

Constitution

9 June 2022



Index

Section A

1. Introduction

The Constitution of the East Sussex Fire Authority includes the rules within which the Authority operates and the arrangements which the Authority has put in place to enable it to perform its duties and functions lawfully and transparently. This Constitution has been divided into sections which group together the rules, procedures and policies which the Authority is bound by in the performance of its functions.

This Constitution was first approved and published in its current form in 2015. It is regularly updated to ensure that the Authority's arrangements represent current practice as well as legal requirements, and is published online as part of the Fire Authority's commitment to transparency in the delivery of its functions.

2. A Guide to East Sussex Fire Authority

5 - 14

The Members
Organisational Structure
Fire Authority Purpose & Commitments
Fire & Rescue Service Contact

Section B

3. The Members of the East Sussex Fire Authority

15 - 24

The current Members
Lead Members

Section C - Arrangements to perform functions

4. 1 The Fire Authority and its Panels

25 - 44

5. 2 The Scheme of Delegations to Officers

45 - 52

Section D - Rules of Procedure

6.	1 General Standing Orders	53 - 78
7.	2 Procurement Standing Orders	79 - 104
8.	3 Financial Regulations	105 - 130

Section E - Codes, Protocols and Guidance

9.	1 Members Information (a) Member Development	131 - 134
10.	1 Members Information (b) Code of Conduct	135 - 152
11.	1 Member Information (c) Breaches of Code of Conduct	153 - 166
12.	1 Member Information (d) Member Employee Relations	167 - 180
13.	1 Member Information (e) Member Allowances	181 - 188
14.	2 Guidance (a) Access to Information	189 - 196
15.	2 Guidance (b) Guidance on Correspondence	197 - 204
16.	2 Guidance (c) Legislation	205 - 206

Strategies

17.	Estates Strategy	207 - 224
18.	Communications, Engagement & Consultation Strategy	225 - 254
19.	People Strategy	255 - 298
20.	Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy	299 - 332
21.	Information Technology Strategy	333 - 368
22.	Procurement Strategy	369 - 378
23.	Fleet & Equipment Management Strategy	379 - 424

24.	Response & Resilience Strategy	425 - 476
25.	Prevention & Protection Strategy	477 - 522
26.	Local Code of Corporate Governance	523 - 528

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SECTION A

A GUIDE TO EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Introduction	2
The Members of East Sussex Fire Authority	5
Organisational Structure	6
Fire Authority Purpose and Commitments	9
Fire & Rescue Service Contact	10

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
DCFO	October 2005	December 2016 April 2017 July 2019 June 2020	

INTRODUCTION

Establishment of the East Sussex Fire Authority

The East Sussex Fire Authority was established on 1 April 1997 by the East Sussex Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996. It is a stand-alone fire authority made up of Members of The Fire Authority's two constituent authorities: East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council.

Membership of the East Sussex Fire Authority

East Sussex Fire Authority comprises 18 Members: 12 Members appointed by East Sussex County Council from amongst its elected councillors and 6 Members appointed by Brighton & Hove City Council. The ratio is proportionate to the number of electors in the constituent authorities. The two constituent authorities determine which of their elected councillors to appoint to the Fire Authority, subject to the legal requirement (in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) that they achieve a political balance. Details of the Fire Authority's current membership are available on our website <https://esfrs.moderngov.co.uk/> or from Democratic Services (democraticservices@esfrs.org).

The overriding duty of Members of the Fire Authority is to the whole community of the county of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. The Members of the Fire Authority ensure that the Authority fulfils its duties and functions under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and other relevant statutes. At meetings of the Fire Authority, Members approve strategic policies and budgetary plans, as well as appointing Chief Officers and monitoring performance. Further information is available on our website at <https://www.esfrs.org/about-us>

Legislation and core responsibilities

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, (and the supporting national framework), sets out the functions of the Authority, which include fire safety, firefighting, road traffic collision rescues, and other emergency activities.

The Authority is a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and has a duty to assess, plan and give advice in connection with the risk of an emergency occurring.

Section A **A Guide to East Sussex Fire Authority**

The Authority covers an area of 179,000 hectares and serves a population of approximately 845,000. The area provides almost every aspect of firefighting risk, and includes ports, mines and quarries, cities, universities and colleges, coastal areas and resorts, heathlands, forest areas, historic sites, listed buildings and areas of special scientific interest. There are also areas of social deprivation, there are poor transport links, and one in four residents is over pensionable age.

The Fire Authority and the Fire & Rescue Service: governance & strategy, and operational control.

The Fire Authority sets the strategic direction of the Fire & Rescue Service. It has a key governance role and has the ultimate responsibility, as a corporate body, for decision-making. It retains responsibility for the oversight of the organization, although it delegates certain types of decisions to its Panels, and others to its officers. The arrangements which it has put in place to carry out its functions are outlined in Section C of this Constitution.

The Fire & Rescue Service has responsibility for the operational delivery of the functions of the Authority, and for delivering the Fire Authority's strategic aims and objectives. It comprises the staff employed by the Fire Authority, including both its uniformed and support personnel.

The Service operates within the statutory framework mentioned above. It does this within the purpose and commitments which underpin service delivery. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that service provision continues to meet the needs of the population.

The Officers of the East Sussex Fire Authority

The Chief Fire Officer and the Senior Leadership Team manage the Fire & Rescue Service on a day to day basis. They advise the Fire Authority on operational matters in order to ensure that the Service is delivered both in accordance with legal obligations and in such a way as to meet corporate objectives. Further information is available on our website at <https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/>

The posts of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer are statutory posts which are required by law.

This Constitution sets out in a single place how the Authority works and how it makes decisions. It includes amongst other things the scheme of delegations



Section A
A Guide to East Sussex Fire Authority

to officers which provide officers with delegated authority to act on behalf of the Fire Authority. This Constitution is published on the Fire Authority's website to ensure maximum transparency, and is regularly reviewed.

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS

An up to date list of the elected councillors of East Sussex County Council and of Brighton & Hove City Council who have been appointed to the East Sussex Fire Authority is available on the Fire Authority Website.

The role of a Member of the Fire Authority is described in greater detail in Section B of this Constitution.

All postal correspondence to Members of the Fire Authority may be sent via Democratic Services, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Church Lane, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2DZ, and all email correspondence to democraticservices@esfrs.org

EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE: THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Fire Authority oversees the Fire & Rescue Service, which carries out all operational functions.

The Chief Fire Officer, the Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer all carry out key roles in the organisation. Together with the Senior Leadership Team, they are responsible for the implementation of policy and for the day to day management of the organisation.

There are three uniformed Principal Officers, namely the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) head up two directorates. There are five Assistant Directorates working to the DCFO and ACFO responsible for the following areas:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer leading:

Assistant Director **People Services** with responsibility for:

- Command and Operational Training
- Workforce Development
- Operational Improvement and Assurance
- Health, Safety & Well-being
- Payroll and Pensions
- Human Resources
- Organizational Development
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Administrative Support for Assistant Directors

Assistant Director **Resources/Treasurer** with responsibility for:

- Finance, Risk and Insurance
- Procurement

- Estates
- Information and Technology Governance
- Legal Services

Assistant Director **Planning and Improvement** with responsibility for:

- Performance Management and Business Planning
- Project Co-ordination
- Integrated Risk Management Planning
- Marketing, Communications and Business Services
- Democratic Services

Assistant Chief Fire Officer leading:

Assistant Director **Safer Communities** with responsibility for:

- Groups and Stations
- Community Safety
- Business Safety

Assistant Director **Operational Support and Resilience** with responsibility for:

- Engineering Services
- Operational Planning and Policy
- Sussex Control Centre
- Special Projects
- Emergency Services Network

Borough Command Structure

The Service was restructured in 2019 to divide the area covered by the Service into three Groups: Central, East and West.

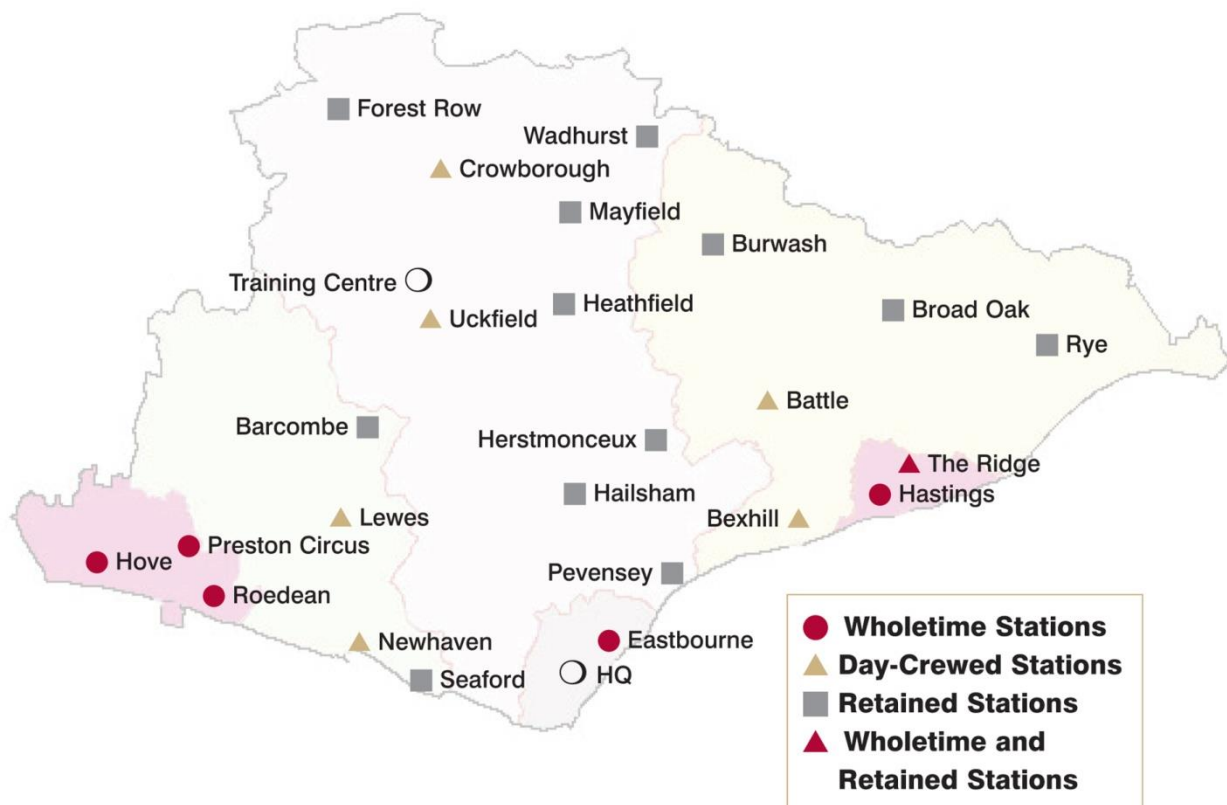
Section A A Guide to East Sussex Fire Authority

Each Group is managed by a Group Manager, who is based within the Group area. The Group Manager has responsibility for all aspects of service delivery within the Group, including prevention, protection and response services. This structure enables the service to work productively with our partners in the local authorities, Police and ambulance services and other public services and community groups.

Community Fire Stations

The Fire & Rescue Service provides its operational service from:

- 6 shift fire stations - crewed 24 hours a day by wholetime firefighters plus one retained appliance at The Ridge Fire Station.
- 6 day-crewed stations - crewed 24 hours a day by wholetime firefighters who are on station from 0900 – 1800 and are on call from home outside of these hours. The stations are supported by firefighters, on the retained duty system, who are on call 24 hours a day and respond when called via alerters (pagers).
- 12 retained stations – crewed by firefighters, on the retained duty system, who provide 24 hour cover on call using alerters (pagers).



Fire Authority Purpose and Commitments

Our Purpose and Commitments are at the centre of everything we do.

Whether responding to emergencies, working to prevent them happening in the first place or providing support, our firefighters, officers, control room operators, Business and Community Safety Teams, support staff and volunteers all play their part.

We are proud to serve East Sussex and Brighton and Hove City.

Our Purpose

We make our communities safer

Our Commitments

We will do this by:

- Delivering high performing services
- Educating our communities
- Developing a multi-skilled, safe and valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resources

Our Values

Proud

We are proud of our Service and enjoy working in a positive environment – by continually improving our services and our organization

Accountable

Serving our whole community – by providing a good, cost-effective service

Integrity

Trust, integrity, initiative and innovation – by being open, honest and encouraging creativity

Respect

Respect and dignity for all – by treating members of our community and each other in a way that values their individuality and by challenging discrimination and unsuitable behaviour

Fire & Rescue Service Contact

For general queries, operational policies or the Fire & Rescue Service Complaints, write to:

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters
Church Lane
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2DZ

Telephone: 0303 999 1000

Email: enquiries@esfrs.org

Fax:

01323 725574

Web:

www.esfrs.org

For all operational issues

In the event of an emergency please dial 999.

For all non-emergency enquiries please contact:

Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters

Email: enquiries@esfrs.org

Tel: 0303 999 1000

(minicom: 01323 462 003)

SECTION B
MEMBER ROLES AND LEADS

[East Sussex Fire Authority Members](#)

[Fire Authority Lead Members](#)

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	July 2014	September 2015 July 2019 September 2021	

East Sussex Fire Authority Members

East Sussex County Councillors

Councillor Abul Azad (Conservative)

Email: cllr.abul.azad@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Chris Dowling (Conservative)

Email: cllr.chris.dowling@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Roy Galley (Conservative)

Email: cllr.roy.galley@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Nuala Geary (Conservative)

Email: cllr.nuala.geary@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Carolyn Lambert (Liberal Democrat)

Email: cllr.carolyn.lambert@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Wendy Maples (Green)

Email: cllr.wendy.maples@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Sorrell Marlow-Eastwood (Conservative)

Email: cllr.sorrell.marlow-eastwood@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Sarah Osborne (Liberal Democrat)

Email: cllr.sarah.osborne@eastsussex.gov.uk

Councillor Paul Redstone (Conservative)

Email: cllr.paul.redstone@eastsussex.gov.uk

Cllr Phil Scott (Labour)

Email: cllr.phil.scott@eastsussex.gov.uk

Cllr Barry Taylor (Conservative)

Email: cllr.barry.taylor@eastsussex.gov.uk

Cllr David Tutt (Liberal Democrat)

Email: cllr.david.tutt@eastsussex.gov.uk

Brighton & Hove City Councillors

Councillor Amanda Evans (Labour)

Email: amanda.evans@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Councillor Les Hamilton (Labour)

Email: leslie.hamilton@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Councillor Garry Peltzer Dunn (Conservative)

Email: garry.peltzerdunn@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Councillor Steph Powell (Green)

Email: steph.powell@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Councillor Carol Theobald (Conservative)

Email: carol.theobald@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Councillor Pete West (Green)

Email: pete.west@brighton-hove.gov.uk

All postal correspondence to Councillors may be sent via Democratic Services, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Church Lane, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2DZ.

