

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2021/22

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Executive Summary

This report summarises the progress made to date against the improvements contained in the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2021/22.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress made on the 2022/23 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 2021/22 at its December 2022 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 2022/23). This Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress, which the Service makes against the Plan.

The AGS 2021/22 and Improvement Plan 2022/23 were considered and agreed by this Committee at its meeting on 30 September 2022.

4 Monitoring Progress against the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2022/23

A copy of the AGS Improvement Plan 2022/23 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 2022/23 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 2022/23.

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2022/23

Area of Review		Improvement Required	Lead Officers	Progress to date	Reporting Year
People	1	<p>Continue to deliver the people strategy including the Wholetime and Fire Control shift changes.</p> <p>Produce and implement the actions identified in the On-Call Sustainability Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration • Pay • Contracts 	<p>Guy Williams Adam Matthews</p>	<p>Wholetime shift system pilot has been measured against the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) self-assessment tool with positive results. The November Service Management Team (SMT) report incorporates a recommended shift process for 2023. This will incorporate all learning from the pilot and will have the support of representative bodies. This is being converted into a collective agreement for wholetime shift working. This agreement will require national union ratification which might be delayed by the current pay dispute.</p> <p>On Call Sustainability Project (OCSP) was formally launched at the On Call conference on 9 September 2022. Its recommendations included changes to Pay, contracts, transfer process (formerly migration), leading fire fighter rank and other initiatives. A dedicated Fire Service Rota (FSR) administrator is to be added to support the delivery of the project for its implementation in 2023. Discussions are ongoing around the future project management of OCSP in 2023 and the financial impact of the recommendations.</p>	2022/23

Area of Review		Improvement Required	Lead Officers	Progress to date	Reporting Year
People	2	Adopt the new fitness standard whilst assisting with the implementation of fitness support facilities via the refurbishment programme.	Guy Williams Chris White	Fitness equipment to all stations has been completed, an assessment of how a small number of stations can be further developed to make using the equipment easier is being undertaken. Fitness results are being monitored and the results still remain positive. The upgraded service provided by University of Worcester has been a success, however staffing arrangements at the University are to be monitored to ensure they do not impact on the agreed service as per the contract. The new brigade order combined with fitness equipment, in house trainers and the University of Worcester appear to be successful, however it is still too early to amend the risk assessment.	2022/23
Process	3	Through the Service Transformation Programme continue to replace paper-based processes with streamlined electronic workflows.	Ged Edwards	The recent departmental review has identified the need to recruit a business analyst to support this activity. A job description has been developed and is currently subject to evaluation through the Skills For Information Age (SFIA) framework.	2022/23
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.	Sally Edwards Guy Williams Adam Matthews	Following the successful implementation of Darktrace that uses artificial intelligence to combat against cyber-attacks, there are reviews of other security products, such as mobile device management for mobile phones, because protection remains constant as threats become more sophisticated.	2022/23

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		Enhance the workflows in Fire Service Rota (FSR) to incorporate as many pay elements as possible so that manual processes are removed.		The enhancements to FSR will be delivered as part of the On Call sustainability project.	
Building Facilities	5	<p>Deliver the property capital schemes including the Telford Central Fire Station redevelopment project.</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>	Andrew Kelcey Sally Edwards Adam Matthews	<p>Telford Central refurbishment is continuing. Supply chain and technical issues are being identified and managed through a formal project approach.</p> <p>Door and window replacement works have been instructed at various sites, including replacement access systems.</p> <p>Costs are being obtained for additional solar panel installations to improve environmental performance and reduce future energy costs.</p> <p>Training facilities review feasibility study for the Telford Central site have been received. Training facilities across the estate are now being reviewed with feasibility work starting at Shrewsbury. The wider on call estate is being reviewed by Training centre staff.</p>	2022/23
Appliances / Equipment	6	Deliver the fleet and equipment strategy to include the introduction of new pumping appliances.	Guy Williams Adam Matthews Andrew Kelcey	10 new pumping appliances are now with the Service. Driver and operator training is almost complete.	2022/23
Collaboration	7	Support and monitor the strategic alliance programme plan including replacement Command and Control system.	Dan Quinn	Output specification is currently being developed for replacing the Command and Control System. Currently working towards running a tender process in the first quarter 2023.	2022/23