



## **EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

**THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2013 at 10.30 HOURS**

### **MEMBERS**

#### **East Sussex County Council (12)**

Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Earl, Galley, Howson, Lambert, Pragnell, Scott, Sheppard, Taylor and Wincott.

#### **Brighton & Hove City Council (6)**

Councillors Carden, Hawtree, Peltzer Dunn, Powell, Rufus and Theobald.

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**You are required to attend this meeting to be held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne at 10.30 a.m.**

### **AGENDA**

733. In relation to matters on the agenda, seek declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.
734. Apologies for absence.
735. Notification of items which the Chairman considers urgent and proposes to take at the end of the agenda/Chairman's Business.  
  
(Any Members wishing to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chairman before the start of the meeting. In so doing they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently).
736. To consider any public questions.
737. To receive any petitions.
738. Non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 (copy attached).

739. Callover.  
The Chairman will call the item numbers of the remaining items on the open agenda. Each item which is called by any member shall be reserved for debate. The Chairman will then ask the Fire Authority to adopt without debate the recommendations and resolutions contained in the relevant reports for those items which have not been called.
740. 2012/13 Performance Outcome report – report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (copy attached).
741. Review of Members’ Allowance Scheme – report of the Clerk (copy attached).
742. Quarterly Report (April to June 2013) – report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (copy attached).
743. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

To consider whether, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information. **NOTE:** Any item appearing in the confidential part of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public. A list and description of the exempt categories are available for public inspection at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service HQ, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, and at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

744. Confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 (copy attached). (Exempt category under paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972).
745. Integrated Risk Management Planning Review of how Prevention, Protection and Response Service activities are provided to maintain the Authority’s statutory duty and stated aims – confidential progress report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (copy attached). (Exempt category under paragraph 4 of the Local Government Act 1972).
746. Sussex Control Centre – confidential progress report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (copy attached). (Exempt category under paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Local Government Act 1972).

**ABRAHAM GHEBRE-GHIORGHIS**  
**Monitoring Officer**  
**East Sussex Fire Authority**  
**c/o Brighton & Hove City Council**

**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, at 10.30 hours on Thursday 6 June 2013.**

**Present:** Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Carden, Earl, Galley, Hawtree, Howson, Lambert, Peltzer Dunn, Pragnell, Rufus, Scott, Sheppard, Taylor, Theobald and Wincott.

**Also present:**

Mr. D. Prichard (Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Mr. G. Walsh (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Mr. G. Ferrand (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Mrs. C. Rolph (Assistant Chief Officer – People & Organisational Development), Mr. A. Ghebre-Ghiorghis (Monitoring Officer), Miss. L. Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Mr. D. Savage (Treasurer), Mr. R. Charman (Director of Financial Services) and Mrs. K. Ward (Clerk).

**716. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

- 716.1 a. It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, no participating Member had any disclosable pecuniary interest under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.
- b. It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, Councillor Scott declared a personal interest as his brother-in-law works for East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

**717. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

- 717.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that set out the procedures governing the election of Chairman and invited the Fire Authority to appoint a Chairman for the ensuing year. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 717.2 **RESOLVED** – That Councillor Howson be appointed Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

**718. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

- 718.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that set out the procedures governing the election of Vice-Chairman and invited the Fire Authority to consider whether it wished to appoint a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 718.2 **RESOLVED** – That Councillor Rufus be appointed Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

**719. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 719.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Powell.

720. **URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

720.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly elected Fire Authority and thanked Members for electing him as their Chairman for the ensuing year.

720.2 The Chairman notified Members of two induction events that had been organised to help new Members understand the work of the Fire & Rescue Service and to help smooth the way for what would be for many Members a new experience.

720.3 The Chairman highlighted some of the key events from the last administration and informed Members that these, together with a strategic overview and introduction to key strategies, would be discussed amongst other issues during the induction programme.

720.4 The Chairman noted the amount of work Members would need to undertake within a quick timescale in order to achieve the aspirations set out in the Medium Term Plan and continue to deliver a first class service to the Council Tax payers within the budget constraints whilst identifying savings in the order of around £4m by 2017/18.

720.5 The Chairman, together with Councillor Theobald (Leader of the Conservative Group), Councillor Scott (Leader of the Labour Group), Councillor Rufus (Leader of the Green Group) and Councillor Lambert (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) wished to thank previous Members, in particular John Livings (former Chairman) and Paul Sparks (former Vice Chairman), for their dedication and leaving the Fire Authority in a strong position from which to go forward.

720.6 The Chairman introduced Brian Pidgeon and Joy Waite to the new Authority, noting that there was 10 years' service between them and that they had made contributions not only as decision-makers setting the direction of the Service, but also in taking part in the wider activities of the Service such as station open days, pass-out parades and award ceremonies. The Chairman thanked them for their hard work and commitment during their term and presented them with rose bowls as a token of the Fire Authority's appreciation.

721. **TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS, IF ANY**

721.1 There were none.

722. **TO ACCEPT PETITIONS, IF ANY**

722.1 There were none.

723. **NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2013**

723.1 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman. (Copy in Minute Book).

724. **CALLOVER**

724.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

- 725. Political Representation on the Panels of the Fire Authority
- 726. Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2012/13
- 727. Treasury Management – Stewardship Report for 2012/13
- 729. Facing the Future: Findings from the Review of Efficiencies and Operations in the Fire & Rescue Authorities in England
- 730. Quarterly Report for January to March 2013

724.2 **RESOLVED** – That all other reports be resolved in accordance with the recommendations as detailed below.

725. **POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON THE PANELS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

725.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer to secure political balance on Panels in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and agree the resultant membership to the Panels of the Fire Authority. (Copy in Minute Book).

725.2 Members were advised that changes had been proposed which included the disbandment of the Standards Panel and its terms of reference being taken on by the Scrutiny & Audit Panel. It was also proposed that the Grievance and Discipline & Dismissal Panels be merged into a Human Resources Panel.

725.3 **RESOLVED** – That:

- 1) the Panel arrangements and political representation, as set out below, be confirmed;
- 2) the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Panels be appointed by the Panels in accordance with Standing Order 40.14;
- 3) it be noted that a report will be submitted to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel on 11 July 2013, following a request to each Political Group to make any changes to current nominations to these posts; and
- 4) the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make consequential amendments to the Members’ Handbook to reflect the revised Panel structure.

	<b>Based upon political proportions for 2013/14</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	
Appointments	6	2 Cons, 1 LDem, 1 Green, 1Lab, 1 UKIP
Scrutiny & Audit *	8	3 Cons, 1 LDem, 1 Green, 2 Lab, 1 UKIP
Policy & Resources	8	3 Cons, 1 LDem, 2 Green, 1 Lab, 1 UKIP
Human Resources	6	3 Cons, 1 Lab, 1 Green, 1 UKIP
Urgency	6	3 Cons, 1 LDem, 1 Green, 1Lab
* informal protocol – up to 3 P&R Members to serve on S&A Panel		

(The total number of seats = 34, divided 14:6:6:4:4 on the basis of the 2013/14 political balance).

726. **PROVISIONAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2012/13**

- 726.1 Members considered a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Treasurer which advised the Authority on the provisional outturn position for 2012/13. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 726.2 The report provided an updated analysis of reserves and balances and the figures presented within the report were expected to be close to the final outturn, although it was possible that changes may be required before certification and final publication.
- 726.3 The provisional Revenue Budget Outturn for 2012/13 showed an underspend of £62,000 which would be transferred to General Balances and the provisional Capital Budget outturn for 2012/13 showed an underspend of £237,000 against the revised Capital Programme.
- 726.4 Councillor Taylor asked Officers to explain how the underspend had occurred. The Treasurer assured Members that the finances were being well managed and that the small underspend equated to 0.15% of the budget. The aim throughout the year had been to control spending whilst maximising reserves and balances.
- 726.5 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive reassured Members that a report is provided to Policy & Resources Panel once a quarter so that Members can monitor spend but the nature of the Service was unpredictable and therefore some budgets would vary. One such budget was the retained pay budget. This was underspent as the number of call outs were less than anticipated. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive also noted that spend on the planned capital scheme for a new fire station in Newhaven had been re-phased as a result of the time taken to investigate the possibility of partnership working with other agencies.
- 726.6 Councillor Barnes asked Officers about the level of income generated. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised Members that there was very little income generated by fees from callouts. The Service does have the ability to charge for certain types of calls and the Officer in charge would determine the appropriateness of charging at the scene after getting a special service form signed by the person making the request. The previous Fire Authority agreed not to charge for most types of services as tax payers had paid for the service and it was generally felt that they should not in effect be charged twice.
- 726.7 **RESOLVED** – That the provisional revenue and capital outturn for 2012/13 be noted.

727. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT – STEWARDSHIP REPORT FOR 2012/13**

727.1 Members considered a report of the Treasurer which provided Members with the annual treasury management stewardship report which confirmed that the Authority had complied with its approved Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential indicators. (Copy in Minute Book).

727.2 In response to questions from Members, the Treasurer advised that no new borrowing had been undertaken in 2012/13, with a total loan debt outstanding at £11.123m at 31 March 2013 and that, whilst opportunities for debt rescheduling had been reviewed, the current level of PWLB interest rates for new loans and the premium for early repayment of existing loans meant that there were no economic opportunities to reschedule debt. The likely outturn of the Fire Authority's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the underlying need to borrow, was confirmed as £10.578m.

727.3 **RESOLVED** – That the Fire Authority note the treasury management performance for 2012/13.

728. **AUTHORISED BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

728.1 Members considered a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive which sought to agree the change in arrangements relating to the Authority's principal bank accounts. (Copy in Minute Book).

728.2 **RESOLVED** – that the amended list of Officers authorised to sign cheques on behalf of the Fire Authority be approved.

729. **FACING THE FUTURE: FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW OF EFFICIENCIES AND OPERATIONS IN FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND AND THE PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

729.1 Members considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive which presented Members with the findings of the review of efficiencies and operations in Fire and Rescue Authorities in England and the proposed way forward. (Copy in Minute Book).

729.2 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive felt the findings report was unremarkable. He noted that the report had concluded Fire Authorities could save up to £196m and that £123m could be saved if Authorities increased their retained duty system staff by 10%. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive went on to add that this would be a difficult option for East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service as an increase in retained staff of 11% would be approximately 27 staff. To make the equivalent level of savings intimated within the report would result in the loss of 70 whole time staff.

729.3 Councillor Wincott felt the report did not take into account the individual make up of Fire Authorities, the make-up of the areas those Authorities served, for example the infrastructure and Sir Ken Knight did not explain the methodology used in producing the findings report.

729.4 Councillor Rufus noted his disappointment with the report and didn't feel there was much objectivity. He was willing to back the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive in a robust and forthright reply. Councillor Scott felt the report was lacking, the sums did not add up and that more for less would be expected. He felt a grown up discussion with Government was required.