Fire Authority Lead Members

The Fire Authority benefits from having Lead Members who will provide detailed support, advice and scrutiny for matters overseen by the Policy & Resources and Scrutiny & Audit Panels. Guidance on the exact role of Lead Members includes:

- i. [Role Scope](#)
 - ii. [Reporting .](#)
 - iii. [Media Statements & Press Releases](#)
 - iv. [Lead Member Engagement](#)
 - v. [Strategies and ESFRS Functions](#)
 - vi. [Support & Training](#)
- [APPENDIX A – Lead Member Arrangements](#)

Lead Members current remits as at June 2021 are set out in Appendix A.

LEAD MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

GUIDANCE AS AT JUNE 2021

In addition to the more general requirements of their role on the Fire Authority, Lead Members are expected to become experts within their remit and to represent the Fire Authority within their specialist area.

i. Lead Member Scope

The Fire Authority does not have executive governance arrangements. It runs under committee arrangements, at East Sussex Fire Authority these are referred to as “Panels”. Any executive powers delegated by the Fire Authority are defined within the terms of reference of the Panels, or delegated functions of officers of the Fire Authority. Lead Members do not have any additional executive powers.

Lead Members are accountable to the Fire Authority and its Panels. Their scope is to represent their remit to the Fire Authority and provide assurance that recommendations and decisions arising within their remit are sound and evidence based, have followed appropriate processes and are aligned to the Authority’s Strategies.

ii. Lead Member Reporting

It will occasionally be necessary for a Lead Member to contribute to reports for the Policy & Resources or Scrutiny & Audit Panel. Preparation of reports will be the responsibility of the lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director.

Where a Lead Member has contributed to a report, they will be named alongside the lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director.

It is the responsibility of the lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director to liaise with Lead Members to ensure their comments and contributions are included within reports.

When relevant, the lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director and their Lead Member, will create a summary of Lead Member actions/updates three weeks prior to the next Fire Authority meeting.

Principal Officer/Assistant Directors will support Lead Members and advise on strategic issues. Where a Member Lead identifies an area which might merit further scrutiny, they should inform their lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director, who after due consideration will ensure it is addressed in an appropriate manner.

Meetings between Lead Members and Principal Officers will be arranged on a regular basis, to fit in with the Fire Authority timetable.

iii. Media Statements and Press Releases

Lead Members are permitted to make statements on their remits, but this must be done in accordance with the Fire Authority's Communication, Engagement and Consultation Strategy and in consultation with responsible officers.

Lead Member communications are welcomed as a means of enhancing public knowledge and engagement in the work of our organisation and helping us to make our local communities safer and more sustainable.

All Member led communications must be agreed in advance by the Chairperson and lead Principal Officer or, in their respective absences, the Vice Chairperson and another Principal Officer. Any urgent communication with the media must be co-ordinated through the ESFRS Communications & Marketing Manager.

Generally, the lead Principal Officer will prompt/encourage when a press release should be made, but Member Leads are encouraged to take the initiative on relevant occasions, in consultation with the lead Principal Officer.

iv. Lead Member Engagement

Any engagement Lead Members have with external parties must be within the context of the Fire Authority's Communication, Engagement and Consultation Strategy .

Generally, it will be for the lead Principal Officer to prompt/encourage consultation and engagement opportunities, but it is hoped that Lead Members will take the initiative on relevant occasions, in consultation with the lead Principal Officer, and ensure feedback received is captured.

v. Strategies and ESFRS functions

Lead Members should have a broad understanding of the Fire Authority strategies and a working knowledge of how ESFRS functions, including potential areas of overlap. Care should be taken to ensure all issues are given appropriate consideration as part of specific Lead Member remits. Where potential conflicts arise, these should be discussed with Lead Members, Group Leaders and the Principal Officers concerned. Lead Members are not allowed to use their position for political purposes.

vi. Lead Member Support and Training

Lead Members should feel adequately supported however, there are no additional administrative resources available. Preparations of briefing notes, seminar presentations and consultation and engagement opportunities should be co-ordinated through lead Principal Officers who will utilise their available resources to assist, where possible.

Training and development opportunities for Lead Members will be provided if required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEAD MEMBERS

ROLES

The primary role of a Lead Member is to support the Fire Authority's democratic responsibilities and help achieve its Purpose and Commitments. Lead Members should promote knowledge and understanding on the relevant remits both within and outside the Service; by undertaking the following key activities:

- A** championing key services both internally and externally encouraging engagement with relevant stakeholders and maximising collaboration.
- B** working with fellow Lead Members to ensure the development of the Fire Authority is proportionate and inclusive.
- C** assisting in the development and prioritisation of cost effective service delivery within the available medium-term resource constraints and refining Service Strategies to ensure they remain appropriate to community needs and strategic priorities.
- D** ensure services are properly defined, developed and delivered within a strong performance management framework.
- E** engage with external parties as appropriate to seek opportunities to help ESFRS adopt best practices in a timely manner within the national, regional and local community contexts.

DUTIES

The primary activities that a Lead Member is anticipated to undertake include:

- A** Research into subject areas to develop their knowledge and understanding of the particular remit to which they have been appointed.
- B** Increase their awareness of relevant external assessment recommendations and best practice documents and consider the position

of the Service in meeting such expectations for future improvement planning.

- C** Be aware of the performance position of the Service in relation to past performance patterns and within the context of available benchmarking material as well as an overview of the resource inputs, outputs and outcomes expected from the functional area as appropriate.
- D** Attend meetings and develop relationships with Fire & Rescue Service Managers/employees to increase knowledge and understanding of the services provided.
- E** Share the knowledge and understanding gained through:
 - Informal briefings with both Members and Senior officers
 - Internal/external briefing documents
 - Presentations
 - Press releases
 - External consultation and engagement and shared working as appropriate

This will be supported by the relevant lead Principal Officer/Assistant Director.

Appendix A

Lead Member Arrangements

Lead Role	Lead Officer
Health & Safety	Assistant Director People Services
Performance & Assurance	Assistant Director Planning & Improvement
Inclusion & Diversity	Assistant Director People Services
IT	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer
Estates	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer
Sustainability & Environment	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer

Note:

The Lead Member role does not attract an entitlement to Special Responsibility Allowance.

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SECTION C1

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY AND ITS PANELS

Index

[Introduction](#)

[East Sussex Fire Authority](#)

[Terms of Reference of Fire Authority Panels](#)

[Urgency Panel](#)

[Policy and Resources Panel](#)

[Scrutiny and Audit Panel](#)

[Standards Hearing Panel](#)

[Pension Board](#)

[Human Resources Panel](#)

[Principal Officer Appointments Panel](#)

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning and Improvement	October 2005	February 2015 June 2015 December 2015 May 2016 July 2019 September 2021 June 2023	

Introduction

East Sussex Fire Authority was established by the East Sussex Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996.

The functions of the Fire Authority are set out in the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004, which defines the core functions of making provision for fire safety, fire-fighting and rescues from road traffic accidents. The Fire Authority may also provide services that appear to the Authority to be appropriate, both within and outside the Authority's area.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 sets out further powers of the Fire Authority in relation to inspection of premises and Alterations, Enforcement and Prohibition Notices.

The Fire Authority is also a category 1 responder under the provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and has a duty to respond to emergencies as well as assess, plan and advise.

Extracts from the relevant legislation are available on-line.

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

The Fire Authority comprises 18 Members (12 from East Sussex County Council and 6 from Brighton & Hove City Council).

(Quorum 6: provided that there shall be at least one representative from each constituent authority)

Whilst the Fire Authority has agreed a Scheme of Delegations to its Panels and Officers, there are some functions that may only be discharged by the Fire Authority.

Only the Fire Authority will exercise the following functions:

Approving:

- variations to Standing Orders, including Contract Standing Orders, and financial regulations
- the revenue budget and capital programme, levying or issuing a precept, and borrowing money
- the terms of reference and composition of Panels
- substantial changes to the Constitution
- a Scheme of Delegation to Officers
- a Code of Conduct for Members
- a Members Allowances Scheme
- a Pay Policy Statement
- major policy issues, including approving the Integrated Risk Management Plan
- the Authority's strategic objectives and priorities

Appointing the Chairperson of the Authority

Any matters by law that must be approved by the Authority

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF FIRE AUTHORITY PANELS

The Fire Authority has established the following Panels:

- Urgency Panel
- Policy and Resources Panel
- Scrutiny and Audit Panel
- Standards Hearing Panel
- Human Resources Panel
- Principal Officer Appointments Panel

Panels may establish Working Groups to deal with specific tasks as required from time to time.

Details of the number of Members and quorum of each Panel are given immediately after each Panel heading below. Members are appointed from the political groups on the Fire Authority in accordance with the requirements for political balance up to the number fixed for the Panel concerned (with the exception of the Standards Hearing Panel and the Principal Officer Appointments Panel.) If no specific appointments are made by the Fire Authority, Panel Members, (and substitutes in the event of non-availability of Panel Members), are nominated by the Monitoring Officer after consultation with the spokespersons for the relevant political groups.

These terms of reference form part of the authority's constitution and may be amended in accordance with the constitution. Where the changes are required as a result of legislative changes, the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, may make consequential amendments.

URGENCY PANEL

(Number of Members 6: Quorum 3 voting Members)

The Terms of Reference for the Urgency Panel are as follows:

1. To make decisions on any matters within the functions of the Fire Authority which the Urgency Panel considers to be urgent. (Excluding those powers delegated to the Standards Hearing Panel under Section 28 (11) of the Localism Act 2011).
2. To determine if requests for assistance from Members of the Fire Authority, Principal Officers, the Monitoring Officer or the Treasurer fall within the general indemnity provided for Officers and Members of the Authority.
3. To determine any applications by Principal Officers under the indemnity arrangements as advised by the Treasurer and Monitoring Officer.

POLICY AND RESOURCES PANEL

(Number of Members 7: Quorum 3 voting Members)

The Terms of Reference for the Policy and Resources Panel are as follows:

4. To advise the Authority on Policy and Resources issues as appropriate.
5. To provide overall political leadership to the service and to drive the formulation, planning and subsequent implementation of Fire Authority Plans and Strategies.
6. To advise the Fire Authority on the strategic risk based planning agenda in line with the need to secure continuous service improvement and community risk reduction across East Sussex and the City of the Brighton & Hove and within the context of:
 - (i) guidance issued under the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 and its related National Framework; and
 - (ii) other legislation such as the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
7. Annually, to present options to the Fire Authority, for service improvement and community risk reduction, including associated financial implications, having regard to matters such as:
 - (i) predicted risks of changes to available resources over the medium term;
 - (ii) key long term service improvement priorities of the Authority as determined and set out in the Authority's Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan;
 - (iii) effective partnership working; and
8. To instruct officers to implement efficiency measures agreed by the Panel which do not involve a change of policy or level of service and to report the Panel's decision to the next meeting of the Authority.
9. To monitor the Members' Allowance Scheme and other CFAs' schemes on an annual basis between formal review periods to ensure that it remains equitable and fair.
10. To discharge any of the functions of the Fire Authority except:
 - a) those functions which only the Fire Authority has power to exercise;

Section C1
East Sussex Fire Authority and its Panels

- b) those functions delegated to any other Panel, excluding the Urgency Panel; in relation to proposals which are advised by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, or the Treasurer, or the Monitoring Officer to be of significant budgetary or strategic importance; or
- c) in any case where the Chairman or a majority of the Panel wishes the decision to be taken by the Fire Authority.

SCRUTINY AND AUDIT PANEL

(Number of Members 7: Quorum 3 voting Members)

The terms of reference for the Scrutiny & Audit Panel are as follows:

11. The Scrutiny & Audit Panel is a key component of East Sussex Fire Authority's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
12. The purpose of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel is to provide independent assurance to the Members of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides an independent review of East Sussex Fire Authority's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, risk and control

13. To review the Authority's corporate governance arrangements against the good practice standards.
14. To review the Authority's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, prior to approval and to consider whether they properly reflect the risk environment and supporting assurances.
15. To consider the Authority's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
16. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Authority.
17. To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
18. To review the effectiveness of management arrangements to ensure probity and legal / regulatory compliance and the Authority's exposure to the risk of fraud and corruption including, but not limited to, procurement standing orders, financial regulations, codes of conduct, the counter-fraud strategy, whistleblowing and complaints processes.

19. To receive reports from the Pension Board.

Internal audit

20. To oversee the internal audit service on behalf of the Authority, including but not limited to:
- a) approving the internal audit charter;
 - b) reviewing proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services;
 - c) approving the risk-based internal audit plan;
 - d) approving the Head of Internal Audit's annual report and considering their opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's framework of governance, risk management and control;
 - e) considering any specific internal audit reports deemed necessary;
 - f) considering the effectiveness of the internal audit service including its performance and compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS);
 - g) considering the action taken by the Authority in responding to and implementing internal audit recommendations.

External audit

21. To oversee external audit activity on behalf of the Authority including, but not limited to:
- a) considering the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance;
 - b) considering specific reports as agreed with the external auditor;
 - c) commenting on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
22. To commission work from internal and external audit.
23. To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.

Financial reporting

24. To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Authority.

25. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Scrutiny and Performance Review

26. To review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Authority's functions.
27. To review and scrutinise the performance of the Authority in relation to its aims and objectives and its performance targets.

Standards

28. To discharge the following functions:
- a) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Members and co-opted Members of the Authority as required by section 27 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.
 - b) Assisting Members and co-opted Members of the Authority to observe the Authority's Code of Conduct.
 - c) Advising the Authority on the adoption or revision of a Code of Conduct.
 - d) Monitoring the operation of the Authority's Code of Conduct.
 - e) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by employees of the Authority.
 - f) Developing and adopting procedures for the assessment, investigation and determination of Code of Conduct complaints.
 - g) Advising the Authority on the adoption or revision of any codes/guidance (1) regulating working relationships between the Members and co-opted Members of the Authority and the employees of the Authority, (2) governing the conduct of employees of the Authority or (3) for preventing fraud or corruption, including any "whistle blowing" codes.
 - h) Monitoring the operation of any such codes/guidance.
 - i) Training or arranging training in connection with any of the foregoing.
 - j) Supporting the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer in their statutory monitoring roles and in the issue of any guidance by them.
 - k) Receiving reports from the Monitoring Officer on any matter relating to ethical standards and deciding action as appropriate.
29. As authorised by section 33 of the Localism Act 2011:
- To exercise the power to grant dispensations to Members and co-opted Members of the Authority whose participation in any business would otherwise be prohibited by section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011.

30. As required by Section 28 (11) of the Localism Act 2011:

Where a Member or Co-opted Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, to determine whether to take action in relation to that member.

[Note – usually this function will be discharged by a Standards Hearing Panel following a hearing].

STANDARDS HEARING PANEL

(Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 shall not apply in respect of this Panel). ,

Number of members: Any 3 members of the Scrutiny and Audit Panel: Quorum 3)

The Terms of Reference for the Standards Hearing Panel are as follows:

To conduct determination hearings in relation to allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members referred by the Monitoring Officer and, where it has found that a Member has breached the Code, in accordance with section 28 (11) of the Localism Act 2011 to determine whether to take action in relation to that Member and, if so, what action to take.

