proposal for integrated and consistent access control and video management across the estate.</p> |
| Appliances/ Equipment | 6 | Deliver the fleet and equipment strategy to include the introduction of new pumping and specialist appliances. | <p>Scott Hurford</p> <p>Andrew Kelcey</p> | Operations Board | <p>See Item 8 for update on Resource review.</p> <p>Orders have been placed for 8 pumping appliances as direct replacement for those reaching the end of their lives. These appliances are currently in build with Emergency One.</p> |
| Collaboration | 7 | Oversee the replacement of the new Command and Control (C&C) system. | <p>Karen Gowreesunke</p> <p>r</p> | C&C Project Board | <p>The current estimated go live is scheduled for September 2025 which has moved from June due to the development work required. Ongoing work is continuing to configure the new system and data load with the Integrated Fire Control Collaboration (IFCC).</p> <p>Resource for ICT for the project still needs to be considered but currently limited resources are available.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|------------|-----|--|
| | | | | | <p>New Incident types in collaboration with the IFCC are currently being proposed and will be presented to the service in the next few weeks for review.</p> <p>The MDT Framework tender is now closed with one bid received and currently being reviewed.</p> |
| Operations | 8 | Undertake an operations resource and capability review to support the next Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which will come into effect in 2025. | Sam Burton | SMT | <p>The CRMP evidence base has highlighted the following areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing Community: Addressing poverty, loneliness, and aging through a partnership with Leeds University to analyse local data. - Managing emerging risk: Enhancing safety protocols for evacuating tall buildings, with a specialised team in Telford. - Climate Change: Strengthening water rescue capabilities and preparing for wildfires and droughts. - Road Traffic Collisions: Increasing preparedness with advanced first aid training and updated equipment in Wellington. - New Energy Systems: Acquiring new equipment to manage technologies like battery storage and electric vehicles. - Attendance Standard: Setting clear response times from call receipt to arrival. - SFRS Structure: Updating the organizational structure for future needs. - Shrewsbury Expansion: Relocating a fire appliance to address infrastructure developments and flooding risks. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | These developments are to be aligned to a new internal SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|