729.5 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised Members that Officers would draft a response. He also added that he would contact other Services to see what they did as good practice and if those practices could be adopted by East Sussex. He considered that the cost of bureaucracy can be large which was why a merger with West Sussex County Council was sought. This would have provided a more cost effective Service with similar bureaucracy but within a much larger organisation. If this was the favoured option with Members, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised Members that the way forward lay with them in discussions with their colleagues.

729.6 **RESOLVED** – That the Service's performance and plans for further improvement, as set out in the report, be noted.

730. **QUARTERLY REPORT FOR JANUARY TO MARCH 2013**

730.1 Members considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that presented the quarterly results for the period January to March 2013. (Copy in Minute Book).

730.2 Councillors commented on the wealth of information that the quarterly report provided and the breadth of Services offered. Councillor Wincott noted that there appeared to be a spike of fatalities during 2011/12 and asked why that might be.

730.3 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive said he would provide the information to Councillor Wincott. He noted that one of the issues currently being focused on by the Service is encouraging people to report fires. Insurers hold on record many more fires than are currently reported to the Service. He added that the Fire Authority had been supportive of sprinklers and that a previous Chairman, Mr Murphy, had been the spokesperson to the LGA on sprinklers. The Fire Authority would be considering reports in the future to continue to support the installation of sprinkler systems in vulnerable homes.

730.4 Members were concerned that sprinklers were not installed in schools and it was suggested that if the profile and benefits of sprinkler systems could be raised with the general public, then pressure would mount with planners and developers. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive added that a council tower block in Sheffield had just had a sprinkler system installed, courtesy of the British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association, who hoped this pilot project would demonstrate the practicability and cost effectiveness of using sprinklers to safely protect people from fire in high rise tower blocks. It was important to look to these cases as they would provide invaluable information as to what they have done, how it was done and at what cost.



730.5 Members were given an update on the current progress on the Service Control Centre between West Sussex County Council and East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. It was anticipated that the Centre would open in April 2014 providing approximately £475,000 in savings. Currently just over 60 staff were based between Eastbourne and Chichester and when the new centre opens in Haywards Heath, it is anticipated that there will be approximately 40 staff.

730.6 Assistant Chief Officer (People & Organisational Development) Cheryl Rolph informed Members that 36 new staff had joined the Service having transferred over from West Sussex County Council via TUPE and were now in the employment of East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. It was anticipated that the contractors would finish at the Haywards Heath site by mid-December. The contract had been awarded for the technical aspect which was on schedule.

731. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

731.1 **RESOLVED** – That item 732 be exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 and accordingly is not open for public inspection on the grounds that it includes information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting concluded at 12.35 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this            day of

2013.



**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

Date: **12 September 2013**

Title: **2012/13 Performance Outcome report**

By: **Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive**

Purpose of Report: **To present the 2012/13 Performance Outcome report**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** The Fire Authority is asked to note the 2012/13 performance results.

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**MAIN ISSUES**

1. The 2012/13 Performance Outcome report is attached as a separate document (copy on web-site or available from the Clerk to the Fire Authority), and summarises the 2012/13 performance outcomes. As of last year, it presents performance outcomes for sections within the organisation, and continued development work taking place within Community Safety, Technical Fire Safety, Equality & Diversity and Health & Safety.
2. Other sections cover a summary of 2012/13 performance indicator results, complaints against the Service, analysis of incidents by station and type and Borough performance against targets.
3. The report highlights an overall performance improvement and also demonstrates that the Fire Authority is continuing to build upon achievements made in previous years. In 2012/13, 77.4% of the performance indicators met the improvement targets set.
4. The Fire Authority is asked to note that it is impossible for any report to cover every aspect of the work being undertaken by ESFRS and it is fair to say that the efforts of many staff within certain functions might, at first, appear to be under represented in this performance outcome report. However, it is everyone's efforts across the whole organisation that have contributed towards these performance outcomes – as such, all departments are key to helping us to achieve our organisational performance improvement agenda.

**Des Prichard**  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
29 August 2013

Background Papers:  
Annual Plan 2012/13



**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

Date: **12 September 2013**

Title: **Review of Members' Allowance Scheme**

By: **Clerk**

Purpose of Report: **To advise the Fire Authority of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Advisory Group following its review of the Members' Allowances Scheme.**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Fire Authority approves the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Advisory Group (IRAG) set out below:

- i. the Members' Allowance Scheme should remain unaltered except for any minor consequential amendments;
- ii. the reviewed Members' Allowance Scheme should be implemented with effect from 1 April 2014 for the years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18;
- iii. the Co-optees' allowance should be removed from the Scheme, but if the Authority decides to appoint Co-optee(s), IRAG should consider the amount of any entitlement at that time;
- iv. the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the Chairmen of all Panels should remain unaltered unless the work of any Panel is subject to significant change, at which point such SRAs should be the subject of review by IRAG;
- v. travel allowances should remain consistent with the limits set by HM Revenue & Customs for approved mileage allowance rates (AMR);
- vi. the rates at which subsistence allowances are paid should remain unchanged;
- vii. the arrangements for the updating of Members' Allowances, travel and subsistence set out at Section 10 of and Schedule 3 to the current Members' Allowance Scheme should be amended to refer to the periods commencing 1 April 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, but otherwise remain unaltered; and
- viii. IRAG should be recalled to consider the appropriateness of revising the Members' Allowance Scheme should there be any significant constitutional changes to the structure of the Authority or its governance arrangements.

## **MAIN ISSUES**

1. The Fire Authority is required to make available a Members' Allowance Scheme. Unlike the constituent authorities, the Fire Authority is not required to establish an Independent Remuneration Group to review the Members' Allowance Scheme, although it is required to consider the schemes in operation at East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council. However, the Authority has previously decided that their preferred way of determining the appropriate allowances is through an independent group, with a scheme that has been developed in a publicly independent and transparent way and which has the confidence of Members.
2. The current Members' Allowance Scheme was approved by the Authority on 3 June 2010 following an independent review by IRAG. The scheme provides for the rates of basic and special responsibility allowances to be upgraded for the years 2011/12, 2012/13, and 2013/14 by using the national headline increase applied to Local Government (LG) staff. Since the introduction of the Scheme, the Authority agreed that no increases should be applied for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 (min no 527 – 3/2/11, min no 626 – 2/2/12 and min no 709 – 7/2/13).
3. As an indexation has been applied to the scheme, the Authority is required to review the scheme after a 4-year period with an amended scheme being brought into operation with effect from 1 April 2014.
4. The Policy & Resources Panel has within its remit the responsibility for monitoring the Members' Allowance Scheme and other CFAs' schemes on an annual basis between formal review periods to ensure that it remains equitable and fair. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive has delegated authority to amend the travel and subsistence allowances.
5. Approval of a Members' Allowance Scheme cannot be delegated to a panel or officer. The Authority is, therefore, asked to consider approving a new Members' Allowance Scheme based on the recommendations of IRAG.

## **CLERK TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

21 August 2013

### **Previous Reports**

Service Planning & Resource Management Panel – 8 September 2005, Independent Remuneration Advisory Group – 26 October 2005, Service Planning & Resource Management Panel - 23 November 2005, Independent Remuneration Advisory Group – 25 November 2005, Service Planning & Resource Management Panel – 12 January 2006, Fire Authority – 19 January 2006, Fire Authority – 11 December 2006, Fire Authority – 10 December 2007, Fire Authority 11 December 2008, Policy & Resources – 3 September 2009, Policy & Resources – 19 November 2009, Fire Authority – 3 June 2010, 3 February 2011 and 2 February 2012.

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Fire Authority had previously agreed arrangements for an independent review of the Members' Allowance Scheme to ensure that a revised scheme can be brought into operation with effect from 1 April 2014. The Authority agreed to establish an Independent Remuneration Advisory Group (IRAG) to advise the Authority on what would be an appropriate basis and range of remuneration for Members having regard to a number of issues such as:
- The role of the Fire Authority and the importance of effective democratically accountable local government and community leadership taking into consideration the approved Member structures of the Authority and its leadership arrangement;
  - The scale and complexity of the Authority's legislative responsibilities, wider partnership agenda and Service activities;
  - The time and commitment required from Members to enable both the Authority and individual Members to be effective in their various roles having regard to the changes taking place in the various roles that Members are expected to fulfil, and the particular responsibilities attaching to such roles;
  - The importance of encouraging people from all backgrounds and circumstances to service in local government;
  - The implications of the prevailing Regulations applicable to Fire Authority Members' Allowances Scheme in terms of scope and nature of the contents of any scheme and any recommended best practices;
  - Comparative information from other similarly structured fire and rescue authorities; and
  - The relative merits of establishing allowances over a period of up to four years, indexed as appropriate in order to ensure review arrangements are commensurate with the level of Allowances paid and numbers of Members involved so as to avoid the need, if possible, for annual reviews.
- 1.2 IRAG comprises Martin Varley (Chairman), Deborah Robinson and Clive Mills, all of whom have previous experience of conducting independent reviews.
- 1.3 The proposed rates of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to take effect from 1 April 2014 are set out in Appendix A.
- 1.4 A report of IRAG is attached as Appendix B and the recommendations are set out on the front page of this report.

## 2. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The provision for Members' Allowance (excluding subsistence) included in the 2013/14 Revenue Budget is £74,400 per annum.
- 2.2 If the Authority approves the Members' Allowance Scheme and the allowances remain unaltered as proposed by the review, there will be no anticipated increased costs to be met, other than the annual uprating for which budget provision will be made in subsequent years over the next four year period.

## Appendix A

### Rates of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances

	East Sussex Fire Authority (as approved CFA 12.09.13) effective from 1 April 2013 £
Basic Member Allowance	2,400
Additional Special Responsibilities:	
Chairman of the Authority (presuming also Chairman of Policy & Resources and/or Scrutiny & Audit Panels)	10,500
Vice-Chairman of the Authority (presuming also Chairman of Scrutiny & Audit Panel)	5,250
Leader of a Political Group (except where the Group includes either or both the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Authority)	2,420
Chairman of other Panels if not Chairman of the Authority	1,936
Panel membership for Policy & Resources, Scrutiny & Audit and their respective Working Groups and Urgency Panels excluding those members in receipt of special responsibility allowances for Chairman, Vice Chairman and leader of other political groups*	835

\*No Member can be paid more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

#### Payments

Payments shall be made, in respect of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, in arrears on a monthly basis taking into account the days in the month (unless otherwise notified).



**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY – REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2013**

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION ADVISORY GROUP**

1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 The Independent Remuneration Advisory Group (IRAG) has noted the background to the establishment of the East Sussex Fire Authority’s (the Authority) Members’ Allowance Scheme (the Scheme). An IRAG had previously been established in 2005 and, again, in 2010 to consider and make recommendations as to the level of remuneration which should be paid to Members of the Fire Authority. The current scheme was approved by the Fire Authority in June 2010 following consideration of a report and recommendations of IRAG. The Authority has reviewed the rates annually in December in line with the framework established within the Scheme.