PENSION BOARD

Number of members: 4 Elected Members (Employer) 4 Scheme Members (Employee): Quorum 3 to include at least 1 Employer and 1 Employee representative)

The full title of the Board is the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Local Pension Board of East Sussex Fire Authority however it is referred to in practice as the Pension Board. It has been established by East Sussex Fire Authority as the Scheme Manager under the provisions of the Public Sector Pensions Act 2013 and the Firefighter's Pension Scheme (Amendment)(Governance) Regulations 2015.

1. The purpose of the Pension Board is to assist East Sussex Fire Authority in its role as a scheme manager of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. Such assistance is to:
 - a) secure compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Scheme and';
 - b) ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

Duties

2. The Pension Board should at all times act in a reasonable manner in the conduct of its purpose. In support of this duty Board members:
 - a) should act always in the interests of the scheme and not seek to promote the interests of any stakeholder group above another.
 - b) should be subject to and abide by the East Sussex Fire Authority code of conduct for members.

Membership

3. The Pension Board will comprise an equal number of employer and member representatives with a minimum requirement of no less than four in total. The current membership is made up of four employer representatives who are elected members of and appointed by East Sussex Fire Authority and four scheme member representatives.
4. Substitute members will not be permitted.

5. Each Pension Board member shall endeavour to attend all Board meetings during the year.

Employee - Member representatives

6. Four member representatives shall be appointed to the Pension Board.
7. Member representatives shall either be members of the scheme administered by East Sussex Fire Authority or have experience of representing pension scheme members in a similar capacity.
8. Member representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as required.

Employer - Elected representatives

9. Four employer representatives shall be appointed to the Pension Board.
10. Employer representatives shall be elected members of and appointed by East Sussex Fire Authority.
11. Employer representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as required.
12. Employer representatives shall be appointed by East Sussex Fire Authority in a manner which it considers best promotes the purpose of the Board.

Appointment of Chairperson

13. East Sussex Fire Authority shall appoint a chairperson.
14. The duties of the chairperson should be in accordance with the duties of a chairperson within East Sussex Fire Authority.

Notification of appointments

15. On appointment to the Pension Board, East Sussex Fire Authority shall publish the name of the appointees, the process followed in the appointment together with the way in which the appointments support the effective delivery of the purpose of the Board.

Conflicts of interest

16. All members of the Pension Board must declare to East Sussex Fire Authority on appointment and at any such time as their circumstances change any potential conflict of interest arising as a result of their position on the Board.
17. On appointments to the Pension Board and following any subsequent declaration of potential East Sussex Fire Authority shall ensure that any potential conflict is effectively managed in line with both the internal procedures of East Sussex Fire Authority and the requirements of the Pensions Regulator's codes of practice on conflict of interest for Board members.

Knowledge and Understanding (including Training)

18. Knowledge and understanding must be considered in light of the role of the Pension Board to assist East Sussex Fire Authority in line with the requirements outlined above. The Board should establish and maintain a policy and framework to address the knowledge and understanding requirements that apply to Board members. That policy and framework shall set out the degree of knowledge and understanding required as well as how knowledge and understanding is acquired, reviewed and updated.
19. Pension Board members shall attend and participate in training arranged in order to meet and maintain the requirements set out in the Board's Training policy.
20. Pension Board members shall participate in such personal training needs analysis or other processes that are put in place in order to ensure that they maintain the required level of knowledge and understanding to carry out their role on the Board.

Term of Office

21. Term of Office shall be longer than 12 months where possible to allow sufficient development of knowledge and understanding.
22. Pension Board membership may be terminated prior to the end of the term of office due to:
 - a) A member representative appointed on the basis of their membership of the scheme no longer being a member of the scheme

Section C1
East Sussex Fire Authority and its Panels

- b) A member representative no longer being a member of the body on which their appointment relied
- c) An employer representative no longer holding the office or employment or being a member of the body on which their appointment relied
- d) The representative no longer being able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and prepare for meetings or to participate in required training.

Meetings

- 23. The Pension Board shall meet quarterly but no fewer than three times during any annual cycle.
- 24. The chairperson of the Pension Board with the consent of the Board membership may call additional meetings. Urgent business of the Board between meetings may, in exceptional circumstances, be conducted via communications between members of the Board including telephone conferencing and e-mails.

Voting

- 25. The chairperson shall determine when consensus has been reached.
- 26. Where consensus is not achieved this should be recorded by the chairperson.
- 27. In support of its core functions the Board may make a request for information to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive or any other officer with delegated responsibility for the scheme manager function with regard to any aspect of that function. Any such a request should be reasonably complied with in both scope and timing.
- 28. In support of its core functions the Board may make recommendations to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive or any other officer with delegated responsibility for the scheme manager function which should be considered and a response made to the Board on the outcome within a reasonable period of time.

Reporting

- 29. The Pension Board shall report its activities periodically, but at least once each year to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel.
- 30. Pension Board members are required to report breaches of the law to the regulator where they believe there is a legal duty that has not or is not

being complied with or the failure to comply will be of material significance to the Pensions Regulator in the exercise of its functions. Any breach brought to the attention of the Pension Board, whether potential or actual, shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in the Breaches of Law Policy and Guidance.

Interpretation

31. In these terms 'the Scheme' means the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.
32. Regulations referred to within these Terms of Reference include the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992, as amended, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006, as amended, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014 as amended, the Pension Regulators Codes of Practice as they apply to the scheme manager and pension board, and any other relevant legislation applying to the Scheme.

HUMAN RESOURCES PANEL

(Number of Members 7: Quorum 3 voting Members)

The Terms of Reference of the Human Resources Panel are as follows:

1. To hear and determine:
 - a) appeals in relation to dismissal action taken against any officer contracted to the National Joint Council Conditions of Service (Grey Book) or any employee contracted to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book)
 - b) any other matter referred to the Panel under the disciplinary procedures of the Fire Authority.
2. To hear and determine collective disputes in accordance with:
 - a) The NJC for Local Authority Fire & Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).
 - b) The NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service for Local Government Services (Green Book).
3. To hear and determine appeals against the outcome of grievance hearings if the grievance was already heard by the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive Officer. The appeal will be heard by the Fire Authority Human Resources Panel comprising at least 3 elected members and advised by the Monitoring Officer.
4. To hear and determine any matters which are required to be dealt with by Members of the Authority under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, the Local Government Pension Scheme and any predecessors to these schemes or any procedures adopted by the Authority in relation to pensions.
5. To decide appeals on the reduction of sick pay for operational and control staff contracted to the National Joint Council Conditions of Service (Grey Book) and the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of the Fire and Rescue Services (Gold Book) in the event of a member of staff being dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.

PRINCIPAL OFFICER APPOINTMENTS PANEL

Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 shall not apply in respect of this Panel, which shall comprise the Chairperson of the Authority and the Leader of each political group (excluding the political group of which the chairperson is a member), and one additional seat allocated to the majority/largest political group.

The Act requires the Authority to agree this without any member of the Authority voting against.

Quorum: 3 voting Members

1. To determine the appointment procedures for the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
2. To carry out the shortlisting of candidates for the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
3. To conduct final interviews and make appointments to the posts of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer. In conducting final interviews, the Panel will be assisted by an independent specialist adviser. In the case of appointments to the posts of Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer, the specialist advisor will be the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive.
4. To consider and approve terms and conditions of service, including remuneration, for Principal Officers and the Treasurer to the Authority.
5. To hear and determine appeals from the Human Resources Panel acting as the Disciplinary Panel for staff contracted to the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of the Fire and Rescue Services (Gold Book) and additionally the post of Treasurer.

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SECTION C2

THE SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

Index

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [General Conditions of Delegation and Definitions](#)
3. [General Delegation of Functions to the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer and Treasurer of the Authority](#)
4. [Specific Delegation of Functions to the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers](#)
5. [Treasurer](#)
6. [Monitoring Officer to the Authority](#)
7. [Declaration of Emergency under the Authority's Emergency Planning or Business Continuity Procedures – Delegation to the Chief Fire Officer \(or in his absence either the Deputy Chief Fire Officer or the Assistant Chief Fire Officer\).](#)

[Notes](#)

Responsible Officer	Section Issue Date	Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director, Planning & Improvement	December 2014	July 2016 February 2017 July 2019 September 2021 December 2021	

Section C2

The scheme of delegations to officers

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Scheme is made under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, which applies to the Authority by virtue of the East Sussex Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996.
- 1.2 For the purposes of this Scheme of Delegation the proper officers are the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.3 The Authority has delegated to the officers the powers set out in this Scheme. Those matters which may not be delegated to officers include:
- (i) variations to Standing Orders, including Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
 - (ii) approval of the revenue budget and capital programme, levying or issuing a precept, and borrowing of money;
 - (iii) adopting a Member Allowances Scheme;
 - (iv) appointing a chairman of the Fire Authority;
 - (v) major policy issues, including approving the Integrated Risk Management Plan;
 - (vi) the Authority's strategic objectives and priorities;
 - (vii) approval of a Scheme of Delegation to officers;
 - (viii) approval of terms of reference and composition of Panels;
 - (ix) approval of a Pay Policy Statement;
 - (x) approval of a Code of Conduct for Members;
 - (xi) approval of substantial changes to the Constitution;
 - (xii) any matter reserved to a Panel; and
 - (xiii) any matters by law that must be approved by the Fire Authority.
- 1.4 The Scheme sets out the limits of authority of the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer. Additional delegations to the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer are described in the Standing Orders, Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations.
- 1.5 Any interpretation of the Scheme shall be in accordance with the Authority's wish that the Scheme shall not be construed restrictively.

2. General Conditions of Delegation and Definitions

- 2.1 The existence of a delegation shall not require the Chief Fire Officer, (or any other officer to whom the authority has been delegated), to take a decision on that issue. Any delegation of functions to an Officer under the Scheme shall not prevent the Authority or a relevant Panel from exercising those functions. The Chief Fire Officer needs to be aware of particular controversial issues which may be of concern to the Authority. In such circumstances they may refer the matter for guidance or decision by the Authority if they consider it appropriate to do so.

Section C2

The scheme of delegations to officers

- 2.2 The Monitoring Officer to the Authority shall keep the operation of the Scheme of Delegations under review and the Authority may amend its provisions from time to time. Financial limits should be reviewed annually by the Treasurer.
- 2.3 The functions delegated under the Scheme shall be subject to the Authority's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, policies and procedures and to any instruction or guidance of the Authority or an appropriate Panel acting under its delegated powers. Any expenditure shall be within the revenue estimates and capital programme, either as approved or with any variations permitted under Standing Orders and Financial Regulations or by the Authority or a relevant Panel.
- 2.4 In exercising delegated powers the Chief Fire Officer shall consult the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson as appropriate.
- 2.5 The Chief Fire Officer may authorise officers within the Service to exercise powers delegated to them. The Chief Fire Officer must maintain proper records of such authorisation. The Chief Fire Officer shall remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken under that authority.
- 2.6 The Principal Officers (Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer) are authorised to act in all matters related to the operational delivery of the Service and for those functions that fall within their remit of responsibility and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, to exercise the functions set out in paragraph 4.3 below with the exceptions of paragraphs 4.3 (viii), (ix) and (xi).
- 2.7 In the event of the Chief Fire Officer's post being vacant or in the absence of the Chief Fire Officer, those delegated powers may be exercised by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer so far as permitted by law. Where the Deputy Chief Fire Officer is unable to act, those delegated powers may be exercised by any other Principal Officer of the authority, so far as permitted by law.
- 2.8 All such matters as may be regarded as included by inference shall be comprised within the delegated functions of Officers and any delegation to an Officer shall include all consequential or ancillary matters as necessary. For example, where the exercise of a function has been delegated, it shall include, subject to any express reservations in the Scheme, the power to serve notices or orders, authorise agreements, authorise proceedings or fix or vary fees and charges etc.

3. General Delegation of Functions to the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer and Treasurer of the Authority

The overriding principle shall be that the Chief Fire Officer is responsible for the planning, organisation, management and delivery of the operational service notwithstanding those matters reserved for the Authority as detailed in section 1.3 above.

Section C2

The scheme of delegations to officers

The following general functions are delegated to the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer in relation to the respective services for which they are responsible:

The power to perform and administer the services for which they are responsible, including taking and implementing decisions which aid in maintaining the operation or effectiveness of those services. The power shall be exercised in conformity with the restrictions set out in the Introduction to the Scheme.

4. Specific Delegation of Functions to the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers

- 4.1 The Chief Fire Officer shall, within the approved budgets, Authority Strategies and policies, exercise all matters of day-to-day administration and operational management and delivery of the service and functions. This delegation shall include taking and implementing decisions including, in particular, any decision which is concerned with maintaining the operation or effectiveness of those services or with a matter incidental to the discharge of the authority's functions or which falls within the scope of the authority's policy framework.
- 4.2 The Chief Fire Officer is authorised to discharge the functions of the Authority in relation to the Service subject to the following requirements:
- (i) any decisions or actions shall comply with relevant resolutions, orders and directions of the Authority and of its appointed Panels;
 - (ii) where any matter involves professional or technical considerations within the sphere or competence of another officer, the Chief Fire Officer shall consult with that officer before authorising action. This shall not be limited to officers within the employ of the authority, if circumstances require.
- 4.3 The Chief Fire Officer is authorised to exercise all the powers of the Authority under relevant legislation. Without prejudice to the generality of this provision he/she may in particular carry out the following:
- (i) fulfil the functions of the Authority as a Fire & Rescue Authority under, or in relation to, the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004;
 - (ii) in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, institute, defend, withdraw or compromise legal proceedings, whether civil and/or criminal, pertaining to the Fire Authority's statutory functions in respect of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
 - (iii) take appropriate action on behalf of the Authority under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005;
 - (iv) on the advice of the Assistant Director of Safer Communities, designate persons as Inspectors under Article 26 of the Fire Safety Order to the extent

Section C2

The scheme of delegations to officers

that the functions may only be carried out by a duly qualified and appointed inspector;

- (v) exercise, where appropriate, the responsibilities of the Authority where it acts as a statutory consultee or as an agent for either or both constituent Authorities;
- (vi) authorise named members of staff in writing to exercise the powers of inspectors under the Article 27 of the Fire Safety Order, including entering any premises which an inspector has reason to believe it is necessary for them to enter for the purpose of carrying out the said Order and any regulations made under it into effect, and to inspect the whole or part of the premises and anything in them, where such entry and inspection may be effected without the use of force;
- (vii) authorise named members of staff in writing to exercise statutory powers conferred on the Authority, including amongst others, section 19 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Construction (Design and Management Regulations) 2015;
- (viii) in consultation with the Chairperson of the Fire Authority, to determine the appointment procedures of all Principal Officers below Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer;
- (ix) to shortlist candidates for the positions of all Principal Officer posts below Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer;
- (x) to Chair the selection panel in relation to the appointment of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer
- (xi) to act as professional advisor to the Principal Officer Appointment Panel for the appointment of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer
- (xii) for all employees below Deputy Chief Fire Officer, to approve appointments, grading, remuneration and benefits, all categories of leave, training, secondments, engagement in other work, disciplinary matters and dismissals;
- (xiii) in consultation with the Treasurer and to the extent that the functions may lawfully be delegated to an officer, to discharge the functions of the Authority, including the exercise of any discretions, under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, the Local Government Pension Scheme and any predecessors to these schemes.
- (xiv) to take such action as appears to be necessary or desirable in connection with any anticipated or actual industrial action having consulted the Chairperson and Group Leaders (if practicable);
- (xv) to determine whether any future industrial action of short duration should be considered as a full shift or part thereof for both operational and pay purposes;