2. **MEMBERS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION ADVISORY GROUP**

2.1 IRAG has been re-established to carry out a further review of the Scheme. Independent persons appointed to IRAG, all of whom have had previous experience in reviewing allowances in other local authorities and the Scheme for the Authority, are Martin Varley (Chairman), Clive Mills and Deborah Robinson.

2.2 The members of IRAG have accepted their appointments to an advisory body established by the Authority, and not one having statutory authority. Nevertheless, IRAG had regard to the Regulations which are applicable in relation to allowances and remuneration paid to Members of local authorities as a guide to their proceedings and recommendations.

3. **MEETINGS OF THE GROUP AND EVIDENCE CONSIDERED**

3.1 IRAG met formally on 28 March 2013 and 25 April 2013. IRAG's members had substantial discussions by email thereafter before producing this report to the Authority.

3.2 The evidence considered by IRAG included:

1. Relevant Regulations about Members’ Allowances, namely the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and a synopsis of those Regulations;
2. Fire Authority current Members’ Allowance Scheme – Section G of the Members’ Handbook;
3. Previous Fire Authority reports approving the Scheme and annual review reports, and report on Members’ motor insurance;
4. Current Brighton & Hove City Council Members’ Allowance Scheme;
5. Current East Sussex County Council Members’ Allowance Scheme;
6. Current membership of the Fire Authority;

7. Constitution of the Fire Authority / Guide to East Sussex Fire Authority (Section A of Members' Handbook);
8. Panels – Terms of Reference (Section B of Members' Handbook);
9. Number of Fire Authority and Panel/other meetings – 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 and expected programme of meetings for 2013/14;
10. Panel membership 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13;
11. Code of Conduct for Members (Section F of the Members' Handbook);
12. Published Members' Allowances and expenses for the financial years ending 31 March 2011 and 31 March 2012;
13. Questionnaire responses from Members;
14. Oral information from the Treasurer and Assistant Chief Officer responsible for Democratic Services;
15. Available comparative data from other similarly structured Combined Fire Authorities including FRS Family Group 2, to which East Sussex was assigned on the basis of similar characteristics for comparison purposes; and
16. Information about Member activity, e.g. LIFE and Pass out Parades, Station visits, conference attendance, VFM reviews, and community work.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF IRAG**

##### 4.1 **Current and Projected Financial Situation**

4.1.1 The Treasurer outlined the Authority's current and projected financial situation. Whilst HM Government had decided to protect the budgets for some Departments, this did not include the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) under which fire and rescue services' (FRSs) grants were determined. There was greater uncertainty over future funding for FRSs. The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in 2010 had brought in a 19% reduction in grant funding over a four year period, with County FRSs having to find the majority of these savings at the beginning of the four-year period, and combined fire authorities (CFAs) at the end. The initial outcomes for this year's CSR were expected to be announced in June but the impact on individual authorities may not become clear until November/December. A savings target of £3.4m by 2017/18 was currently projected for the Authority. Local Government finance nationally had tended to be cyclical in the past but this was likely to be the longest period of sustained reductions. This was a result of the general economic downturn and the Government's deficit reduction strategy.

4.1.2 Future financial risks facing the Authority included the outcomes from the current Spending Review (SR13), the impact of the localisation of Business Rate funding (which was no longer allocated from a national 'pot'), and the impact of the localisation of funding of Council Tax Benefit on Council Tax income. The Government had in the current and previous years offered local authorities Council Tax Freeze grants which had been accepted by the Authority. The current freeze grant of 1% was only in place for 2 financial years.

- 4.1.3 Current modelling was based on 2% increases in Council Tax after 2013/14 but this, along with other assumptions, would need to be revisited as part of the next service planning round. Legislation also required local authorities to hold a council tax referendum if they wished to raise council tax above the percentage threshold determined by the Government (2% for 2013/14). However, this would be at considerable expense, including the financial risk of re-billing if there was no electorate support for the authority's proposed rise.
- 4.1.4 The Authority had a sound financial footing with an average level of balances and reserves which helped manage risk and fund specific projects, such as the Sussex Control Centre. The 2013/14 grant settlement had been better than anticipated but in effect this meant that the Authority had a 12 month period to consider options and make decisions for delivering savings of c. £4m and ensuring a sustainable service and a balanced budget over the medium term.
- 4.1.5 A local government pay restraint had been assumed in the budget. Changes to pension schemes were being introduced aimed at rebalancing the cost of contributions between employees and employers. A pension revaluation was due in the next 12 months and was likely to result in increased employer costs. In addition, the flat rate state pension due to be introduced in 2016 was likely to increase the costs of public sector employers.
- 4.1.6 The Authority's forward estimate 2012/13 showed £23.7m (59%) on firefighter pay, £5.7m (14%) on services and supplies, £5.2m (13%) on non-firefighter pay, £2.1m (5%) on premises, £2.0m (5%) on capital charges and £1.4m (4%) on transport. Savings of the scale required could not be made through support services alone, given that the majority of the Authority's spend is focussed on operational service delivery. The Authority had delivered savings of £7m since 2010/11 and was already exploring alternative ways of delivering its services through a commissioning approach, partnership working, e.g. Sussex Control Centre and use of community interest companies.

## 4.2 **General considerations**

- 4.2.1 The Treasurer and the Assistant Chief Officer apprised IRAG of current and anticipated issues impacting upon the Authority.

### Elections:

- 4.2.2 Several changes to the membership of the Authority were anticipated following the County Council elections on 2 May 2013 as well as one Brighton & Hove City Council Member standing down from the Authority. This would present challenges for new Members appointed, and officers, in apprising new Members of the recent historical events and current financial challenges facing the Authority.

Integrated Risk Management Plan:

- 4.2.3 The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process had changed the traditional way that Fire & Rescue Services planned and delivered their services. An IRMP Forum comprising Group Leaders, and which involved the Representative Bodies, met regularly to consider service planning. The Authority would be faced with difficult decisions over the future administration, in terms of both effective service delivery and balancing future budgets. The IRMP Forum would be meeting regularly to provide political direction and support to the DCFO in deciding service delivery priorities over the next 12 months.

Sussex Control Centre:

- 4.2.4 IRAG was informed about the developments for a new Sussex Control Centre (SCC) which would replace the mobilising centres at both East and West Sussex FRS providing a joint control centre at Haywards Heath fire station. There would be a common approach for firefighter training, procedures and equipment across both Services. A community interest company had been set up (currently inactive) to which Members may be appointed in the future and at which time consideration would need to be given to an entitlement to an allowance.

Governance:

- 4.2.5 It was anticipated that the involvement of Members during the next four years in the work of the Authority may change through a constitutional review of the Panels. The governance structures between the constituent authorities and the Authority were different and this had, on occasions, caused some difficulties and confusion. IRAG noted that current legislation did not allow the Authority to operate a cabinet governance structure.

Information to Members:

- 4.2.6 The paperwork issued to Members had been streamlined, but further improvements could be made in the delivery of information to Members. There was a wide range in the level of IT skills amongst Members and different IT systems were used by East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and ESFRS. The Members' area on the ESFRS Intranet was now being finalised and would help Members to be more self-sufficient in obtaining information. The climate in which Members operated had changed significantly in recent years, with greater reliance on IT and increased use of social media networks. Members were now expected to be conversant with new forms of communication and to be aware of the implications of such communications.

- 4.2.7 IRAG was informed that, whilst the general workload for Members remained much the same, there were peaks and troughs. Member workload was broadly comparable with previous years, but both the changes in the make-up of the authority (i.e. a move to no overall control) and the scale of the financial challenges that faced the authority, were likely to impact both on decision making and Member workload, especially in the short term.

#### **4.3 Comparative Position of East Sussex Fire Authority in Relation to Members' Allowance Schemes for Combined Fire Authorities**

4.3.1 IRAG considered the comparative data that had been produced drawn from 24 CFAs (and South and West Yorkshire CFAs), and the comparison of the Authority with the Audit Commission Family Group 2 comprising similar sized authorities. In the context of the Family Group, the Authority compared well with other authorities, with the Chairman's allowance at 97% of the average for the Group, Committee (Panel) Chairman's allowance at 95% of the average of those who paid it, and the Basic Member Allowance at 106% of the average.

#### **4.4 Members' Allowances Schemes for Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council**

4.4.1 IRAG considered the current Members' Allowance Schemes for both constituent authorities of the Authority; Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council. IRAG noted that East Sussex County Council has a cabinet model of governance. This is different to the Committee model which is in place at the Authority.

#### **4.5 Questionnaire responses from Fire Authority Members**

4.5.1 At the request of IRAG an electronic survey of all Members had been undertaken concerning the current Members' Allowance Scheme. Disappointingly, only three Members had given any responses to the questionnaire. IRAG gave careful consideration to the three responses that had been returned. No Member had asked to be interviewed by IRAG to give views on the current Members' Allowance Scheme.

4.5.2 IRAG deduced from the low response that the majority of Members were unlikely to be discontented with the operation of the current Members' Allowance Scheme.

4.5.3 IRAG considered Members' comments, in particular, that:

1. there was an element of public service in the role of an elected Member;
2. any allowance scheme was not intended to equate to a salary;
3. there was some uncertainty of how effective the roles of Member Leads have been;
4. the time spent on business relating to the Authority had increased due to financial pressures on it; and
5. the current Members' Allowance Scheme appears to be working well.

#### 4.6 **The Scheme – Annual upgrading**

4.6.1 IRAG noted from the comparative data that 17 of 24 CFAs updated their member allowance schemes by reference to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services increase applied to staff salaries. Of the others, two authorities applied an index scheme related to CPI and one referenced to RPI. IRAG noted that if the Members' Allowance Scheme were to be linked to an index, it must be reviewed after four years.

#### 4.7 **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)**

4.7.1 IRAG noted that the work of the Standards Panel had diminished considerably since the Localism Act 2011 had been brought into force. It was anticipated that the Panel may only need to meet once or twice a year in the future and there may need to be a review of the delivery of the Panel's functions. IRAG considered that it was appropriate to continue to pay a Standard Panel's Chairman's allowance whilst the Panel continued.

(Note: The Authority on 6 June 2013 agreed to disband the Standards Panel and subsume its work into that of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel).

4.7.2 From the comparative data, IRAG noted that the Authority was well placed with the Chairman's allowance at 97% of the average for the Group, and Committee (Panel) Chairman's allowance at 95% of the average of those who paid it.

#### 4.8 **Group Leaders**

4.8.1 IRAG considered the allowances for the Political Group Leaders. These were relative to the amount of work required by Group Leaders in the additional meetings attended and work they were involved in, such as the IRMP Forum, meetings with Representative Bodies, etc., and increased contact with Principal Officers on a range of issues. In view of the anticipated service planning work, it was anticipated that political leads would be more active over the next 12-18 months.

#### 4.9 **Member Leads**

4.9.1 Currently, 16 Member Leads worked with Principal Officers on specific topic areas. All of them had been very engaged in training resulting in a detailed knowledge and understanding of their respective subject areas, chairing meetings and championing their service areas. The Member Lead approach had been largely positive but now needed to be reviewed, particularly in the light of reduced capacity to provide officer support and being somewhat disproportionate for the size of the Authority. IRAG considered the payment of allowances for Member Leads, but was of the view that the workload did not currently warrant a specific allowance for such roles.