Section C2
The scheme of delegations to officers

- (xvi) in cases of urgency, following consultation with the Chairperson of the Authority and Group Leaders (if practicable)
 - (a) to approve the acquisition of any interest in land required for the purposes of the Authority; and
 - (b) to approve on behalf of the Authority the purchase or sale price or other consideration for any interest in land;
 - (xvii) in consultation with the Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer, to authorise the disposal of land and buildings in accordance with the policy set by the Authority;
 - (xviii) to approve the terms of any land transaction where the payment to the other party does not exceed £100,000 (in the case of a lump sum payment) or £10,000 per annum (in respect of an annual rental) and to maintain a register of all such transactions which shall be available for inspection by Members of the Authority on request; and
 - (xix) where it is impracticable to obtain authorisation from the Authority, and subject to the action being reported (for information) to the next convenient meeting of the Fire Authority, to take urgent action within legal powers, where this is necessary in the interests of the Authority, in respect of matters otherwise reserved to the Authority.
- 4.4 The Chief Fire Officer may authorise in writing, an officer to exercise an authority in this scheme in their absence, or at other times.
- 4.5 Where a function is delegated to more than one Officer, any one of those Officers may exercise it, but such function shall be exercised in accordance with any direction given by the Chief Fire Officer.
- 4.6 The Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, shall determine any case in which there is uncertainty whether an officer is authorised to act under these arrangements, including the extent to which any function is delegated.
- 4.7 Reference to these arrangements to the discharge of the functions of the Authority include references to the doing of anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of those functions and the Chief Fire Officer is authorised to act accordingly.
- 4.8 In consultation with the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Fire Officer shall make consequential amendments to any of the approved documents of the Authority contained in the Constitution (except the Code of Conduct for Members, for which any proposed changes must be submitted for approval to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel), to take account of any of the following:
- (i) any change in the job title of any officer

Section C2

The scheme of delegations to officers

- (ii) the transfer of any of the responsibilities of any officer, who has delegated functions, to any other officer
 - (iii) any change in any other title or name, for example of the offices filled by Members, any Panel, sub-Panel or group name, the name of any scheme or plan etc.
 - (iv) any changes to legislation (Acts, statutory instruments, regulations, orders, byelaws or the like) where that legislation is applied, extended, amended, consolidated or replaced
 - (v) in any other case where a minor amendment is necessary to correct a clerical error or (as long as the document remains substantially to the same effect) keep the document up to date.
- 4.9 In consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer, the Chief Fire Officer shall make further amendments to the Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegated Functions and Standing Orders as may be required for effective business needs before the next scheduled review by the Fire Authority.
- 5. Treasurer**
- The powers delegated to the Treasurer are described in the Financial Regulations.
- 6. Monitoring Officer to the Authority**
- Powers delegated to the Monitoring Officer to the Authority are described below and in the Standing Orders:
- 6.1 To affix the common seal to all properly authenticated deeds and documents.
 - 6.2 To nominate an appropriate officer of another Fire & Rescue Service to investigate allegations against a Principal Officer.
 - 6.3 Where the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 apply, to make appointments to panels and other bodies which are allocated to a particular political group, in accordance with the wishes of that group as notified to the Monitoring Officer.
 - 6.4 In relation to complaints that one or more Member(s) of the Fire Authority have breached the Code of Conduct for Members, to take such steps as they consider necessary to review, progress and (where relevant) determine such complaints in accordance with the Fire Authority's arrangements as specified in the Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Code of Conduct.
 - 6.5 Where a Member seeks a dispensation pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 to permit them to participate in discussion and/or voting at a meeting of the Fire Authority or one of its Panels despite having a prejudicial interest, to determine any such application on the grounds listed in the Code of Conduct for Members

7. Declaration of Emergency under the Authority's Emergency Planning or Business Continuity Procedures - Delegation to the Chief Fire Officer, (or in their absence either the Deputy Chief Fire Officer or the Assistant Chief Fire Officer).

In cases where an emergency has been declared under the Authority's emergency planning or business continuity procedures:

- (a) After consultation with the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson, to exercise any of the functions of the Authority which are not by law reserved to the Authority or a Panel. See also notes (i) to (iv) below.
- (b) After consultation with the Treasurer, to approve expenditure of up to £1,000,000, the action taken to be reported for information to the Urgency Panel as soon as practicable. See also notes (i) to (iv) below.

Notes:

- (i) The Chairperson (or in their absence the Vice-Chairperson), the Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer shall be informed as soon as is practicable if it appears likely that any such emergency will be declared.
- (ii) If it is not possible or practicable for the Chief Fire Officer to exercise the above delegated powers, the powers may be exercised by the Officer who is designated to be in charge under the Authority's emergency planning or business continuity procedures or any Officer appointed by him / her to act on his / her behalf.
- (iii) In relation to paragraph (a) above, if it is not possible or practicable for the Officer to consult the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson before exercising the above delegated powers the Officer may exercise the powers without doing so but shall take such steps as appear appropriate at the time to keep Members of the Authority informed of the action taken.
- (iv) In relation to paragraph (b) above, if it is not possible or practicable for the Officer to consult the Treasurer before approving any expenditure under the above delegated powers, the Officer shall consult the most senior Officer available in the Assistant Director of Resources/ Treasurer's directorate and shall take such steps as appear appropriate at the time to keep the Treasurer informed of the action taken.

Section D1

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders govern the conduct of the meetings of the Fire Authority and its Panels. They have been put in place to ensure clarity and transparency around how the Authority makes decisions at its meetings

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	October 2005	August 2103 December 2014 January 2017 September 2017 July 2019 September 2021	

STANDING ORDERS

PART 1 – AUTHORITY MEETINGS

GENERAL

- 1 [Interpretation of Part 1](#)
- 2 [Membership of the Authority](#)
- 3 [Timing of meetings](#)
- 4 [Notice of meetings and the right of the public to be present](#)
- 5 [Circulation of Panel reports](#)
- 6 [Record of Attendances](#)
- 7 [Admission of public and press](#)
- 8 [Motions affecting employees](#)
- 9 [Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson](#)
- 10 [Minutes](#)
- 11 [Suspension of Standing Orders](#)
- 12 [Adjournment of Meetings](#)
- 13 [Lack of quorum](#)
- 14 [Order of business](#)

RULES OF DEBATE

- 15 [Points of order or personal explanation](#)
- 16 [Motions and amendments](#)
- 17 [Definition of ‘amendment’](#)
- 18 [Disposal of amendments](#)
- 19 [Alteration of motions](#)
- 20 [Withdrawal of motion or amendment](#)
- 21 [Closure of Debate on a motion or amendment](#)
- 22 [Voting](#)
- 23 [Voting on appointments](#)

QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

- 24 [Questions which Members may ask without notice](#)
- 25 [Questions of which members of the public or Members must give notice](#)
- 26 [\(written questions\)](#)
- 26 [Petitions](#)

IMPROPER CONDUCT OF MEMBERS AND PUBLIC

- 27 [Chairperson may direct Member to discontinue speech](#)
- 28 [Disorderly conduct](#)
- 29 [Disturbance by members of the public](#)
- 30 [Disclosure of Authority business](#)

PART 2 - GENERAL

- 31 [Financial Regulations](#)

- 32 [Custody of the Common Seal](#)
- 33 [Sealing & signing of documents](#)
- 34 [Inspection of documents](#)
- 35 [Inspection of land and premises etc.](#)
- 36 [Interest of Members or Officers in appointments](#)
- 37 [Interest of Officers in contracts](#)
- 38 [Members' Interests](#)
- 39 [Canvassing of Members](#)
- 40 [Standing Orders to be made available to Members](#)

PART 3 - PANELS (COMMITTEES) OF THE AUTHORITY

- 41 [Appointment of Panels](#)

CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND STANDING ORDERS FOR THE EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

PART 1 - AUTHORITY MEETINGS

GENERAL

P 1 Interpretation of Part 1

- 1.1 In these Standing Orders:
- i. "Authority" means the East Sussex Fire Authority.
 - ii. "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the Authority, the Vice-Chairperson of the Authority, or the person presiding at the meeting of the Authority.
 - iii. "Chairperson of a Panel" includes the Vice-Chairperson of the Panel or any other Member of the Panel presiding in the Chairperson's absence.
 - iv. "Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive" means the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of the Authority.
 - v. "Constituent Authorities" means East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - vi. "Member(s)" unless the context requires otherwise means Member(s) of the Authority.
 - vii. "Monitoring Officer" means the Monitoring Officer of the Authority
 - viii. "The Scheme" means the East Sussex Fire Services Combination Scheme.
- 1.2 If there is any conflict between these Standing Orders and the Local Government Act 1972 (or subsequent or amending legislation), then the Act shall prevail.
- 1.3 "**P**" before the title of a Standing Order denotes that the order applies to Panels as well as to meetings of the Authority.

- 1.4 The ruling of the Chairperson as to the meaning or application of any of the Standing Orders in Part 1 or as to any aspect of the Authority's procedure (including the order of business) shall be conclusive and shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Authority, nor shall it be open to discussion.
- 1.5 For the avoidance of doubt, these Standing Orders shall apply to all relevant meetings of the Authority, whether they are physical meetings or virtual meetings held in accordance with the requirements of legislation in place at the relevant time.

Standing orders to apply to Panels

- 1.6 Standing Orders 1 (interpretation), 6 (record of attendances), 7 (admission of public and press), 8 (motions affecting employees), 13.4 (lack of quorum), 14.2 (declarations of Interest), 14.4 (apologies for absence), 14.5 (urgent items), 14.8 (minutes of last meeting), 14.9 (callover), 14.10 (reports), 14.11 (motions to exclude press or public), 14.12 (other business), 14.13 (referral of reports to the Authority), 22.2 (a member recorded vote), 22.3 (Chairperson's casting vote), 23 (voting on appointments), 27-29 (improper conduct), 30 (disclosure of Authority business), 38 (Members' interests) and 41 (Appointment of Panels) shall, with any necessary modification, apply to all meetings of Panels and Sub Panels.
- 1.7 Insofar as the rules of debate are concerned, each Chairperson of a Panel shall exercise their discretion in such a way as to ensure that the principles which govern the meetings of the Authority and which underpin the Rules of Debate specified at 15 are observed at Panel meetings.

2 Membership of the Authority

- 2.1 In accordance with the requirements of the East Sussex Fire Services (Combination Order) 1996 ('the Combination Scheme'), each Constituent Authority shall appoint, so far as is practicable, such number of its own elected Members to be Members of the Authority as is proportionate to the number of local government electors in its area in relation to the number of such electors in the other Constituent Authority's area.
- 2.2 The Authority shall consist of Members appointed to the Authority by the Constituent Authorities in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Combination Scheme.

- 2.3 The political balance rules in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 apply both at the stage when each Constituent Authority makes appointments to the Authority and also when the Authority establishes Panels (Committees or Sub-Committees) unless (as is normally the case in relation to any Standards Hearing Panel or Principal Officer Appointments Panel) the Authority resolves otherwise.

(Note: the political balance rules do not apply to any member working groups or other bodies set up to carry out an advisory – as opposed to decision-making - function).

- 2.4 A Member may resign from the Authority by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer and also normally to the Monitoring Officer of the Constituent Authority (if not one and the same) at any time prior to the start of any meeting of the Authority. The relevant Constituent Authority may appoint a replacement who will continue in office for the remainder of the period for which the predecessor would have held office, had he or she not resigned.

- 2.5 The Constituent Authorities may in addition agree to appoint one or more Reserve Member(s). Any Reserve Members so appointed shall not have the status of Members, the total number of which shall not exceed the requirements of the Scheme. A Reserve Member so appointed may attend a specific meeting of the Authority where nominated to do so by a Member of the same Constituent Authority and political group in order to speak and vote in their place where that Member is unable to do so. Notice must be given to the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting and the Reserve Member must declare themselves and have their attendance recorded in the minutes.

- 2.6 Attendance by a Reserve Member shall only be for the whole of the meeting and not for part of it. For the avoidance of doubt, this facility to nominate a Reserve to attend in the standing Member's place shall be without prejudice to the ability of any Member attending a meeting of the Authority to excuse him or herself from any individual item during the course of any meeting and re-join the meeting for a later item.

- 2.7 2.5 and 2.6 above shall not affect the standing Member's entitlement to Member Allowances, nor shall it permit the Reserve Member access to the Fire Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme.

3 Timing of meetings

- 3.1 The Authority shall normally hold at least four meetings per year, in accordance with a programme set by the Authority at its annual meeting.

The Authority's annual meetings and its budget meetings shall normally be held in or about June and February each year respectively, on dates indicated at the annual meeting except when otherwise agreed by the Chief Fire Officer, following consultation with the Authority's Chairperson.

- 3.2 Extraordinary meetings may be called either by the Chief Fire Officer, having first consulted with the Chairperson, or on the requisition in writing of any five Members of the Authority
- 3.3 The Chief Fire Officer may postpone or cancel any meeting and/or determine where it takes place with the prior agreement of the Chairperson.
- 3.4 Meetings of the Authority shall commence a time determined by the Authority or by the Chairperson, and shall start no earlier than 10 a.m.

4 Notice of meetings and the right of the public to be present

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer shall both publish on the Authority's website and also provide Members with access to the agenda for each meeting of the Authority specifying the business to be transacted and providing copies of relevant papers, together with the minutes of the preceding meeting. Such notice shall be given not less than 5 clear working days before the day of the meeting.
- 4.2 While Members are provided with the agenda and papers of meetings as a matter of courtesy, the publication of the agenda is considered to serve as notice to Members as well as to the public. A lack of service on any individual Member shall not affect the validity of the meeting.
- 4.3 All meetings of the Authority shall normally be open to the public and to the press. Where a decision is made pursuant to Standing Order 7 to exclude them where a confidential or exempt item is under consideration, then a clear indication of the decision and the reasons for it shall be given and they shall be invited back in for the remainder of the meeting once the relevant matter is concluded.

5 Circulation of Panel reports

- 5.1 After consulting the Chairperson of any relevant Panel, the Monitoring Officer shall settle on behalf of all Panels any reports from Panels to the Authority (incorporating appropriate material before the Panel) for signature by the Panel Chairperson.

P 6 Record of Attendances

- 6.1 A record of the Members attending any meeting of the Authority shall be retained by the Monitoring Officer.

P 7 Admission of public and press

- 7.1 The public shall be admitted to all the meetings of the Authority unless excluded by resolution in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.
- 7.2 The press and public shall be excluded for the whole or any part of the proceedings if a motion in one of the following forms, duly moved and seconded, is carried:
- (i) To exclude the public and accredited representatives of the press from the meeting during consideration of item(s) on the agenda on the grounds that the item(s) involve(s) a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
 - (ii) To exclude the public and accredited representatives of the press from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) on the agenda on the grounds that there would be a disclosure of confidential information furnished to the Authority by a Government Department on terms which forbid its disclosure to the public.
 - (iii) To exclude the public and accredited representatives of the press from the meeting during consideration of item(s) on the agenda, on the grounds that there would be a disclosure of confidential information prohibited by statute or by order of a Court.
- 7.3 The Chairperson may give the Monitoring Officer directions as to arrangements for the admission of the public.
- 7.4 Tape or video recorders, transmitters, microphones, cameras or similar equipment shall be permitted at meetings of the Authority.
- 7.5 No member of the public shall interrupt or take part in the proceedings at any meeting otherwise than in accordance with the Rules in these Standing Orders on public participation or exceptionally with the consent of the Chairperson. If any member of the public interrupts or takes part in the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairperson shall warn them and if they continue to interrupt, the Chairperson will order their removal.

- 7.6 The Chairperson may at any time – if they think it desirable in the interests of achieving order – move that the meeting be adjourned or suspended. If the motion is carried, the meeting shall be adjourned or suspended to a time and place to be determined by the Chief Fire Officer after consultation with the Chairperson.

P 8 Motions affecting employees

- 8.1 If any question arises at a meeting of the Authority as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation or conditions of service, or as to the conduct or ability of any person employed by the Authority, a motion to exclude the public and press shall be moved forthwith by the Chairperson and put without debate, save where the information is already in the public domain.

9 Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

- 9.1 The Authority shall at the annual meeting elect a Chairperson. It may also elect a Vice-Chairperson or Vice-Chairpersons from among its Members as the first item of business.
- 9.2 On a casual vacancy occurring in the office of Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson, the Authority shall elect from its Members a person to replace the Chairperson and may so elect a person to replace the Vice-Chairperson as the case may be.
- 9.3 The Authority, when deciding to elect a Vice-Chairperson, should consider an appropriate representative balance between the two Constituent Authorities such that the Vice-Chairperson, unless the Fire Authority specifically determine otherwise, should be a Member from the other Constituent Authority to that of the newly elected Chairperson.

10 Minutes

- 10.1 The Chairperson shall put the question "that the Authority resolves to approve the signing of the minutes of the last meeting of the Authority as a correct record".
- 10.2 No discussion shall take place upon the minutes, except upon their accuracy, and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion. If no such question is raised, or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chairperson shall indicate an intention to sign the minutes.

11 Suspension of Standing Orders

- 11.1 One or more Standing Orders in Part 1 may only be suspended by the Authority if a motion to do so is formally moved, seconded and put without discussion at a point when at least two thirds of the total number of Members are present.

12 Adjournment of Meeting

General power to adjourn

- 12.1 The Chairperson may, in addition to any other power, adjourn a meeting of the Authority for such period as the Chairperson shall consider expedient. The Chairperson shall fix the date and time at which the Authority will resume either at the time of the adjournment or at any time thereafter.

Adjourned meeting

- 12.2 Subject to Standing Order 12.1, if any meeting of the Authority is adjourned before its business has been finished, the meeting shall then stand adjourned until a date and time fixed by the Authority, or fixed by the Chairperson, or if no such date and time is fixed, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.

13 Lack of quorum

- 13.1 One third of the total number of Members (at present 6), this to include at least one Member from each Constituent Authority, constitutes a quorum, except that when a motion is moved to suspend Standing Orders (Standing Order 11.1) there shall be present at least two thirds of the Members of the Authority.
- 13.2 If during any meeting of the Authority the Chairperson, after the Members present have been counted, declares that there is not a quorum, the meeting shall stand adjourned until a date and time to be fixed by the Chairperson or, if no such date and time is fixed, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.
- 13.3 A quorum found to be present under Standing Order 13.2 at any meeting of the Authority shall be deemed to continue to be present at the meeting until found otherwise under Standing Order 13.1.
- P** 13.4 Quorum for the Panels will be set at the Authority's annual meeting, when the political balance is determined. No business shall be transacted at any meeting of any Panel if quorum is not achieved.

14 Order of business

- 14.1 The order of business at a meeting of the Authority shall (subject to the Chairperson's discretion to vary the order of proceedings) be as follows.

P 14.2 Declarations of Interest

To invite members to notify the meeting of any interests to be declared (including but not only any conflicts which arise between the business of the Fire Authority and the business of any other Authority to which the Member is appointed)

At the Annual Meeting of the Authority:

14.3 Appointment of Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons and Lead Members

- (i) At an annual meeting of the Authority and any other meeting where it is necessary, to elect a Chairperson, and if considered appropriate a Vice-Chairperson, and to appoint such Lead Members as the Authority may from time to time determine.
- (ii) At the annual meeting of the Authority, to appoint a Chairperson, and if considered appropriate a Vice-Chairperson, of each Panel. *(Note: in any case where no such appointments are made at the annual meeting, the relevant Panel will exercise this function under Standing Orders 14.3(iv) and 41)*
- (iii) On any occasion when the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Authority are not present, to elect a person to preside.
- (iv) At the first meeting of any Panel after the annual meeting where a Chairperson, and optionally a Vice Chairperson, has not been appointed, to make those appointments.

P 14.4 Apologies for Absence

To notify apologies for absence and (where relevant) attendance by any Reserve Members.

P 14.5 Notification of items considered urgent by the Chairperson/ Chairperson's business items

To notify urgent business items/Chairperson's business.

14.6 Written Questions from the Public or from Members

To consider any written questions from members of the Public or from Members submitted in accordance with Standing Order 25.

14.7 Petitions

To consider any Petitions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 26

P 14.8 Minutes of last meeting

To consider and approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Authority pursuant to Standing Order 10.

P 14.9 Call over

The Chairperson to call the item numbers of the remaining items on the agenda. Each item which is 'called' by any Member shall be reserved for debate. The Chairperson 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.

P 14.10 Reports

To consider reports, including any exempt or confidential reports, and/or any reports back from any informal Member Working Groups.

P 14.11 Consideration of any motion to exclude the press and public

P 14.12 Consideration of any other business

To consider any other business specified in the summons or required by law to be dealt with.

P 14.13 Referral of reports to the Authority (Panels only)

In the case of Panels, to determine which reports (if any) are to be referred to the Authority.

RULES OF DEBATE

15 Points of order or personal explanation

15.1 A Member may raise a point of order and shall be heard immediately. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a Standing Order

or statutory provision and the Member shall first specify the Standing Order or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been broken.

- 15.2 With the leave of the Chairperson, a Member may make a statement by way of personal explanation which must be confined to some material part of a former speech by the Member at the same meeting of the Authority which has been misunderstood.

16 Motions and amendments

- 16.1 A motion or an amendment to a motion shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and it shall, if required by the Chairperson, be put in writing and handed to the Monitoring Officer before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.

- 16.2 Notwithstanding Standing Order 16.1, a motion to adopt a report, or paragraphs of a report, of a Panel of the Authority shall (in the absence of an indication to the contrary) be deemed to have been moved by the Chairperson at the time at which they are presented. They need not be seconded.

16.3 The 'six month rule'

At a meeting of the Authority, no motion or amendment shall be moved to rescind any resolution which was passed within the preceding six months or which is to the same effect as one which has been rejected within that period. Such a motion may be moved if it is recommended by a Panel or notice of such motion has been given by as many Members as will constitute a quorum of the Authority (currently six) on the summons to the meeting.

17 Definition of "amendment"

- 17.1 An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either:

- (i) to refer a subject of debate to a Panel for consideration or reconsideration;
- (ii) to leave out words;
- (iii) to leave out words and insert other words; or
- (iv) to add words,

but such omission, substitution or addition of words shall not have the effect of negating a motion before the Authority.

17.2 Notice of amendments

Amendments shall normally be accepted only if they are submitted to the Monitoring Officer in writing no later than 10am on the working day which precedes the meeting at which the motion is scheduled for consideration.

The Chairperson however has full discretion to accept any amendments proposed during the course of a meeting where they consider that the amendment may assist the meeting in resolving matters or otherwise arriving at a decision.

18 Disposal of amendments

18.1 Notice of any number of amendments may be given to the Monitoring Officer. Unless the Chairperson rules otherwise, those on related subjects shall normally be debated (but not voted on) together. Moreover unless the Chairperson rules to the contrary then amendments shall be voted on in reverse chronological order, with the amendment submitted first being considered last.

18.2 If an amendment is lost, other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

18.3 If an amendment to refer a subject of debate to a Panel has been rejected and no other amendment is moved, then the Chairperson shall – unless a Member requires a vote – declare the motion to be carried.

19 Alteration of motions

19.1 A Member may, with the consent of the seconder and of the members present at the meeting of the Authority, signified without discussion, alter a motion or amendment if the alteration is one which could be made as an amendment.

20 Withdrawal of motion or amendment

20.1 A motion or amendment moved during a meeting may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of the seconder and of the members present at the meeting of the Authority, which shall be signified without discussion, and no Member may speak upon it after the mover has obtained permission for its withdrawal.

21 Closure of debate on a motion or amendment

21.1 A Member who has not spoken on the matter before the meeting may at the conclusion of a speech by another Member move without comment "that the Authority proceeds to the next business" or "that the question is now put" or "that the debate is now adjourned" or "that the Authority now adjourns" on the seconding of which the Chairperson shall proceed as follows:

- (i) On a motion "to proceed to the next business", unless in the Chairperson's opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed (in which case the Chairperson may refuse to accept the motion), they shall put to the vote the motion "to proceed to next business".
- (ii) On a motion "to put the question", unless in the Chairperson's opinion, the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed (in which case the Chairperson may refuse to accept the motion), they shall first put to the vote the motion "to put the question" and if it is passed, then before putting the original motion to the vote the Member shall be given a right of reply.
- (iii) On a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting, if in the Chairperson's opinion the matter before the meeting has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be sufficiently discussed at that meeting the Chairperson shall put the adjournment motion to the vote without giving any right of reply on that occasion.

22 Voting

22.1 The Authority shall vote upon all matters (except where the law otherwise provides) by show of hands, but on demand of four Members, the names of the Members present and their votes shall be taken by the Monitoring Officer and recorded in the minutes.

P 22.2 Where a Member makes a request immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting of the Authority, there shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting whether the Member voted for the issue, against the issue or abstained from voting.

P 22.3 Where there is an equality of votes, the person presiding at the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

P 23 Voting on appointments

- 23.1 Notwithstanding Standing Order 22, where there are more persons nominated for any position(s) to be filled by the Authority than there are vacancies, voting shall be by roll-call unless otherwise agreed and if more than half the total number of votes given are not cast in favour of one individual prospective appointee, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh roll-call shall be taken, and so on until more than half the total number of votes are given in favour of one candidate. If two or more persons have equal votes, a vote shall be taken to decide whose name shall be struck off the list.
- 23.2 Standing Order 30.1 relating to confidentiality shall apply to appointments of Members and Officers.

QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

24 Questions which Members may ask without notice

- 24.1 A Member may, without notice, ask the Chairperson of a Panel or other Member introducing the report of a Panel any question upon an item of the report of the Panel before the Authority during the Authority's consideration of the item to which the question relates.

25 Questions of which members of the public or Members must give notice (written questions)

- 25.1 At each ordinary meeting of the Authority, a period of up to 15 minutes shall be set aside for questions to be put, normally to the Chairperson or Chairperson of the Panel which has relevant responsibilities. Questions will only be accepted from persons who live, work or study in East Sussex or the City of Brighton & Hove or from Members. Questions may be asked if they relate to a matter or matters for which the Authority has responsibility, or to its functions, as long as they affect the area of the Authority, or part of it, or the inhabitants of the area, or some of them, subject to the provisions in Standing Orders 25.2 – 25.6.
- 25.2 A question may not be asked which relates to:
- (i) An individual or the questioner's own particular circumstances:
 - (ii) A matter which is the subject of legal proceedings or an appeal to a tribunal or to a Government Minister or an investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman or the subject of an ethical standards complaint which has not been finally determined; or

- (iii) the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation or conditions of service or the conduct or ability of any individual employed by the Authority or the conduct of a Member of the Authority.
- 25.3 The Chairperson of the Authority shall be entitled to rule that a question shall not be answered because:
 - (i) The preparation of the answer would require the expenditure of a disproportionate amount of time, money or effort or
 - (ii) In the Chairperson's opinion it is improper, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable or is in the same or similar terms to a question asked at the previous meeting.
- 25.4 A question must be by way of a genuine enquiry and not a statement.
- 25.5 The wording of all questions from members of the public must be received by the Monitoring Officer in writing accompanied by the name and contact details of the questioner who must provide an indication of whether they live, work or study in the areas of East Sussex and/or Brighton & Hove.

The deadline for receipt of a question from a member of the public shall be no later than 12 noon on the second working day after the agenda is published. The deadline for receipt of a question from a Member shall be five clear working days before the meeting.
- 25.6 The Monitoring Officer may edit any question to secure reasonable brevity or to delete any part that appears to be defamatory or to delete improper or unbecoming language and shall inform the questioner accordingly. The Monitoring Officer shall return to the questioner, with an explanation, any question that cannot be dealt with under this Standing Order.
- 25.7 Questions shall be dealt with in the order in which they are recorded as having been received by the Monitoring Officer.
- 25.8 A questioner shall be limited to one question per meeting, subject to the right in Standing Order 25.9 to ask one supplementary question for clarification.
- 25.9 At the meeting of the Authority, when the agenda item is reached, questioners shall be invited to read their question that shall be answered orally by the Chairperson to whom it is addressed. If the questioner is

not present in person they shall be sent a written response. Questions shall be asked and answered without discussion. However, a questioner may ask one supplementary question solely for the purpose of clarifying a point in the answer given.

- 25.10 A copy of the questions that have been received, together with the names of the questioners, shall be circulated before the meeting at which the questions are to be asked to all Members and the media.
- 25.11 In the event of there being insufficient time to deal with all the questions of which notice has been received, a response to any unanswered question(s) shall be sent to the questioner(s) in writing by the appropriate Chairperson. A copy of the response shall be sent to all Members and to the media.
- 25.12 Details of the questions which have been asked, and by whom, together with the answers given, shall be recorded in the minutes of the Authority.

26 Petitions

- 26.1 At each ordinary meeting of the Authority, a period of up to 15 minutes shall be set aside for the presentation of petitions by Members of the Authority or members of the public.
- 26.2 The presentation of a petition shall be limited to not more than three minutes, and shall be confined to reading out or summarising the request being made in the petition and indicating the number of the signatories.
- 26.3 Petitions must be submitted in writing to the Monitoring Officer no later than ten working days prior to the meeting, and will be accepted only where they are signed by at least 20 individuals living, working and/or studying in the areas of East Sussex or Brighton & Hove.
- 26.4 Petitions may only be presented if they a) relate to matters for which the Authority has responsibility or to its functions, and also b) they affect the area of the Authority, or part of it, or the inhabitants of the area, or some of them.
- 26.5 A petition must include a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition, what action the petitioners wish the Authority to take, and the name and contact details of the petition organiser as well as information to confirm that they live, work or study in one of the two areas.