#### 4.10 **Member Development and Training**

4.10.1 A cross-party Member Development Steering Group had been established to consider a range of issues to support Members in their various roles. This had included the development of a mentoring scheme for Members which had proved very successful and did not act on party lines. The Member Development Steering Group would continue to meet quarterly to consider an approach to Member training, appraisals, exit interviews and mentoring. As part of Member development, Members were invited to take part in exit interviews so that their experiences could help shape future Member development.

#### 4.11 **Supporting Authority Events and other work**

4.11.1 IRAG is impressed that the Members were very connected and committed to the Service and the Chairman played a significant civic role attending station open days, including Christmas Day visits. Members were actively involved in the work of the Service, including attendance at Pass-Out parades, etc., with a pro-active focus on prevention methods such as Home Safety Visits.

#### 4.12 **Independent Persons/ Co-optees**

4.12.1 IRAG noted that following changes brought about in the Localism Act 2011, the Authority was no longer required to appoint Independent Persons to the Standards Panel and consequently, not required to have an independent person chairing that Panel. IRAG was also informed that no Co-optees had been appointed to the Authority and there were no current plans to do so. IRAG considered that it was appropriate to remove the Co-optees' allowances from the Scheme as the amount of work and time required by a Co-optee could not be determined at this time. Should the Authority decide at a future date to appoint Co-optees, IRAG agreed that it would be willing to convene to consider an allowance at that time.

#### 4.13 **Basic Allowance**

4.13.1 IRAG noted from the comparative data of those in the Audit Commission's Family Group 2 that the Authority was well placed against other Fire Authorities, with the Authority's Members' Basic Allowance set at 106% of the average.

#### 4.14 **Subsistence Allowances**

4.14.1 IRAG was reminded that the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive had delegated power to implement appropriate annual increases to travel rates and subsistence rates (as set out in Schedule 3 of the Scheme). IRAG also noted that the Authority generally provided a sandwich lunch when the Authority and Panels met, negating the need for Members to submit claims for subsistence allowances.

#### 4.15. **Travel Allowances**

- 4.15.1 IRAG noted the comments from two of the questionnaire responses that the approved mileage rates were no longer reasonable in relation to the cost of fuel and insurance. Whilst recognising the rising costs of running a private motor vehicle, IRAG was mindful of the limits set by HM Revenue & Customs for approved mileage allowances rates (AMR) and considered that travel allowances should remain consistent with AMR.  
(<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/travel.htm>)
- 4.15.2 IRAG took the view that to depart from the AMR would impose a significant and unnecessary administrative burden on the Authority. It would be necessary to calculate the taxable benefit derived from payments in excess of AMR which would create an additional overhead cost.
- 4.15.3 IRAG considered the requirement for Members to have current motor insurance, including business use, in place for them to be able to claim motor mileage allowance. IRAG considers that the basic Member allowance is set at a rate which will cover any incidental costs such as any additional motor insurance premium that may be applied for business use. Furthermore, Members are also members of the two constituent authorities. They will have the same requirements to have business use insurance cover imposed upon their use of motor vehicles in respect of their respective roles as councillors.

#### 4.16 **Conclusion**

- 4.16.1 IRAG agreed that, given the evidence that it had considered, in particular the comparative data in relation to the Family Group 2 of similar sized CFAs, and the current financial position for the Authority outlined by the Treasurer, the Members' Allowance Scheme should continue with the current rates and the Co-optees' allowances be deleted from the Scheme. All other aspects of the Scheme remained appropriate and did not require any amendments (other than minor consequential amendments).
- 4.16.2 The financial impact of the recommendations of IRAG, if implemented, (together with the cessation of the Standard Panel's Chairman's allowance) would lead to a reduction in the costs of the Scheme in the year commencing 1 April 2014 of approximately £6,000.
- 4.16.3 IRAG indicated that it would be pleased to be recalled to consider the Scheme should there be any significant changes to the constitutional arrangements of the Authority or to its governance arrangements.



5. **RECOMMENDATIONS OF IRAG**

- i. the Members' Allowance Scheme should remain unaltered except for any minor consequential amendments;
- ii. the reviewed Members' Allowance Scheme should be implemented with effect from 1 April 2014 for the years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18;
- iii. the Co-optees' allowance should be removed from the Scheme, but if the Authority decide to appoint Co-optee(s), IRAG would be willing to consider the amount of entitlement;
- iv. the special responsibility allowance for the Chairs of all Panels should remain unaltered unless the work of any Panel is subject to significant change, at which point such SRAs should be the subject of review;
- v. travel allowances should remain consistent with the limits set by HM Revenue & Customs for AMR;
- vi. the rates at which subsistence allowances are paid should remain unchanged;
- vii. the arrangements for the updating of Members' allowances, travel and subsistence set out at Section 10 of and Schedule 3 to the current Members' Allowance Scheme should be amended to refer to the periods commencing 1 April 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, but otherwise remain unaltered; and
- viii. IRAG will be happy to be recalled to consider the appropriateness of revising the Scheme should there be any significant constitutional changes to the structure of the Authority or its governance arrangements.

**Martin Varley**

**CHAIRMAN**

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION ADVISORY GROUP**

1 July 2013



**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

Date: **12 September 2013**  
 Title: **Quarterly Report for April to June 2013**  
 By: **Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive**  
 Purpose of Report: **To consider the quarterly results for the period 1 April to 30 June 2013**

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Fire Authority is asked to note the report.

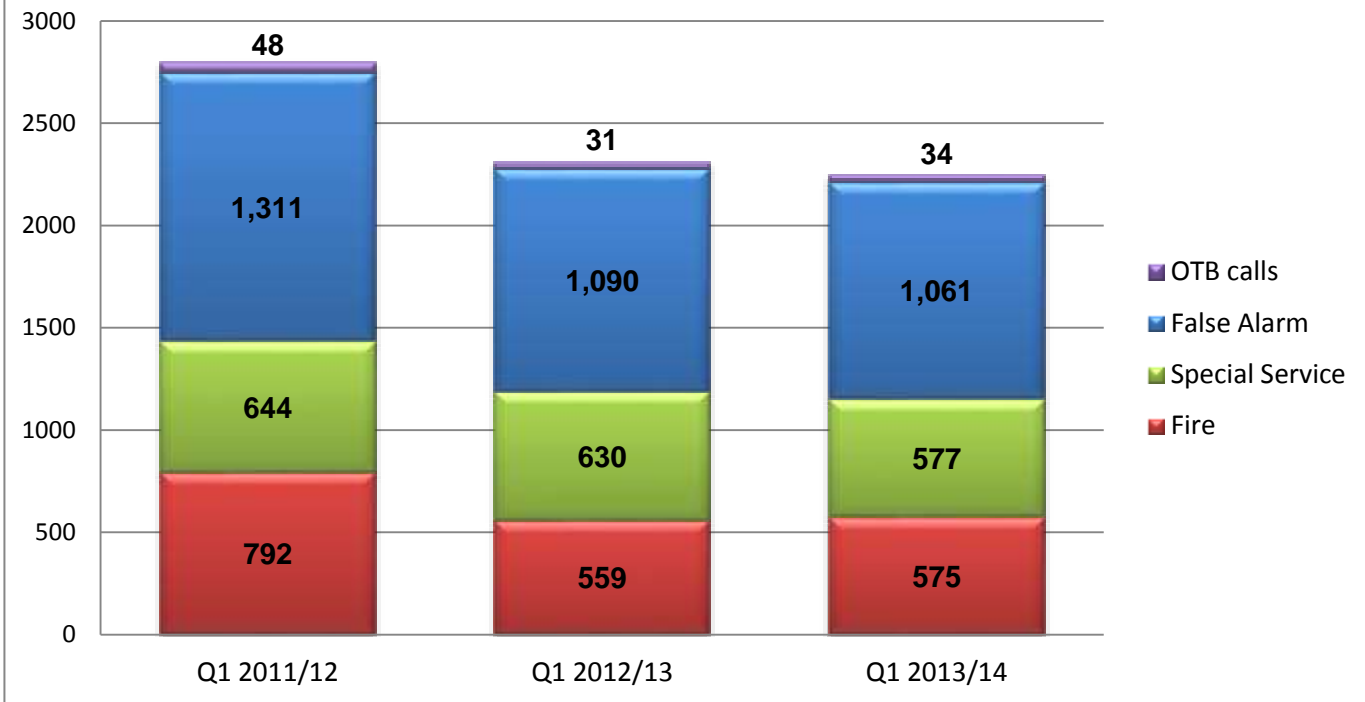
**1 FIRES AND OTHER OCCURRENCES**

**1.1 Number of Calls**

1.1.1 During the period 1 April to 30 June 2013, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service responded to 2,226 calls, a 2.9% reduction on the same period in 2012/13 (2,293) and a 19.2% reduction on the same period in 2011/12 (2,757).

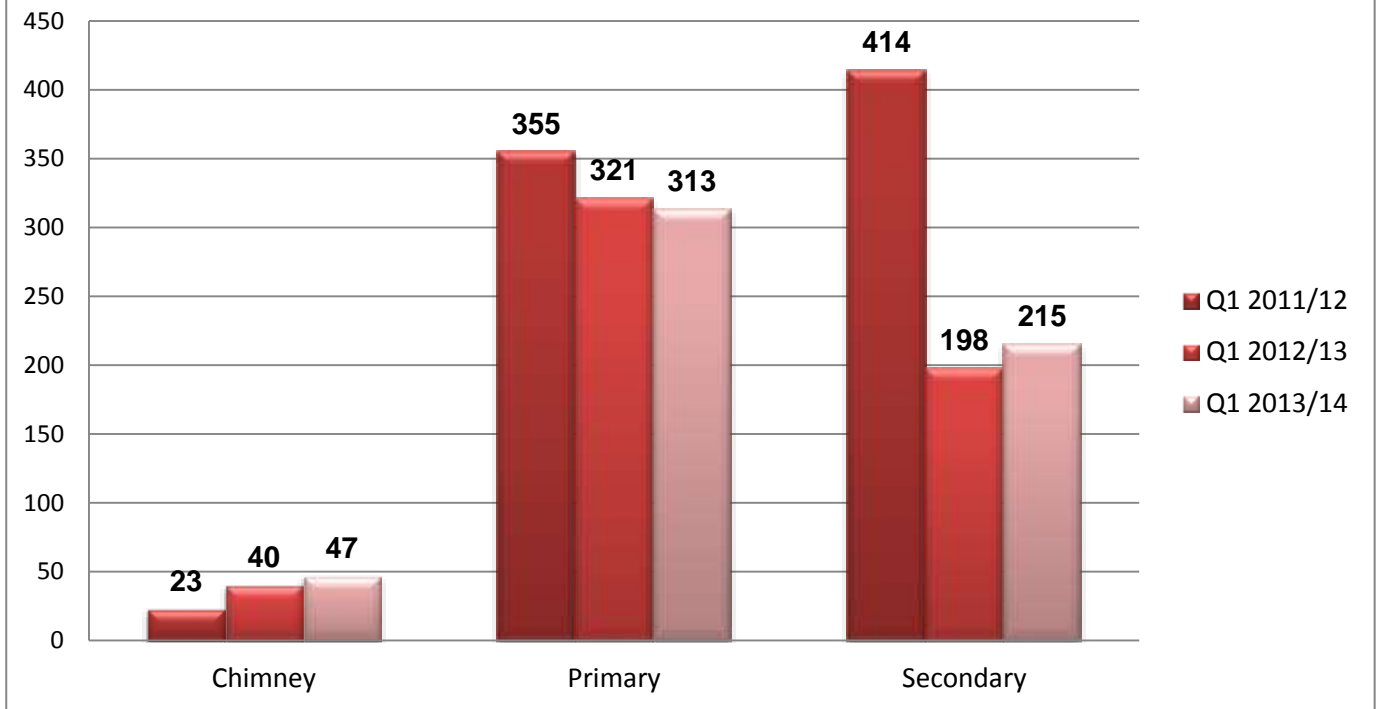
	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
<u>Incidents attended</u>			
Fires including small fires and chimney fires	792	559	575
Special Services including Road Traffic Collisions	644	630	577
False Alarm calls including Malicious, Good Intent, and False Alarm due to Apparatus	1,311	1,090	1,061
	2,747	2,279	2,213
<u>Over the Border Calls assistance</u>			
to West Sussex	8	13	13
to Kent	2	1	0
	2,757	2,293	2,226
In addition, the following assistance was received from neighbouring Fire & Rescue Services:			
from West Sussex	37	15	15
from Kent	1	2	6