- 26.6 Petitions shall be presented in the order in which they are notified to the Monitoring Officer. The Chairperson shall decide how the petition will be dealt with: whether it shall be debated at the meeting to which it is presented, or whether to refer the petition to the relevant Panel or a later Fire Authority meeting. This shall be recorded in the minutes. If the petition is referred to a Panel or a later Fire Authority meeting, the petitioner shall be invited to the meeting when the petition is to be considered but shall not be permitted to address the Panel or Fire Authority meeting.

IMPROPER CONDUCT OF MEMBERS AND PUBLIC

P 27 Chairperson may direct Member to discontinue speech

- 27.1 The Chairperson shall call a Member to order for irrelevance, repetition, unbecoming language, improper motives, failure to address the Chairperson, reflections of a personal character on any Member or employee of the Authority, or any breach of order, and may direct such Member, if speaking, to discontinue the speech and be seated.

P 28 Disorderly conduct

- 28.1 If at a meeting any Member, in the opinion of the Chairperson notified to the Authority, misconducts himself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chairperson, or by behaving irregularly, improperly, or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Authority, the Chairperson or any other Member may move "*that the Member named should not be heard further*", and the motion as seconded shall be put and determined without further discussion.
- 28.2 If the Member named continues to misconduct themselves after the motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the Chairperson shall either move "*that the Member named should be required to leave the meeting*" in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion, or adjourn the meeting of the Authority for such period as the Chairperson shall consider expedient.
- 28.3 In the event of general disturbance or repeated interruptions which in the opinion of the Chairperson renders the orderly dispatch of business impossible, the Chairperson may forthwith adjourn the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 12.1.

P 29 Disturbance by members of the public

- 29.1 If a member of the public interrupts proceedings at any meeting, the

Chairperson shall warn that person of the consequences if they persist. If the interruption continues, the Chairperson shall order the person's removal from the meeting. In case of general disturbance or repeated interruptions in any part of the meeting space, the Chairperson shall order that part to be cleared of members of the public.

P 30 Disclosure of Authority business

- 30.1 All documents marked "confidential", all documents marked "exempt/confidential", all documents and matters which have been, or are intended to be, raised or discussed in the absence of the press and public, and all discussions on those occasions, shall be treated as confidential by Members.
- 30.2 Without the consent of both the Chief Fire Officer and the Monitoring Officer, a Member shall not disclose to any person not being a Member or an officer of the Authority any such business.

PART 2 – GENERAL

31 Financial Regulations

- 31.1 Such Financial Regulations as the Authority may from time to time make for regulating and controlling the finances of the Authority shall have the force and validity of Standing Orders (see Section D2).

32 Custody of the Common Seal

- 32.1 The Common Seal of the Authority shall be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Monitoring Officer.

33 Sealing and signing of documents

- 33.1 The Common Seal of the Authority shall not be affixed to any document unless the sealing has been authorised by a resolution of the Authority or of a Panel or by an officer acting under delegated powers. A resolution of the Authority or of such Panel which requires for its execution the sealing of any document shall be sufficient authority for the purpose.
- 33.2 The affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by the Monitoring Officer or an officer authorised by the Monitoring Officer in writing for the purpose.
- 33.3 An entry of the sealing of each document shall be made in an online

register provided for that purpose, which shall provide a record of whether the Monitoring Officer or a named authorised officer was present at the sealing.

- 33.4 Where it is neither a legal requirement nor is it customary to affix the Common Seal, any person with sufficient specific or general delegated power from the Authority may sign on behalf of the Authority any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the Authority or of a Panel or officer acting under delegated powers.
- 33.5 Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Authority it shall be signed by the Monitoring Officer, or by an officer authorised in writing by either the Authority or the Monitoring Officer for that purpose.

34 Inspection of documents

- 34.1 Members may, for the purposes of carrying out their duties as Members but not otherwise, on application to the Monitoring Officer and in accordance with the Authority's Access to Information rules, inspect any document which has been considered by a Panel or by the Authority, and if copies are available shall on request be supplied for the like purposes with an electronic copy of such a document.
- 34.2 A Member shall not knowingly inspect and shall not call for a copy of any document relating to a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or any other interest required to be disclosed under the Authority's Code of Conduct.
- 34.3 This Standing Order shall not preclude the Monitoring Officer from declining to allow inspection of any document which is, or in the event of legal proceedings would be, protected by privilege arising from the relationship of solicitor and client.
- 34.4 All reports made or minutes kept by any Panel shall be open for the inspection of any Member and the Monitoring Officer shall send to any Member who so requests all reports and papers (save those marked "exempt/ confidential", which shall be dealt with pursuant to Standing Order 30) submitted to any Panel.

35 Inspection of land and premises, etc.

- 35.1 Unless specifically authorised to do so by the Authority or a Panel, a Member shall not issue any order on behalf of the Authority or claim by virtue of membership of the Authority any right to inspect or to enter upon

any lands or premises which the Authority has the power or duty to inspect or enter.

36 Interest of Members or Officers in appointments

36.1 A candidate for any appointment under the Authority who knows that they are related to any Member or Officer of the Authority shall when making application disclose that relationship in writing. This requirement shall be included in any application form. A candidate who fails to disclose such a relationship shall be disqualified for the appointment and if appointed shall be liable to dismissal without notice.

36.2 Every Member and every Officer of the Authority shall disclose to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive any relationship known to them to exist between themselves and any person known to be a candidate for an appointment under the Authority. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive shall report to the Members or officers responsible for making the appointment details of the disclosure.

36.3 For the purpose of this Standing Order, persons shall be deemed to be related if they are family members. Family membership includes a partner (whether or not this is a formal marriage or civil partnership), a parent, a parent-in-law, a son or daughter, a stepson or stepdaughter, the child of a partner, a brother or sister, a partner's brother or sister, or a grandparent.

37 Interest of Officers in contracts

37.1 The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive shall record in a register to be kept for the purpose particulars of any notice given by an officer of the Authority, under the Local Government Act 1972, of any pecuniary interest in a contract and the register shall be made accessible on request during office hours for the inspection of any Member.

P 38 Members' Interests

38.1 Members shall observe the requirements of the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members, which is published in the Fire Authority's Constitution.

38.2 Without prejudice to the requirements of the Code of Conduct, any Member who (whether personally or by any partner or associate) or whose employer or company is about to act in any professional or private capacity in any matter in which the Authority has an interest, shall forthwith notify the fact to the Monitoring Officer.

39 Canvassing of Members

- 39.1 Canvassing of Members directly or indirectly for any staff appointment under the Authority shall disqualify the candidate concerned for such appointment. The purpose of this Standing Order shall be included in the form of application.

40 Standing Orders to be made available to Members

- 40.1 A copy of these Standing Orders shall be made available to each Member upon their appointment to the Authority.

PART 3 - PANELS (COMMITTEES) OF THE AUTHORITY

P 41 Appointment of Panels

- 41.1 At its annual meeting the Authority:
- (i) May resolve which Panels shall be appointed, what shall be the terms of reference of each of those Panels and of how many voting Members each Panel shall consist.
 - (ii) May resolve that non-voting co-optees shall also be appointed to any such Panel.
 - (iii) Shall specify the number of any such non-voting co-optees and the functions in relation to the Panel that each person so appointed may exercise.
- 41.2 The terms of reference of Panels as agreed from time to time are set out in Section B of the Constitution.
- 41.3 The Authority may at any time amend resolutions made under the previous paragraph.
- 41.4 No Panel may appoint a sub-panel to discharge any of the functions of the Authority without the approval of the Authority, except as provided by Standing Order 41.17.
- 41.5 Each Panel set up under this Standing Order shall continue to discharge the functions committed to it until the Authority resolves otherwise.
- 41.6 Each person appointed by their Group as a Member of such a Panel following the report submitted in accordance with para 41.7 shall

continue (as long as the appointment is not varied) to act as such for as long as that person has been appointed by the Authority, or until such time as the appointment is terminated by the Authority or that person resigns.

- 41.7 The Monitoring Officer shall submit a report to the Authority showing the allocation of seats which would in the Monitoring Officer's opinion best meet the requirements of the allocation of seats between political groups in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Such report shall be submitted:
- (i) Whenever the Authority is required to review the allocation of seats on Panels between political groups; or
 - (ii) When the Authority resolves to carry out such a review; or
 - (iii) At such time as it appears proper to the Monitoring Officer to do so.
- 41.8 In the light of such a report, the Authority shall determine the allocation of seats to political groups.
- 41.9 Whenever an appointment of a voting Member to a Panel needs to be made or terminated in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seat has been allocated, then the Monitoring Officer shall make or terminate the appointment upon receipt of such a request from a representative of the political group.
- 41.10 The Authority or its Panels may from time to time establish working groups/working parties/advisory bodies to provide informal input on such specific topic(s) within the remit of the Authority or Panel setting it up as it directs. Such working groups shall have a membership drawn from Members and shall perform an advisory function. They will not comply with the rules on political balance and will provide advisory input only. The proceedings of any such group shall be reported to the Panel that established it on a regular basis. The group may make recommendations or otherwise take a view on matters it has been directed to consider. Neither the Authority nor any of its Panels may delegate any of its functions to any such group.
- 41.11 The Authority or the relevant Panel may fix the date, time and place of ordinary meetings of Panels, and the Chief Fire Officer may postpone or cancel any meeting with the prior agreement of the Chairperson of the Panel.

- 41.12 The Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Panel may call a special meeting of the Panel at any time.
- 41.13 The Authority may appoint, from amongst its voting Members, a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson for each Panel.
- 41.14 If no appointments have been made by the Authority under Standing Order 41.13, then the Panel at its first meeting after the annual meeting of the Authority or in the case of a vacancy at any meeting shall elect from amongst its voting Members a Chairperson and may elect a Vice-Chairperson.
- 41.15 In the absence of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of a meeting of a Panel, those voting Members present shall elect a person from amongst their number to preside over the meeting.
- 41.16 If it is necessary for a Chairperson to be elected, the Monitoring Officer shall invite nominations and shall exercise the powers of the Chairperson in order to regulate that process.
- 41.17 The Scrutiny & Audit Panel may appoint a Standards Hearing Panel to deal with complaints referred to the Authority for determination. Standing Orders 41.5, 41.6 and 41.11 to 41.16 shall apply to any such Panel with the substitution of the word 'sub-panel' for 'Panel' and 'Standards Scrutiny & Audit Panel' for 'Authority' in each case.

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Section D2

Procurement Standing Orders

Rules to be followed when buying on behalf of East Sussex Fire Authority

- 1. [Introduction](#)**
 - [1.1 Legal status of these Procurement Standing Orders](#)
 - [1.2 Key Principles](#)
 - [1.3 Compliance](#)
 - [1.4 Scope](#)
 - [1.5 Roles and Responsibilities](#)
 - [1.6 Category Strategies](#)
- 2. [Finding and contracting with suppliers](#)**
 - [2.1 Purchase Orders](#)
 - [2.2 Using Procurement Cards](#)
 - [2.3 Temporary Staff, Consultants and Professional Services](#)
 - [2.4 Contract Value Calculation](#)
 - [2.5 Grants](#)
 - [2.6 Bribery, Corruption, Canvassing and Collusion and Publicity](#)
 - [Bribery and Corruption](#)
 - [Canvassing and Collusion and Publicity](#)
 - [2.7 Financial Thresholds for Procurement and Contracting](#)
 - [Summary table](#)
- 3. [Procurement methods](#)**
 - [3.1 Tenders over Regulatory Thresholds](#)
 - [3.2 Use of Selection Questionnaires \(SQs\)](#)
 - [3.3 Evaluation](#)
 - [3.4 Collaboration with other public bodies](#)
 - [3.5 Approved or 'Select' Lists](#)
 - [3.6 Framework agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Systems \(DPS\)](#)
 - [3.7 Responsible Procurement](#)
 - [3.8 Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice \(VEAT\)](#)
 - [3.9 Developing Local suppliers](#)
 - [3.10 Commercial Confidentiality and Intellectual Property](#)
- 4. [Waivers and Emergencies](#)**
 - [4.1 Waivers](#)
 - [4.2 Emergency Purchases](#)
- 5. [Liability and Security](#)**
 - [5.1 Insurance Liability](#)

- 5.2 [Financial Security](#)
- 5.3 [Document Retention periods](#)
- 6. [Managing Contracts](#)**
 - 6.1 [Contract Performance](#)
 - 6.2 [Contract Award Notices](#)
 - 6.3 [Contracts Register](#)
 - 6.4 [Contract Modifications and Extensions](#)
 - [Extensions](#)
 - [Other Modifications](#)
 - 6.5 [Contract Novation](#)
- 7. [Paying our suppliers](#)**
 - 7.1 [Invoice Payments](#)
 - 7.2 [Payment Terms](#)
- 8. [Disposing of surplus goods](#)**

Appendix 1 [Policies and Guidance relevant to these Orders](#)

Updated: September 2021

1. Introduction

Procurement is the act of acquiring goods, services and works from third parties. Procurement is a much broader term than simply 'purchasing'.

The procurement process spans the whole cycle from the initial identification of needs through to managing the end of a contract (or the end of the useful life of an asset) and all stages in between.

The policy of the Authority is to conduct responsible procurement activity, in accordance with its legal obligations, in a way that aligns to accepted procurement best practice, for the purpose of delivering value for money, in a fair, open and transparent way.

The Procurement Standing Orders (referred to as the 'Orders' from this point on) set out the governance arrangements by which the Authority conducts and authorises the procurement of goods, works and services. They are the framework by which the Authority will procure and manage the relationship with suppliers for the duration of any contractual relationship.

Budget Managers are accountable for all procurement in their respective area of responsibility. Anyone who buys on behalf of the Authority, including staff, contractors and consultants, is responsible for following these Orders. Functions delegated to particular officers under these Orders may be carried out by other officers specifically authorised by them for that purpose.

These Orders must be considered along with the Authority's Financial Regulations, Schemes of Delegation, the ESFRS Procurement Card Policy and the Responsible Procurement Policy.

Note: In these Orders, 'You' means anyone who needs to buy from an external supplier. 'Regulatory Threshold' means any relevant threshold applicable to procurement by UK law or regulation.

1.1 LEGAL STATUS OF THESE PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS

As a good practice measure, the Authority has determined to make these Procurement Standing Orders, which are published as part of the Constitution.

The Procurement Manager is the custodian of these Orders and is responsible for keeping them under review.

The Orders reflect procurement legislation, public sector policy and best practice. These are subject to change from time to time and will be reviewed annually, to ensure they remain current. The Combined Fire Authority will consider and approve significant changes to the Orders following consideration by the Senior Leadership Team. Minor changes will be made with the approval of the Procurement Manager.

1.2 KEY PRINCIPLES

These Orders are based on the following key principles:

- a) To ensure that the Authority meets its statutory duty to deliver **best value for money** and creates healthy competition and markets for the Goods, Services and Works purchased
- b) To promote **transparency and market competition**, and to comply with transparency and reporting requirements and standards
- c) To assist and guide staff to ensure **compliance with the law, rules and procedures** which govern the spending of public money
- d) To ensure that public money is spent **legally and fairly**
- e) To support our responsible procurement considerations, to meet our environmental sustainability and social value objectives, our public sector equality duty and to encourage local small businesses

1.3 COMPLIANCE

All staff and any external contractors empowered to form contracts on behalf of the Authority must comply with these Orders at all times. If you breach them this may lead to disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct. The Procurement Manager will report any breaches of these Orders to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer on a quarterly basis.

Every contract made by the Authority or on its behalf must comply with legislation, regulation, these orders and the Authority's Financial Regulations.

Where there is a difference between current legislation governing procurement and these Orders, the legislation prevails. Where these Orders appear to conflict with other Authority- determined rules, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer determines which takes precedence.

1.4 SCOPE

Apart from the exceptions listed below, these Orders cover all spend with external suppliers regardless of how they are funded or which systems are used to place orders with suppliers.

These Orders do not apply to the following items:

- a) Contracts for the acquisition or lease of land and/or real estate;
- b) Contracts for permanent or fixed term employment;
- c) Works or orders placed with utility companies;
- d) Non-trade mandatory payments to third parties, such as insurance claims, pension payments, payments to public bodies;
- e) Awarding of grants;
- f) Any contract relating to the engagement of Counsel or other legal specialists;
- g) A declared emergency as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and authorised by the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive or a nominated officer in their absence.

1.5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Delivery of best practice procurement and sound commercial outcomes relies on staff from different parts of the Authority working effectively together.

Understanding the respective roles and responsibilities of all those that play a part in procurement is an important aspect of ensuring high quality outcomes.

Set out below are the high level roles and responsibilities of the principal stakeholders in the procurement process.

1.5.1 The Procurement Department

The Procurement Department provides support and guidance relating to all aspects of commissioning, procuring and contracting for goods, services and works.

The team will support our internal customers with any aspect of procurement. The Financial Thresholds prescribe the routes which must be followed and the **level of anticipated spend** informs the extent to which the Procurement Department must be involved. Their responsibilities include:

- a) Ensuring that all purchasing activity is conducted in line with these Orders;
- b) Developing a procurement strategy to help the Authority meet its objectives;
- c) Development and maintenance of Category Strategies;
- d) Development and maintenance of the Procurement Action Log for pipeline activities;
- e) Resource planning to deliver the Action Log;
- f) Giving support and training for all those involved in procurement;
- g) Working with teams to develop commercial and procurement approaches for requirements;
- h) Managing specific tender processes;
- i) Giving information on existing agreements and guidance on procurement procedures (including legal obligations);
- j) Guiding the selection of the right suppliers or service providers on quality, delivery, service and price to meet requirements;
- k) Guidance on contract management (or management of the most significant contracts) with contracted suppliers, defining the principles governing the relationships and performance monitoring;
- l) Monitoring and reporting procurement performance;
- m) Maintaining knowledge of the supplier marketplace;
- n) Maintaining contract management arrangements;
- o) Documenting effective change control mechanisms to support the contract management arrangements.
- p) Determining the minimum levels of Insurance Liability required during the term of a contract

1.5.2 Internal Customers

The role of the customer is important in defining the goods or services that are being purchased on behalf of the Authority. Alongside the professional procurement advice provided by a procurement specialist, budget holders and subject matter experts from the key buying areas, Internal Customers will have a significant input into the procurement process.

The term "customer" is used to describe the individual 'you' (or team) with responsibility for formulating the requirement i.e. the goods, services or works required.

Their responsibilities include:

- a) Identifying requirements and communicating their needs to Procurement;
- b) Consulting with Procurement Department at the earliest opportunity in strategic planning for acquisitions of goods or services or works from third parties;
- c) Ensuring there is adequate budget/funding in place for the whole life cost where this can be reasonably assessed, to make the proposed purchases;
- d) Ensuring all purchases are compliant with the Orders and delegated financial authority;
- e) Ensuring the Authority's Procurement Department is informed and involved at the earliest opportunity;
- f) Adequately defining user's needs, identifying minimum standards and desirable elements;
- g) Ensuring appropriate documentation is produced to support procurement, as required (e.g. project plan, risk register, terms of reference, decision logs, evaluation criteria, business case, waiver request);
- h) Ensure compliance with relevant legal obligations relating to the goods, services or works to be purchased e.g. environmental/health and safety etc;
- i) Ensure any conflict (or potential conflict) of interest is declared, recorded and managed;
- j) Where appropriate, prepare a business case for approval;
- k) Contribute to drafting the tender specification;
- l) Contribute to development of the category strategy and associated risk assessment;
- m) Be involved throughout the life cycle of the contract at pre-planning, selection, award, implementation, review and onward contract management;
- n) Provide technical expertise and input to support the bid assessment fairly and transparently;
- o) Prepare the technical recommendation in any bid assessment report providing evidence if necessary;
- p) Creating and authorising purchase orders in a timely manner
- q) Reviewing and approving Procurement Card transactions in a timely manner

Staff should not deal directly with bidders or potential bidders before or during the Procurement process without the full involvement of and/or approval by the Category Specialist or the Procurement Manager.

Anyone who buys from suppliers is responsible for:

- a) Complying with these Orders and all relevant policies
- b) Purchasing from existing contracts where they are in place
- c) Ensuring there is adequate budget available for any purchase
- d) Raising and ensuring a purchase order or Procurement Card purchase is approved before the requirements are delivered to the Authority
- e) Ensuring specifications meet the defined need and requirements and properly take into account equality and diversity as well as Responsible Procurement implications
- f) Ensuring that HR is consulted and the appropriate approval is obtained in respect of the engagement of any temporary workers or consultants outside of any agreed corporate contract

Contracts are to be managed within Business Areas, supported by their Category Specialist, either by a dedicated contract manager or by a nominated officer who has these responsibilities as part of a broader role.

1.6 CATEGORY STRATEGIES

To enable the Authority to maintain an accurate oversight of procurement activity across the Service, the Procurement Department are responsible for the development of an annual Procurement Action Log, which will identify the following:

- a) For each Department, all contracts which are due for extension, renewal or replacement in the coming financial year, and the notice required for this
- b) The aggregate contract value across the life of the contract
- c) The agreed budget allocated for the year in question
- d) The procurement activity required
- e) The expected start date for procurement
- f) The expected start date of any new contract or extension
- g) Whether there is an option to extend the existing contract or not
- h) Whether the spend is capital, revenue, or a combination

The Action Log will be developed and agreed with the Assistant Director or delegated officer, of the relevant categories on an annual basis, as part of the budget setting cycle.

Procurement must maintain a proper audit trail of all approvals and decisions and track the delivery of savings and benefits in line with the Category Strategies, as agreed with the relevant Assistant Director or delegated officer.

2. Finding and contracting with suppliers

2.1 PURCHASE ORDERS

Once you have found the right supplier in accordance with these Orders, you must not make verbal commitments but must raise a Requisition in order for a Purchase Order to be raised via the SAP Financial Management system. This must be approved in accordance with the Authority's Financial Regulations before it is sent to the supplier and before any goods or services have been received.

2.2 PROCUREMENT CARDS

The Authority makes use of Procurement Cards as the preferred route for all low value or one off purchases, up to a value of £5,000, in a wide range of situations.

You must use purchase cards only as set out in the 'ESFRS Procurement Card Policy', unless otherwise agreed in writing by Procurement, or in emergency circumstances (see also section 4.2).

The How to Buy area within the Procurement pages on the intranet, details all pre-contracted suppliers for varied commodities and should be the first port of call for Procurement Card purchases.

<https://esfrsorg.sharepoint.com/sites/ESFRSIntranet/SitePages/One-Stop-Shop.aspx>

2.3 TEMPORARY STAFF, CONSULTANTS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Procurement works closely with HR to manage the Authority's temporary workforce needs. This applies to any appointment that is outside the Authority's direct employment. No temporary worker, agency or consultant may be procured or engaged outside of existing contract or framework arrangements without prior approval from HR.

A consultant is a person (not an employee), agency or firm engaged for a limited period of time on a project or requirement specific basis to carry out a specific task or tasks which meet a desired set of outputs or outcomes. A consultant provides subject matter expertise, support and/or experience to the Authority either because it does not possess the skills or resources in-house or requires an independent evaluation/assessment to be made.

This definition excludes:

- a) Agency staff, interim or role specific duties which should be sourced through the Authority's corporate contract;
- b) Routine services e.g. maintenance, cleaning and security;
- c) Professional services e.g. architects, structural engineers, legal counsel or training services.

Temporary & agency staff, and other consultants or contractors, must abide by the terms of their contract with the Authority and follow the Authority's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy.

2.4 CONTRACT VALUE CALCULATION

Contract value means the estimated aggregate or recurring value payable in pounds sterling exclusive of Value Added Tax over the entire contract period including any extensions of the contract.

Where the contract period is not fixed or the requirement finite, the estimated value of the contract must be calculated by multiplying the monthly spend value by 36.

Where an existing contract is being extended, the aggregate value includes the amount spent to date plus the expected forward value.

Contracts must not be artificially underestimated or disaggregated into two or more separate contracts with the intention of avoiding the application of these Orders or legislation.

In the case of Framework Agreements or Dynamic Purchasing Systems the contract value must be calculated to include the total estimated value, net of VAT, of all the contracts envisaged to be awarded for the total term of the Framework Agreement or the Dynamic Purchasing System.

2.5 GRANTS

The making of grants is not subject to these Orders.

2.6 BRIBERY, CORRUPTION, CANVASSING AND COLLUSION AND PUBLICITY

Bribery and Corruption

You must comply with the Authority's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy and the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. You must

not accept gifts from contactors or potential contractors, including those who have previously worked for the Authority, service users, clients or suppliers. You must not invite or accept any gift or reward in respect of the award or performance of any contract.

Canvassing and Collusion

All Invitations to Tender must include a requirement for tenderers to complete fully and sign a form of tender including certificates relating to canvassing and non-collusion. Every contract must contain a clause entitling the Authority to cancel the contract and to recover from the contractor the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation if the contractor or his representative has practiced collusion in tendering for the contract or any other contract with the Authority.

Publicity

The Authority does not participate in any publicity relating to any of its contracts or purchases. Contracts will include that suppliers do not advertise or publicly announce that they are undertaking work for the Authority. This is to ensure suppliers are assured we operate under a fair, consistent and equal approach for all potential bidders. If the Authority is made aware of any such advertising on websites or company literature the supplier will be contacted and requested to remove such references.

2.7 FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS FOR PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING

For each proposed purchase of goods, services or works, you must estimate the total, whole life cost and apply the relevant PSO threshold for the associated value.

All purchasing activity, including extensions and variations to Contracts, are subject to the procedures defined below, relevant to aggregated value of the procurement.

Contracts must not be artificially underestimated or disaggregated into two or more separate contracts with the intention of avoiding the application of these Orders or legislation.

There may be occasions where the business need, the anticipated cost, or the level of risk associated with a requirement does not fit neatly within the prescribed routes and the specified thresholds. Where this occurs, Internal Customers are required to contact the Procurement Department, who will advise the most appropriate approach.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 set out procedures which must be followed before awarding a contract **when its value exceeds our own PSO thresholds**, unless it qualifies for a specific exclusion - e.g. on grounds of national security.

The regulatory thresholds currently in force, as of 01 January 2020 are as follows & refer to whole life cost, excluding VAT:

Supplies and Services (except subsidised services contracts) £189, 330
Works (including subsidised works contracts) £4,733, 252
Light Touch Regime for Services £663, 540 (specific criteria apply – the Procurement Manager will determine)

Section 3 describes the mandatory procedure if the contract value meets or exceeds the thresholds described above.

The PSOs describe four routes to market and where Procurement must be involved, according to the associated internal thresholds:

Route 1 – Self Serve: Up to £5000 - Procurement Card or Requisition: Procurement Cards are the preferred route for all low value or one off purchases, up to a value of £5,000.
Route 2 – Self Serve: Up to £10,000 – Obtain 1 Quotation - this route is for unregulated procurements which are low risk, non-repetitive and valued anywhere up to £10,000. The quotation must be forwarded to Procurement with the associated requisition.
Route 3 - Assisted Procurement: £10,001 to £50,000 – Obtain 3 Quotations - this route mandates assistance from the Procurement Department. Procurement will provide standard documentation and processes for the Internal Customer to follow, including publication on Contracts Finder at £25,000 and above.
Route 4 – Formal Procurement: This route is for requirements valued over £50,000. The Procurement Department will lead the sourcing exercise in conjunction with Internal Customer inputs.



Section D2
Procurement Standing Orders

2.7. SUMMARY TABLE

A Aggreg ate value includin	B Purchase Card permitted?	C Procurement Method?	D How should you approach the market?	E Who leads the procurement?	F Must the contract be formally advertised?	G What type of contract is required?	H Who must approve the contract award?	I Who signs the contract on the Authority's behalf?	J Contract Award Notice needed?
£0 to £5000	Yes if within rules & guidance and card limits	Direct purchase	Self -Serve - directly with card or Purchase Order	Internal Customer	No	Standard PO Terms apply	N/A - Budget Holder approves the purchase	N/A - Budget Holder approves purchase	No
£5001 to £10,000	No	Minimum of 1 quotation	Self -Serve – Procurement can assist	Internal Customer	No	Standard PO Terms apply	Budget Holder or Delegated Person	Budget Holder	No
£10,001 to £50,000	No	Minimum of 3 Quotations	Via Procurement	Procurement	Yes - via Contracts Finder above £25,000	Standard Terms and Conditions and any additional in line with agreed level of risk and complexity	Budget Holder or Delegated Person	Budget Holder or Delegated Person	Yes as required by Contracts Finder
£50,001+	No	Full competitive tender exercise or as prescribed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or purchase via a framework	Via Procurement	Procurement	Yes – via Find A Tender as required by Contracts Finder &/or Public Contracts Regulations	Standard Terms and Conditions and any additional in line with agreed level of risk and complexity	Budget Holder or Delegated Person in line with Financial Regulations	Budget Holder or Delegated Person in line with Financial Regulations. Over £500k - sealed as a deed via Legal Services	Yes – as required by contracts Finder &/or Public Contracts Regulations

3. Procurement methods

3.1 TENDERS OVER REGULATORY THRESHOLDS UNDER THE PUBLIC CONTRACTS REGULATIONS 2015

Procurement is responsible for selecting the most appropriate route to market.

3.2 USE OF SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRES (SQS)

Procurement will apply minimum standards of experience, reputation and economic standing to suppliers to test their suitability to bid for an Authority contract.

Procurement must use the Authority's standard Invitation to Tender Questionnaire and adhere to statutory guidance for all procurements of contracts above the relevant Regulatory Threshold.

All the methods and criteria used for assessing the suitability of suppliers must be transparent, objective and non-discriminatory.