## Fire and Other Incidents Quarter Comparison Last 3 Years



**N.B. Over the Border calls (OTB) is the total of assistance provided and received**

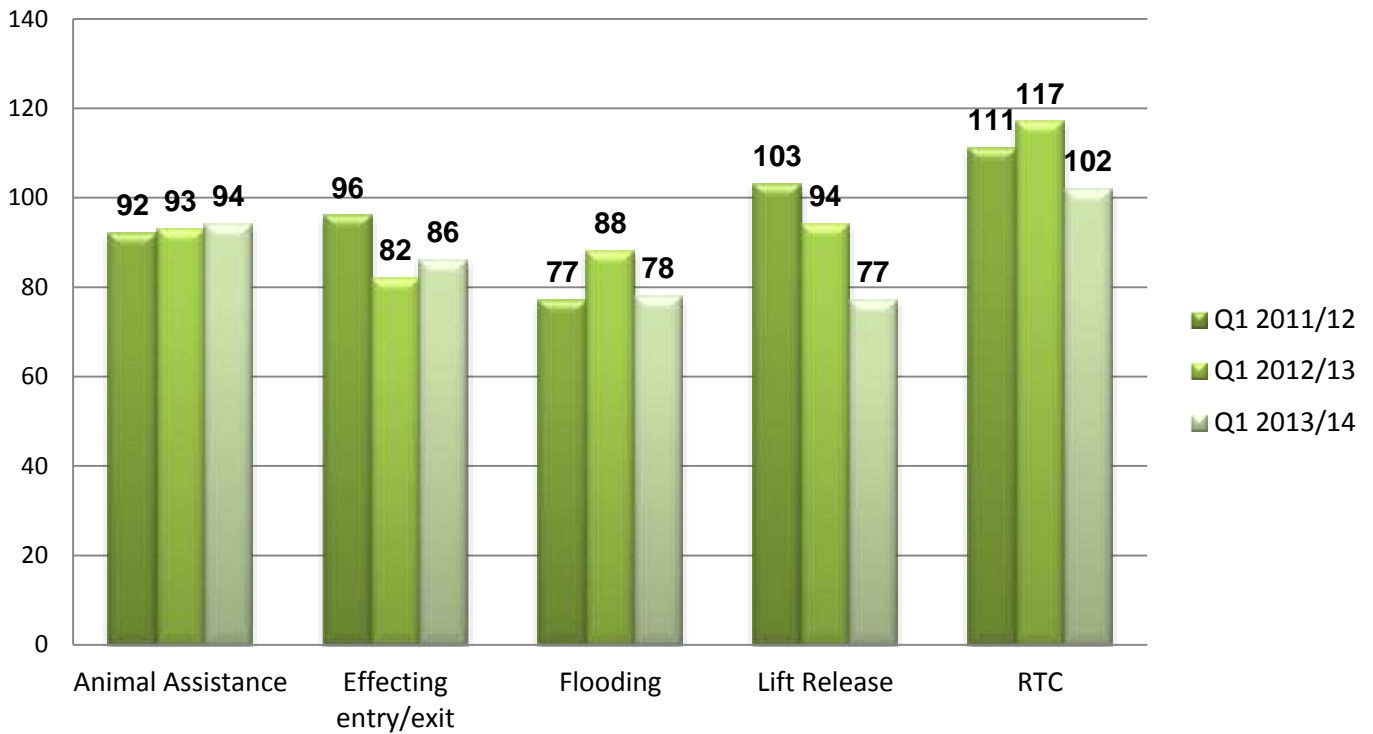
## Number of Fires Quarter Comparison Last 3 Years



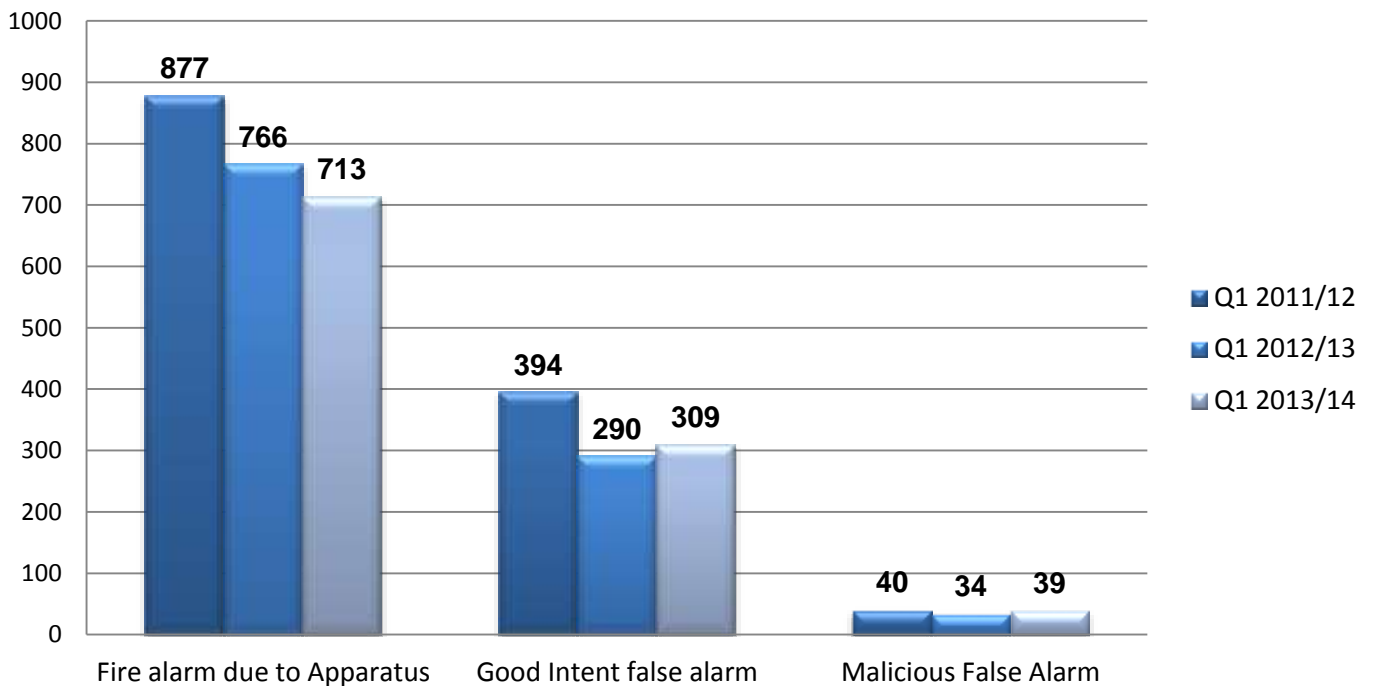
**Primary Fire** - fires include all fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures or any fire involving casualties, rescues, or fires attended by five or more appliances.

**Secondary Fire** - the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or five or more appliances attend. They include fires in single derelict buildings.

### Top Five Special Service Call Incidents Quarter Comparison Last 3 Years



### Number of False Alarms Quarter Comparison Last 3 Years



## 1.2 **Fatalities in Fires**

1.2.1 There was one fatality in a fire during this period in 2013/14.

There was one fatality in a fire during the same period in 2012/13.

There were two fatalities in fires during this quarter in 2011/12.

## 1.3 **Persons Injured (including rescue with Injury)**

	Fire Incidents			Special Service Incidents			Total		
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Quarter One	25	14	24	85	80	82	110	94	106
Quarter Two	15	12		75	81		90	93	
Quarter Three	26	31		83	81		109	112	
Quarter Four	24	22		72	73		96	95	
Annual Total	90	79		315	315		405	394	

Includes victims that were rescued with an injury: includes 'first aid', 'precautionary checks' and 'Victim went to Hospital injuries appear to be slight or serious'.

## 1.4 **Persons Rescued (rescue without injury)**

	Fire Incidents			Special Service Incidents			Total		
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Quarter One	6	4	5	128	129	110	134	133	115
Quarter Two	4	3		128	140		132	143	
Quarter Three	8	5		116	125		124	130	
Quarter Four	7	2		91	123		98	125	
Annual Total	25	14		463	517		488	531	

Victims that were rescued only.

Figures for the latest quarter are provisional as all incidents may not have been completed.

## 2. **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

2.1 The Service's strength and financial provision at 30 June 2013, against the previously approved Establishment Scheme, were as follows:

	<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Financial Provision 2013/14</b>	<b>Actual Strength</b>
<b><u>Wholetime Members</u></b>			
Specialist and Supervisory Staff, (including Station Managers)	61	61	63
Operational Staff on Stations	347	347	351
<b>Total:</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>414</b>
*includes previously approved 4 Station Managers on the Operational Improvement Team, added to the Establishment			
Add:			
Mobilising and Communications Staff	54	54	61
<b>Total Wholetime</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>475</b>
<b><u>Part-time Members</u></b>			
Whole Unit equivalent	299	242	233
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>708</b>

## 2.2 **Medals and Other Awards**

2.2.1 There were two Long Service and Good Conduct medals awarded during this quarter, to Firefighter M Simes and Crew Manager J Stoneham.

## 2.3 **Appointments, Examination Results, Promotions, Resignations and Retirements**

### 2.3.1 **Appointments**

#### 2.3.1.1 **Wholetime**

There were 35 Wholetime appointments during the quarter, 34 of whom were transferred across from West Sussex FRS's Control Room at Chichester; the other wholetime appointee was a Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighter who became wholetime at Hove.



### 2.3.1.2 Retained

There were nine Retained Duty System (RDS) appointments during this quarter: two at Battle, one at Crowborough, one at Newhaven, two at Pevensey and three at Uckfield.

### 2.3.1.3 Support Staff

There were seven Support Staff appointed this quarter: one at Bohemia Fire Station, two at Chichester Control Room and four at Headquarters.

### 2.3.2 Promotions

There were four promotions during this quarter: three from Firefighter to Crew Manager, and one from Crew Manager to Watch Manager.

### 2.3.3 **Resignations**

#### 2.3.3.1 Wholetime

There were no Wholetime resignations during this quarter.

#### 2.3.3.2 Retained Duty System

There were five RDS resignations during this quarter: one each from Broad Oak, Lewes, Hailsham, The Ridge and the Training Centre.

#### 2.3.3.3 Support Staff

There were two Support Staff resignations during this quarter, both from Headquarters.

### 2.3.4 **Retirements**

2.3.4.1 No operational personnel retired from East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service in the last quarter.

#### 2.3.4.2 Support Staff

There was one member of Support Staff who retired from East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service in the last quarter, from Bexhill Fire Station.

### 2.3.4 **Exam Results**

Following three years of study, project work and a final panel presentation, Mark Hobbs and Martin Combs have recently passed the CFPA Europe Advanced Diploma in Fire Safety Management.

### 3. **LEARNING & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### 3.1 **Communications & Marketing**

In April, Assistant Chief Officer Cheryl Rolph, the Head of Learning & Organisational Development Mark Rist and the Acting Communications & Marketing Manager Victoria Jones, attended a social media conference run by London Fire Brigade. Speakers included representatives from Police, London Fire Brigade, journalists and social media consultants. This will help inform the development of the use of social media within East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

In June, Elizabeth Curtis joined East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service as the new Communications & Marketing Manager. She is now working on identifying communication priorities for the coming months in order to deliver against the strategies and plans already in place.

#### 3.2 **Inclusion & Diversity**

In June 2012 the Head of Organisational Development retired and the post was amalgamated with the Head of Learning & Development, creating Learning & Organisational Development (L&OD).

In April 2013, following the previous incumbent leaving the Service, the Equality & Diversity Manager post was separated into two distinct part-time roles. The two roles remain intrinsically linked, however, rather than now just focussing on the nine protected characteristics as detailed within the Equality Act 2010, the Service has moved towards the broader Social Inclusion agenda which naturally encompasses the protected characteristics. Using our Community Risk Management data to identify, on a Borough by Borough basis, those that are potentially socially excluded and, therefore, at risk will enable us to provide a targeted approach. This will also ensure that the training given to staff is specific and focussed on the needs of the community. To reflect this change the section has changed its name to Inclusion & Diversity (I&D).

The I&D team have been working closely with the City Borough preparing for this year's Pride parade on 3 August. Once again, we will be participating in the parade and the park event as well as having a pre-Pride breakfast event for all those wishing to show their support.

Inclusion & Diversity inductions still happen for new members of staff and an input to ESFRS volunteers was provided in the first quarter.

#### 3.3 **Command & Operational Training**

##### **Station-Based Maintenance of Competence Project**

In September 2012, the Corporate Management Team approved a review of the station-based maintenance of competence programme as it was realised that the two year planner was difficult to achieve within the allotted training time for RDS personnel.

In April 2013, a revised/interim maintenance of competence programme was devised and delivered to RDS colleagues that would better support them in the achievement of their maintenance of competence. Although all of the risk-critical competencies are met within the interim programme, the recording of activities was streamlined and simulations were produced to gather together some of the training.

A sub-group of the Operational Training Review Group (OTRG) has been formulated to produce a programme that is achievable by all duty systems. This group consists of station-based personnel and managers from appropriate departments, in order to achieve a broad spectrum of knowledge and practical use of the current system in place.

Standard operating procedures, regional training packages and other Services' ways of working are being considered in the production of the new programme which is due to be realised by April 2014.

### 3.4 **Organisational & Workforce Development**

#### Corporate Training & Development

In the first quarter the Learning & Organisational Development team has arranged 123 training events across the Service with 534 people receiving training. This training ranges from operational courses, including Incident Command, through to Fire Safety and development training, including those new to the Service.

During the first quarter, the team supported 61 Firefighters in development; both wholetime and RDS employees, plus a further two wholetime transferee induction programmes. 34 employees are currently being supported by the Organisational & Workforce Development team through either Supervisory, Middle or Strategic Manager Development Programmes.

Support has been given to the Chichester based Control staff. This included a visit to Chichester to induct the Crew and Watch Managers into East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Learning & Organisational Development processes, as well as designing some training for them specific to their needs.

### 4.1 **AUTHORITY EVENTS**

- 4.1.1 Members of the Fire Authority have attended a number of Fire & Rescue events during this quarter, including various Station Open Days around the County.
- 4.1.2 On 22 April, Councillor Rufus attended an All Party Parliamentary Fire & Rescue Group Parliamentary Seminar on the Impact of Fire on our Schools.
- 4.1.3 Members are encouraged to complete and return feedback forms whenever possible to help monitor the events organised by ESFRS.

## 5. **SERVICE DELIVERY – PREVENTION AND PROTECTION**

### 5.1 **Technical Fire Safety**

#### 5.1.1 **Enforcement Activity**

During the last quarter, ESFRS completed 124 fire safety audits as part of its enforcement activity under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Of these, 71 were broadly compliant with only minimal enforcement action required. The remaining 53 required either informal or formal enforcement action by the Service to address significant inadequate fire safety standards within the premises.

#### 5.1.2 **Formal Notices**

A number of formal Notices were issued in the last quarter. These were:

##### **1 Alterations Notice**

###### **The Quintins Centre, Hailsham**

This was issued on the Quintins Centre, a small indoor shopping centre in Hailsham. The building was constructed to a fire engineered design when it was built approximately 25 years ago, and recent involvement at the premises highlighted a number of changes that had compromised the original fire safety solution. The local Fire Safety Inspector, with technical support from the Service's Fire Engineer, worked with the premises to address the identified issues. An Alterations Notice was issued to the premises, requiring the Fire Authority to be advised of any future proposed changes to the building, so that it can consider the impact on the fire safety arrangements.

##### **3 Prohibition Notices**

These were issued on the following premises:

###### **Sanchos, High Street, Uckfield**

The Uckfield Business Safety Office, working in partnership with the Local Authority Housing Office, visited the premises following a complaint.

The premises is a terraced property consisting of an open plan ground floor shop used for fast food preparation and sales, with living accommodation on the first floor for the owner and his family. There was a single staircase at the rear of the ground floor leading to the first floor living accommodation.

Additional accommodation had been provided for staff in the loft area above the first floor. This was accessed via a loft ladder and hatch from the first floor landing. The loft area showed signs of established living accommodation, including five single beds, washing facilities, furniture and personal possessions, etc. The Local Authority Building Control and Planning Officers had not been aware of this arrangement.

Due to the serious and imminent risk from fire to the occupants, a Prohibition Notice was issued on the premises on 18 April 2013 restricting the use of the loft space for sleeping or living accommodation.

#### Formworks(UK) Limited, North Street, Lewes

This premises is a factory unit in Lewes housing a number of small businesses units, each operating independently. The units were involved in a number of activities, including making film props, welding, carpentry, laser cutting and sound recording. A large part of the building was used to store combustible items. A Fire Safety Inspector attended the premises following a complaint concerning its use for sleeping accommodation.

Inspection of the site revealed a number of dangerous conditions, these included poor housekeeping, lack of an adequate fire alarm system, structures built internally that did not meet safety standards and people sleeping on the premises (one person in accommodation constructed from expanded polystyrene sheets). The risk to occupants using the premises as sleeping accommodation was explained to the occupiers and, because of the serious and imminent danger of fire, a Prohibition Notice was served, preventing sleeping on the premises. This case has highlighted the issue of people finding alternative domestic accommodation in these economically testing times. Local Authority Housing Officers were informed at an early stage in the process.

A Prohibition Notice was issued on 2 May restricting the use of the premises.

#### Fillets, Lewes Road, Brighton

Concerns about the use of a basement in a fish and chip shop being used as sleeping accommodation were brought to the Service's attention by Brighton & Hove City Council (B&HCC) following an environmental health inspection earlier the same day. The B&HCC officer had noted a bed in a room in the basement during their inspection and was concerned that the only available means of escape was via the ground floor commercial kitchen. A subsequent visit by one of the Service's Fire Safety Inspectors found matters giving rise to serious and imminent danger from fire to persons using the basement as sleeping accommodation.

A Prohibition Notice was, therefore, served on 20 May 2013, preventing the basement being used for sleeping accommodation.

#### Enforcement Notices

There was 1 Enforcement Notice issued in the quarter.

#### Carlton Court Hotel, Wilmington Square, Eastbourne

Following receipt of information, a multi-agency visit by Fire Safety Inspectors and Eastbourne Borough Housing Officers was carried out. The premises were found to have significant fire safety deficiencies and persons were found to be residing in the premises, although it is not currently operating as a hotel.

An Enforcement Notice was issued on 27 June, requiring the responsible person to complete a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment in order that the responsible person may identify remedial measures that are appropriate for the business.

#### 5.1.3 Prosecutions

No fire safety prosecution hearings took place during the quarter.

#### 5.1.4 Simple Cautions

1 Simple Caution has been issued in the last quarter:

##### Barefoot Yurts, Stubb Lane, Brede

A fire safety investigation was commenced as a result of a fire on 19 August 2012, during which a young couple were placed at risk of death and/or serious injury whilst staying inside a yurt without a fire alarm. The couple were sleeping in the yurt at the time of the fire and were afforded no early warning. Fortunately the couple woke at the sound of falling crockery in a neighbouring structure and escaped the yurt before it was consumed by fire. The escape was only possible due to the occupants hearing items falling in the burning kitchen hut.

A thorough investigation followed into the causes of the fire and the non-compliance of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in relation to the business and, subsequently, the owner of the business admitted guilt. In recognition of the public interest aspects of the case it was determined that the matter was to be disposed of outside of court and a Simple Caution was issued on the 18 June 2013. The Service recognises that alternative accommodation is a growing industry and we can drive down the risk by engaging with businesses to offer guidance on complying with fire safety legislation. A business safety event is being planned with regard to this issue.

#### 5.1.5 Informal Cautions

1 Informal Caution was issued in the quarter.

##### Red Cottage, Queens Road, Brighton

An Informal Caution was issued following delayed compliance with a formal Notice. In consideration of the public interest, it was not considered appropriate for the Service to prosecute on this occasion, as the required work was eventually completed. However, as the delay had placed relevant persons at risk from fire for an extended period, an Informal Caution was considered appropriate and proportionate. An Informal Caution was issued on 5 April 2013.

#### 5.1.6 Other Legislation and Enforcement Matters

The HQ Business Safety department ran a successful and informative seminar on 6 June, which was well attended by personnel from the Borough Business Safety Offices. A number of topical areas of legislation and enforcement were covered, including an insight into Primary Authority Schemes.

## 5.1.7 Business Safety Matters

### Hoteliers Seminar

A meeting has been held between members of the Headquarters Business Safety Team and a representative from the Brighton Hoteliers Association. Matters discussed included how East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service can support local businesses and work with them to improve not only fire safety standards but also business resilience in general. The Brighton Hotelier representative was very encouraged to hear our suggestions and expressed a wish to fully engage with the Service to improve fire safety standards. It was agreed to host a launch seminar at one of their hotels in Brighton or Hove. A date in October, after the busy summer season, was suggested. This will give enough time for the Business Safety department to put together a first class information toolbox tailored to the hotel industry.

Following this event, the Business Safety Department is aiming to produce a number of complete packages and presentations (toolboxes) specifically tailored to individual business sector needs. These resources will be made available to the Borough Business Safety officers.

## 5.1.8 Borough Business Initiatives

### Hastings HMO Licensing Scheme

The Hastings Business Safety Office has been working jointly with the housing authority on the additional licensing scheme aimed at raising housing standards in the town.

### Hastings Business Watch

Hastings Borough Business Safety staff are partners in a new initiative to inform, educate and advise the business community in Hastings on areas including technical fire safety, business continuity and security. Monthly newsletters are circulated on any issues that have occurred and any good practice in the area. Support is also given to 'Quality Street' events in the various industrial estates in the town. This involves getting out and engaging with the business community to provide reassurance and show the public what they are getting for their money.

### East Sussex Care Home Association

Fire Safety Inspectors from the Hastings Borough are planning to hold a presentation to care providers in Hastings aimed at raising awareness and fire safety standards in care homes. A previous presentation was well received.

### Hastings Town Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

The Borough Business Safety Department sits on the SAG, which engages and advises event planners on specific safety matters, including fire safety and crowd safety. Input has been given into the following recent events: May Day, Jack in the Green and the Hastings air display. Further events included, Pirate Week, Carnival Week and the Pram Race. This is a great forum to promote both inter-agency working and business support.

### Wealden Display Boards

The Wealden Borough is producing a series of seven display boards which detail fire safety issues, including before and after photographs with examples of good and poor practice, as well as the five steps to risk assessment. These boards will be used during business engagement events.

### Business Seminar in September

The Borough is planning a business seminar in September. The full day event will include a fire safety presentation, business advice and an open forum question and answer session. The event will be targeted at responsible persons from commercial premises and will be advertised through the Chambers of Commerce.

## 5.1.9 Fire Engineering Projects

### British Engineerium in Hove

A consultation has been received for a new building being constructed as part of a redevelopment programme at the British Engineerium. The new building is to be sited on a remote part of the sloping site where access for fire appliances is significantly extended. The Service's Fire Engineer has worked with local Fire Safety Inspectors and Building Control Officers to achieve a bespoke fire safety solution for the scheme.

### Gildredge House Free School, Eastbourne

Consultation has commenced in respect of the redevelopment of a commercial site in Eastbourne which will open as 'Gildredge House Free School' in September. This project is being undertaken in a number of phases to convert and extend the existing buildings, using an engineered approach to fire safety.



## Other Fire Engineering Projects

Fire engineering support has been given in respect of plans for a new-build primary school in the Rother Borough, proposals for which currently include sprinklers, as well as changes in the layout of a care home in Hailsham, which have impacted on the effective operation of the installed sprinkler system.

### 5.1.10 Technical Fire Safety Database Update

The Community Risk Management (CRM) fire safety database is continuing to develop. CRM Administrators are continuing to make improvements to the system following feedback from staff. Headquarters staff are successfully extracting data from the system for reporting purposes.

The reports that will provide data for the end of year Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) returns are still not working properly. The company that designed the bespoke system (Optevia) is progressing this.

Data cleansing in line with the Data Warehouse is progressing well, with 99% of the premises on the system now having a post code allocated. This task is expected to be completed by end of August.

HQ staff have visited the Borough Business Safety offices to support staff in the use of the system and manipulation of data. Requests for amendments and improvements to the system have been collated and actioned, in most cases.

User tip sheets have been produced and updated and are available on the Service intranet.

### 5.1.11 Fire Investigation

The fire investigation team undertook 25 Level 2 fire investigations during the quarter, including one fatal fire in a council flat in Brighton. Enquiries and appropriate actions regarding this fire are ongoing and a full report is being prepared for the Coroner.

#### Inquests

##### Baldings Cottages, Wivelsfield Green

The inquest into the fatal fire, which occurred in August 2012, took place during May. The conclusion of the fire investigation was that one of three electrical appliances inside a TV cabinet had caused the fire. The occupant was in very poor health and had severely restricted mobility. A verdict of accidental death was recorded by the Coroner.

## St Margaret's Road, St. Leonard's

The inquest into the fatal fire, which occurred in December 2011, took place during June. One of the two occupants of the flat died from smoke inhalation. The fire investigation concluded that the fire had been caused by a human act, either accidental or deliberate. During the inquest, the Coroner questioned the second occupant, who gave several different accounts of events. The Coroner stated that he believed that the fire had been started deliberately by one of the two occupants. He recorded an open verdict.

### 5.1.12 Fire Investigations of Interest

#### Fire Investigation into Thermoplastic Lighting Diffusers – Thalia House, London Road, Bexhill

On 24 April 2013 a fire occurred which was found to have started accidentally in a light fitting in the common ways of a sheltered housing complex. The relatively small fire created abnormally large amounts of thick black smoke, which resulted in a number of residents having to be rescued by the fire and rescue service.

A fire engineering investigation was undertaken in conjunction with the Fire Investigation Officer into the circumstances of the incident. The joint investigation concluded that the plastic light diffuser had ignited and dropped onto the carpet below. The physical properties of the light diffuser and carpet were the main cause of the large amounts of smoke produced.

Guidance on complying with the fire safety requirements of the Building Regulations is contained in Approved Document B (ADB). Although there are some limitations on the use of plastic diffusers in common ways in ADB, there is no restriction on the type of floor coverings. A report produced following the investigation makes a specific recommendation that this guidance should be reviewed in respect of the use of both items in common ways. To support this recommendation, copies of the report have been sent to the DCLG and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) for their consideration.

The report has also been shared with other fire and rescue services. We believe there are likely to be further examples of similar incidents in other areas, and although these may not have resulted in direct risk to life, they may have had the potential to do so. The Business Safety department is collating this information to forward to the DCLG in support of our recommendation.

The Headquarters Business Safety Team have published a Black Museum case following this incident, highlighting the fire safety outcomes and giving advice for responsible persons in other similar premises. The Black Museum case can be viewed on the ESFRS website:

<http://www.esfrs.org/blackmuseum/fluorescentLight.shtml>

#### Falcon Court, Swanborough Place, Brighton

A fire occurred in the common ways in June which impacted on the means of escape for a number of residents. The incident is currently being investigated by Sussex Police, supported by Service Fire Investigators and Brighton & Hove City Council's Health & Safety team.

#### Medina House, Kings Esplanade, Hove

A fire occurred in May in this premises. It is currently derelict and used as a squat and was not occupied at the time of the fire. The incident is currently being investigated by Sussex Police, supported by Service Fire Investigators.

#### 5.1.13 Joint ESFRS / HSE Investigation into Electrical Fires

Following a request from HM Principal Specialist Inspector for Electrical Networks, and in order to further understanding of the nature of fires involving electrical intake equipment, the Service's Fire Investigators will be commencing a period of further investigation (following previous initial research after a fatal fire in Eastbourne in May 2010) commencing on 1 July 2013 and due to run until the end of the year.

An initial meeting was held at the Service Training Centre on Monday 17 June with the ESFRS Fire Investigation Team and representatives from the HSE, UK Power Networks, the British Electrotechnical and Allied Manufacturers Association (BEAMA) and Burgoyne's (Forensic Scientists and Engineers).

The HSE has chosen ESFRS to lead on this investigation due to the previous work the Service has undertaken, which has led to a number of safety improvements and better awareness across the UK.

A case study can be found at <http://www.esfrs.org/blackmuseum/electricalIntake3.shtml>. There are also links to a number of related documents explaining the issue.

#### 5.1.14 Court Hearings

##### Fire in Uckfield High Street, September 2012

The fire started in a commercial bin and spread to involve 4 premises in the High Street and required a 6-pump attendance by the Service. The fire investigation concluded that the fire had been caused deliberately. 3 persons were subsequently arrested and charged with arson with intent to endanger life. One of the Service's Fire Investigators gave evidence during a trial at Hove Crown Court on 14 June 2013. Two defendants were found guilty and one not guilty. Sentencing was due to take place on 15 July.

## 5.2 **Community Risk Analysis**

5.2.1 The Community Risk Analysts have updated data and systems, including the Fire Service Emergency Cover toolkit and the 'CUBE', to incorporate the 2011 Census data. These important updates are vital to inform review work and impact assessments that fall out of the Integrated Risk Management Plan. The analysts are now providing additional support and advice to Borough Commanders as Business Partners in all matters relating to targeting local risk and community profiling.

## 5.3 **Intervention and Incident Reduction**

### 5.3.1 **General**

A conference arranged by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) on hoarding at the Fire Service College Hoarders Conference was attended by a couple of staff. This conference explored lessons learnt from a recent Rule 43 requiring Council Housing Departments to share information on these individuals with Fire Services. The team has had contact with the National Citizenship Scheme to deliver part of a two week input for 80 Rye College Students later in the year. This appears to be an excellent opportunity to be involved in delivering targeted intervention work to a captive audience in line with a national scheme delivered by Central Government at a residential location.

Work with the Integrated Team for Families (ITF) in the City of Brighton & Hove is progressing with a draft outline of work to be drawn up soon.

Assistance has been given to the Borough Commander for Eastbourne to look at fire setting activities in the Cross Levels Way area near Sussex Downs College and this has resulted in two juvenile referrals.

Community Volunteers have been used on several occasions for leafleting and follow ups to deliberate fire setting activities.

### 5.3.2 **Road Safety – Fire Bike**

Funding from Sussex Safer Roads Partnership allows the Fire Bike to be sustained for at least the next three years. Recruitment for new riders is under way. In Sussex, 26% of killed and seriously injured statistics are from motorcyclists, yet they account for only 1% of the vehicle mileage statistics. A joint East / West strategy, which is composed of targeted intervention programmes, is in place with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

### **Road Safety – Safe Drive Stay Alive**

Safe Drive Stay Alive is produced by a partnership including Sussex Police and South East Coast Ambulance Service and co-ordinated by ESFRS, and targets young drivers.

The objective is to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. The show explores the consequences of getting involved in a road collision. The new season of Safe Drive Stay Alive presentations will start later this summer. The delivery this year will be moved to Key Stage 4 in College and sixth-form settings.

### 5.3.3 Additional information

Two of staff, under the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership banner, are visiting Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service to experience Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 road safety inputs.

A pilot road safety intervention project was successfully delivered by ESFRS in partnership with the Institute of Offender Management with funding and referrals delivered from Surrey and Sussex Probation.

The annual Operation Crackdown meeting was attended in June at Police HQ in Lewes to launch the new look web pages and graphics and the increased focus on reporting antisocial driving. (Operation Crackdown is an initiative co-ordinated by Sussex Police that encourages reporting and crackdown on anti-social driving and abandoned vehicles).

## 5.4 **Children's Services and Education Team**

### 5.4.1 General

The Children's Services and Education Team has been working hard on reviewing the Children and Young People's Strategy with draft guidance supplied by the Chief Fire Officers Association working group (CFOA).

As the academic year finishes, during the school holiday period, development work is undertaken looking at areas such as further work on Key Stage 3 (KS3) materials, evaluation of current Key Stage 1 (KS1) materials, web page development and improved targeting capabilities for the Team.

Talks are continuing with the Head of Police Schools Liaison teams and Princes Trust to deliver a joint intervention of their XL training programme; this is a personal development programme aimed at young people aged 13-19 at risk of underachievement or exclusion from school.

### 5.4.2 Primary School Education

- Number of schools visited: KS1, KS2 and KS3, 56 schools (45 East Sussex, 11 The City of Brighton & Hove).
- KS1 – 2,431 pupils seen
- KS2 – 2,150 pupils seen
- KS3 – 526 pupils seen

#### 5.4.3 Secondary School Education

- Number of schools visited: (1 East Sussex, 0 The City of Brighton & Hove).
- KS4 – 150 pupils seen

#### 5.4.4 Youth Intervention

Local Intervention Fire Education Course (LIFE)

A course was held in Eastbourne (25 June-28 June) which 12 young people attended. Currently 7 courses are planned for the year 2013-14.

Savings have been made in how the course is delivered. It is hoped that these savings will enable Joint Agencies Group (JAG) / Community Safety Partnership (CSP) funding as a more realistic prospect with all Boroughs being encouraged and afforded the templates to place a bid for funding a LIFE course in their Boroughs. The Eastbourne course was fully funded by the Eastbourne JAG.

#### 5.4.5. Fire Setter Advisers Scheme

Number of referrals for this quarter was Juvenile = 9, Adult = 1  
Number of outstanding cases – Juvenile = 20, Adult = 5

The Community Safety Department is currently reviewing the provision of the Firesetter Intervention Scheme (FIS).

#### 5.4.6 Coaching For a Safer Community

The day to day running of the coaching is now led at Borough level with themes and messages held centrally so that it is consistent across the Service.

A review of the content and standardisation of the coaching input will be progressed to make sure that messages are not being repeated between the Children's Services and Education Team and coaches. It is felt that some areas of personal safety and road safety can be developed further to strengthen the input over a wider audience. The inflatable goals have been distributed more evenly throughout the County, enabling Hastings to be able to support linked activities with Hastings United; this will see the goals going out more frequently and being used with partners at a greater number of events.

### 5.5 Home Fire Safety Team

#### 5.5.1 General

The Care Providers' Scheme now has a total of 82 partner organisations signed up to refer vulnerable clients. During April-June the scheme produced 1,088 referrals for Home Safety Visits.

Although there were no new partners joining the scheme, practitioners of 4 care organisations received awareness training.

During the month of June, the Team attended a number of forums and conferences to promote the work of the Department, these included: 3 carers' forums held in Seaford, Maresfield and Rye. The forums allowed us to network with individual personal carers and promote the Home Safety Visit initiative. It also provided us with the opportunity to promote the scheme, with agencies also in attendance.

The 2013 Brighton Pride event is on 3 August and the Department is once again making arrangements for an exhibition stand at the park and assisting in producing and sourcing graphics and resources for the day.

8 of our Community Volunteers have now received the two days of training to prepare them to carry out the new Health and Wellbeing visits. The visits will be directed at members of the community who are over 80 and had their original visits over 3 years ago. The aim of the visits is to identify changes in the occupiers' circumstances i.e. reduced mobility, hearing/sight impairments, trips and falls, heating/fuel poverty, hygiene/nutrition, general welfare, abuse, etc. Where issues are identified to assist the occupiers to continue to live independently and more safely in their own home, the Community Volunteers will, with the occupiers' consent, refer the individuals to the appropriate partner agency to provide assistance.

Following meetings with Eastbourne Homes and Brighton University, the installation and trial of the Stove Guard system in the homes of vulnerable members of the community has started, with two units being installed in the communal kitchens of students resident on the university campus. Two further units will be installed in properties run by Eastbourne Homes and one unit will be installed by Wealden District Council in the home of a resident who is continually having small incidents due to leaving their cooking unattended. The installations will be closely monitored by both us and the installers.

### 5.5.2 Campaigns

The DCLG Campaign for April was Smoking Safety and coincided well with the introduction of the new Fire retardant lap blankets. The blankets are issued to vulnerable high risk smokers with limited mobility to reduce the risk of fire should they drop their smoking materials. The Campaign was designed to raise awareness around the dangers of smoking materials and provided tips.

The DCLG campaign briefing for May was Smoke Alarm purchasing and installation and encouraging members of the public to ensure they have working smoke alarms.

There were also three awareness weeks during May these were :

- Deaf awareness week
- Boat safety week
- National family week

The theme for June's monthly campaign from the DCLG was 'Plan Your Escape'.

The briefing packs were circulated to all Boroughs to encourage full support for the campaigns.

### 5.5.3 Community Volunteers

#### Volunteer Recruitment

A recruitment strategy is being developed for the next phase of the Community Volunteers Scheme. Learning from past experience of the recruitment process, from now on recruitment will target one geographical area at a time, ensuring strong links with key staff in the area. It is likely that the Lewes district will be the first area for recruitment of new volunteers.

#### Project Management

The Volunteer Recruitment and Support Officers are currently working on developing a 3-year Action Plan for the Scheme that will support the changing needs of the Service. Alongside this, a Marketing and Communications Strategy will be produced. Additionally, work is still on-going, updating and reviewing the Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

### 5.6 Inclusion and Partnerships

The majority of community engagement and partnership activities are undertaken by Boroughs through their existing community links, including Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships, the Police, schools, etc. These are locally based and are aimed at resolving local issues. Boroughs will tailor their involvement to their capacity, which may change due to competing pressures. Support for these activities is available from the Community Risk Management Department at headquarters.

The Inclusion and Partnership Co-ordinator's role includes identifying the meetings and groups that are not presently included in Borough Partnership activity but if possible should be, whether it is to support a particular subject or group. This is particularly the case in the City, with so many minority groups that pose a challenge to the Borough to support. Identifying these groups through the City Council or many of the other supporting networks continues.

The Co-ordinator identifies emerging risks and works with Partners to develop strategies to tackle them. One example is smoking where the Fire & Rescue Service is working with Public Health to reduce smoking and help people to give up. More people die in smoking related fires than any other cause so, apart from the health benefits to the community, there is a direct benefit to the Service in reducing smoking. To help develop this area of work the Service is a core member of the Tobacco Partnership, a new East Sussex group.



Road safety has long been an important aspect of community life; however until recently, there has not been an effective co-ordinated or collaborative approach to it across East Sussex. The opportunity to change this came with the adoption of road safety, including casualty reduction and reducing anti-social driving, by East Sussex Safer Communities and then, subsequently, by the Police and Crime Commissioner. ESFRS proposed that it lead the co-ordination of the provision of road safety across East Sussex and work is continuing to develop this important piece of work. The Fire & Rescue Service has always been involved in aspects of road safety, mostly around education (including Safe Drive, Stay Alive; New Driver Awareness; Biker down; the Fire Bike, etc.) but taking this leading role will enable us to ensure a consistent County-wide approach, linking in communication of national and local road safety messages, the provision of timely accurate data to ward level – all with the aim of reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads. The Partnership Co-ordinator has the lead in this exciting venture and will be working closely with the road safety leads in the City and West Sussex.

## 6. **SERVICE DELIVERY – RESPONSE & RESILIENCE**

### 6.1 **Operational Improvement**

This quarter has seen the final phase of the deployment of the Operational Improvement Team from within the Operations Department. Staff have been re-deployed to the Training Centre, working to the Learning & Organisational Development Department. In this quarter, crews have been updated on best practice when dealing with fires in high-rise buildings, particularly based upon the lessons learned from the tragic events that claimed the lives of two firefighters at Shirley Towers in Southampton.

### 6.2 **Operational Risk Information**

The database of operational risk information continues to grow, and work is now underway on how we can both retain and provide our operational risk information effectively with the prospect of a new mobilising system and with different mobile “in-cab” data systems.

A Mobile Data User Group ensures operational end-user staff are fully engaged in developing and improving mobile risk information processes. Work is also underway with West Sussex to consider shared risk information frameworks to support convergence to SCC.

### 6.3 **Equipment**

Operational staff at HQ are working with colleagues across the Service to ensure the successful roll-out of the Aerial Rescue Pump at Eastbourne Fire Station. The vehicle build has been completed, the necessary acceptance tests have been satisfactorily passed and an extensive training programme for engineers, driver training instructors and station operators is now underway. The station staff have been heavily involved in the development of this vehicle and have contributed to stowage solutions, the production of the necessary operator’s manuals and the testing of the vehicle prior to delivery into the Service.

A cross-directorate working group is currently considering a range of equipment improvements including pouches for wire cutters and different breathing apparatus cylinder covers in light of the outcomes from the tragic incident at Shirley Towers in Southampton.

#### 6.4 **Policies and Procedures**

A cross-directorate working group continues to meet to progress the implementation of Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) within the Service. The first SOPs went live on 1 March and there are now 8 SOPs in use within the Service. Extensive communication has taken place to ensure that all operational staff are aware of the programme to introduce the new SOPs. The South East led project to harmonise operational procedures is continuing to progress, and will result in the agreement of SOPs which will ensure more efficient cross-border working at incidents.

A significant amount of work has been identified by the SCC project team, in order to see how operational procedures can be further harmonised between East and West Sussex – the intention is to reduce workload on staff in the new mobilising centre, and to improve cross-border operations. Dedicated resources are now undertaking this work.

A revised strategy for ensuring suitable firefighting foam is readily available at large and small scale incidents has now been agreed and is being implemented. This includes provision of a bulk foam unit at Newhaven equipped to deal with Class B (flammable liquid) fires, supported by 1: 7 foam appliances at Hove, Bexhill and Rye also being provided with Class B firefighting foam capability.

#### 6.5 **Inter-agency Activities**

Substantial planning activity for a wide range of potential risks within Sussex continues, working in partnership with many other local agencies via the Sussex Resilience Forum.

ESFRS has supported a large inter-agency debrief following the severe weather event to hit Sussex in March and, in addition, is contributing to a review of local resilience and inter-agency arrangements.

**Des Prichard**  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
15 August 2013