3.3 EVALUATION

Tenders over Regulatory Thresholds are evaluated based on the identification of the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)'. This takes price into account, alongside quality and responsible procurement considerations, but does not require the tender to be awarded to the lowest priced bidder.

The weighting given to the considerations, including in relation to Responsible Procurement considerations will be determined by the Category Specialist in consultation with Internal Customer.

Where written quotations are invited for contracts below regulatory thresholds MEAT should also be used, but where no clear quality criteria are specified then the Procurement Manager can determine that an assessment can be made based on price. The relevant Budget Manager can accept the most economically advantageous tender, or the lowest cost tender, where such a contract award criterion is being used.

For all tenders over Regulatory Thresholds, a full record of all key decisions and process in relation to the procurement procedure must be kept in the contract file maintained by the Procurement Department,

including such details as required by Regulation 84 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

3.4 COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PUBLIC BODIES

The Authority may enter into collaborative agreements for the procurement of goods and services with other public bodies or Central Purchasing Bodies where this offers best value for money. Where this is proposed, you must seek advice from Procurement in the first instance.

3.5 APPROVED OR 'SELECT' LISTS

The Authority does not operate general 'approved' or 'select' lists of suppliers, instead a formal arrangement must be in place via either a contract, a framework agreement, a dynamic purchasing system or other mechanism compliant with regulations.

3.6 FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS AND DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEMS (DPS)

All requirements to use existing frameworks or DPS, or to set up new ones, must be referred to Procurement, who will make appropriate arrangements in consultation with Legal Services as required.

Where the Authority accesses an existing Framework Agreement or DPS, the Framework Agreement or DPS terms and conditions of contract must be used, amended as appropriate, as permitted by the Framework Agreement or DPS and the Regulations.

Before entering into these, due diligence checks must be carried out to demonstrate that the Authority can lawfully access them and that they are fit for purpose and provide value for money.

3.7 RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

Internal Customers must familiarise themselves with the Responsible Procurement policy.

Responsible Procurement is the act of procuring goods, services, or works in a manner that is considerate of the impact, both positive and negative, that the Authority may have on the environment, the economy, our community and society in general.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 places an obligation on the Authority to consider the economic, social and environmental well-being of

our area when we award contracts over Regulatory Thresholds. The Authority will specify responsible outcomes that are proportionate and relevant to the procurement and seek to evaluate tenders in accordance with those outcomes.

It will be the joint responsibility of the Responsible Officer in the key buying areas and the relevant Category Specialist to consider and determine, on a contract by contract basis, the potential responsible outcomes that can be delivered through the procurement process and the most appropriate procurement strategy to achieve these.

The following approach will be adopted for all responsible considerations outlined under the Responsible Procurement policy:

1. Understand the relative impact of each element of RP to each contract;
2. Include relevant RP outcomes within the contract specification and terms and conditions;
3. Include relevant RP evaluation criteria with appropriate weighting within the supplier selection process;
4. Manage and measure RP objectives throughout the life the contract.

The Responsible Procurement policy covers all areas of commissioning and procurement within the Authority and will influence the way we procure all goods, works and services. For procurements below £50,000, Procurement will have regard to the resources available to smaller providers who may bid for lower value contracts. Requirements set will apply to sub-contractors.

All suppliers to the Authority are required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and regulation and any such superseding legislation. The Authority may also introduce from time to time particular local and national policies which support environmental and sustainable procurement and Officers should include these in relevant procurement documentation and procedures.

3.8 VOLUNTARY EX-ANTE TRANSPARENCY NOTICE (VEAT)

Should a VEAT Notice be assessed by the Procurement Manager and Legal Services as being required to manage potential risk to the Authority, this will be approved by the Procurement Manager, in consultation with the

Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer, and a log of all published VEAT notices maintained by Procurement.

3.9 DEVELOPING LOCAL SUPPLIERS

The Authority is committed to encouraging businesses in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove to compete for contract opportunities in order to support the development of the local economy.

You must use our purchasing power to work with local businesses wherever possible where this provides equal or better Value for Money for the Authority than alternatives. However it must also be noted that the Public Contracts Regulations require that any procurement activity should not discriminate, favour or show bias.

You should carefully review the required specifications of any contract to ensure that small and medium sized enterprises are not being disadvantaged in their ability to tender for goods, works or services with the Authority.

For contracts over Regulatory Threshold, Procurement in conjunction with Internal Customers must also consider whether the contract should be divided into Lots in order that small and medium sized enterprises can bid for local work.

3.10 COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

If you are discussing developments with suppliers you should take care to ensure that you do not inadvertently share key commercial or confidential information such as budgets, existing pricing from other suppliers, or suggestions for improvements unless you have a Non- Disclosure Agreement (NDA) in place.

This protects the Authority's interests and our intellectual property. Internal Customers are responsible for putting these agreements in place where appropriate, with advice from the Procurement Department, who can provide a commercial advice and support in dealing with suppliers. Where arrangements include the Intellectual property of the Authority, appropriate or relevant contract clause/s must be included.

Intellectual property is a generic term that includes inventions and writings. If these are created by the Authority as a general rule they belong to the Authority not the supplier. Certain activities undertaken by the Authority may give rise to items that may be patentable, for example software development. These items are collectively known as Intellectual Property.

4. Waivers and Emergencies

4.1 WAIVERS

In the event that the application of these orders prevents or inhibits the delivery or continuity of service, a waiver may be sought. A waiver is required for any proposed procurement or contractual action which is not compliant with these Orders.

A waiver cannot be given if it would contravene the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any other applicable legislation.

You must obtain approval for a waiver in writing specifically identifying the PSO that is being waived and the reason for which the waiver is sought, including justification and risk. When a waiver is sought, advice from Procurement should be sought at the earliest opportunity. A waiver cannot be granted retrospectively; this is viewed as non-compliance with these Orders.

Any proposal to waive any of the provisions of one or more PSOs in relation to a Contract must be referred by the Internal Customer to the Assistant Director Resources / Treasurer. Except in an emergency, the proposal must be in writing, setting out the reason(s) for the waiver.

The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer may waive any provision of one or more PSOs in relation to a proposed Contract, except where it contravenes any applicable legislation. Except in an emergency, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall consult the Monitoring Officer, the Procurement Manager and the relevant Member of the Authority before making a decision.

Procurement must maintain a log of all waivers, and store documentation for waivers within the Contracts Register.

4.2 EMERGENCY PURCHASES

An emergency purchase is only allowed for purchasing outside the hours 0830hrs to 1700hrs, on working days or at weekends and during public holidays.

A declared emergency is as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 where the goods, services or works are necessary and proportionate for

the protection of life, property or the environment, or to maintain the functioning of local fire and rescue services for which the Authority is responsible.

You can use a Procurement Card, within your allocated limits, to pay. If the supplier does not accept Procurement Cards then you may give a verbal order and raise a formal purchase order the following working day. You must also inform Procurement of any emergency purchases on the following working day.

Where a contract is entered into on behalf of the Authority in the circumstances of a declared emergency, whether orally or in writing this must be reported to Procurement at the earliest opportunity and recorded in the Contracts Register to include:

- a) The name and location of the Officer who authorised the Contact
- b) The value and description of the Contract
- c) The rationale under which the contract has been entered.

5. Liability and Security

5.1 INSURANCE LIABILITY

To protect the Authority, insurance is required throughout the term of the contract, where we use goods, works or services provided by a supplier (including consultancy).

The minimum levels of cover for Public Liability Insurance and Employers' Liability Insurance required, and Professional Indemnity Insurance are set out below.

- a) Public Liability - £7m
- b) Employers Liability - £10m
- c) Professional/Product Indemnity - £1m-£5m (dependent of contract type & subject to risk assessment – Procurement to advise)

In some instances where the contract value, risk or scope may be particularly high, additional levels of cover may be required. Equally, where some contracts may be suitable for micro business, lower levels of insurance may be considered. Any variation from the standard levels above must have the agreement of the Procurement Manager, in consultation with the Risk & Insurance Officer.

5.2 FINANCIAL SECURITY

Procurement must confirm that suppliers are financially robust both prior to contract award and during the life of the contract as appropriate. Details of the requirements or potential guarantees a supplier may need to provide must be set out in the procurement documents.

If there is doubt as to the financial credibility of a supplier but the Authority has decided to accept the level of risk, then additional forms of security to a level determined between the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer are required, for example:

- a) a Parent Company, Ultimate Company or Holding Company guarantee where their financial standing proves acceptable;
- b) a Director's Guarantee or Personal Guarantee where finances prove acceptable;
- c) a Performance Bond, retained funds or cash deposit;
- d) any other security (such as escrow arrangements) as determined by the Monitoring Officer.

All documents inviting tenders and contracts issued must contain a statement that the supplier needs to provide security for performance and the level of security needed, financial checks to be applied at tender, plus how financial suitability will be assessed and any checks that will be required during the life of the contract.

Additional documentation, where required, should be stored within the contract file.

5.3 DOCUMENT RETENTION PERIODS

The retention of tenders and contractual documentation is prescribed in the Authority's Retention schedules and the Public Contract Regulations. In summary:

- a) All quotations secured where the threshold requires it must be submitted with the requisitions and will be retained for seven years
- b) All received Tenders must be retained for a minimum of eighteen months following the issue of the Contract Award Notice;
- c) All signed contracts must be retained for a minimum of seven years following contract expiry;
- d) All sealed contracts over £500,000 (including all tender documentation) must be retained for a minimum of seven years following contract expiry.

6. Managing Contracts

Contract management activities will be determined by the complexity and risk profile of the supply and the associated contract.

Foundations for onward contract management must be established during the procurement process, including within the specification and the setting of service levels and key performance indicators within the terms and conditions.

The approach, responsibilities and the nominated contract manager must be determined within the terms and conditions.

The contract documentation will set out the obligations, benefits and performance requirements of the respective parties to ensure that:

- a) The Authority receives the benefits expected from the contract and the contractual relationship throughout the contract's life;
- b) We understand our obligations under the contract and those of the supplier;
- c) We manage the contact in manner which fulfils each party's responsibilities, minimizes risk and maximizes benefits.

Contracts are to be managed by Internal Customers, supported by their Category Specialist, either by a dedicated contract manager nominated within the contract or who has these responsibilities as part of a broader role.

Meetings with key suppliers must be minuted and performance indicators monitored and reported upon by the nominated officer and the Category Specialist, according to the protocols established in the contract.

All purchases above £10,000 must be delivered under a form of contract approved by Procurement.

6.1 CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

Nominated Internal Customers, supported by the Category Specialist, are responsible for the performance of contracts in their area. All Contract Management activities are to be delivered either by a dedicated contract manager or by someone with that responsibility as part of a wider role.

Procurement is responsible for assessing the level of risk, value and complexity of managing a contract once it has been established and will provide support, training and guidance in line with the category model.

6.2 CONTRACT AWARD NOTICES

A full Contract Award Notice must be published no later than 30 days after the award of a contract for all contracts over the Regulatory Threshold values, excluding call-offs from framework agreements. For all contracts called-off from a DPS, the Notice must be published within 30 days of the call-off or be grouped together and published on a quarterly basis within 30 days of the end of each quarter.

For all other contracts under Regulatory Thresholds a simplified Contract Award Notice must be published on the Contracts Finder website for all contracts awarded over a value of £25,000 (including all call-off contracts from Framework Agreements) as soon as is reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the contract.

6.3 CONTRACTS REGISTER

All contracts over £5,000, including any variations or amendments, must be registered and maintained within the Contracts Register, managed by Procurement. The Authority is required by law to publish transparency data about our contracts on a quarterly basis.

6.4 CONTRACT MODIFICATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Extensions

Contracts that have been originally advertised with extension options can be extended only with the approval of the Budget Holder, in consultation with the Category Specialist,

For contracts with an original estimated value below the Regulatory Threshold, extensions or renewals of an existing Contract which are not included in the contract can, in certain circumstances, be made without triggering a requirement for a new Procurement exercise. This would constitute a waiver and is subject to the waiver procedure described in section 4.1.

For those contracts with an original estimated value over the Regulatory Threshold any extension which is not defined by the original public notice must be referred to Procurement and Legal Services.

Other Modifications

For contracts with an original estimated value over the Regulatory Threshold the agreement of the Procurement Manager is required before any material modifications can be made (save for extensions which are dealt with in the preceding paragraph).

Any extension or modification must have an approved budget allocation. All amendments must then be recorded in writing, signed appropriately and retained with the original contract on the Contract Register.

Procurement can provide guidance as to the circumstances under which contract modifications or extensions are permitted by Regulation 72 in the Public Contract Regulations 2015, or superseding legislation or regulation.

6.5 CONTRACT NOVATION

Where a contractor sells, merges or transfers their business to another organisation, the existing contract(s) the Authority has with that contractor should be novated if this is acceptable to the Authority and permitted by law.

The Procurement Manager should be consulted to approve the novation of a contract to a new supplier and if a novation is agreed, then the revised contract will be recorded on the Contracts Register and the master data updated on SAP.

7. Paying our suppliers

7.1 INVOICE PAYMENTS

Contracts will state that Suppliers must submit all invoices to the Finance Department via email at csd.finance@esfrs.org. No invoices should be received directly by your Department.

All invoices received in Finance must include a Purchase Order number. Invoices without a Purchase Order number will be returned to the supplier.

Suppliers cannot be paid until you have confirmed that the requirement has been satisfactorily delivered. A Purchase Order must be followed by a Goods Receipt Notice before an invoice can be paid. It is the Internal Customer's responsibility to ensure all purchases are notified to Procurement as received to the appropriate value and are fit for purpose.

7.2 PAYMENT TERMS

The standard payment terms are 30 days from the invoice date, with payments made via BACS (electronic bank transfer). If a Supplier has identified themselves as an SME (“small or medium enterprise”), they can be paid on preferential payment terms of 10 working days.

You must obtain the agreement of the Finance Manager for any deviation from the standard payment terms.

Except for conferences or similar arrangements, where payments are agreed in advance, appropriate review of a supplier’s financial stability and standing and due regard for risk in the event of supplier failure must be undertaken and agreed by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, in consultation with the Procurement Manager.

8. Disposing of surplus goods

Disposal of surplus materials, goods or assets (including recycling of materials that have a scrap value), must have adequate defined processes and controls to ensure that the Authority receives proper reimbursement, where appropriate and cost effective.

In principle, for assets being sold with a value of:

Less than £1000	It may be sold to a reputable business or publicised for bids within the Service
More than £1000	By public auction or competitive quotation unless the Treasurer has given prior approval to some other method of disposal

You must seek advice from Procurement when making valuations and the book value of the asset will be primarily used to calculate value. In most cases, it is anticipated that the highest bid received will be accepted.

Where recycling of materials can be progressed to sale or scrap, the Authority may enter into a profit share arrangement with Contractor. Examples are construction, servicing and repair type contracts, where scrap metals or building materials can be re-sold. The contractor will need robust processes to define how they deal with disposal and Authority authorisation to sell scrap value materials or goods.

Care must be taken to ensure that environmental sustainability as well as security and other associated issues and obligations (including those from the Data Protection Act and WEEE Regulations) are considered and complied with when disposing of goods.

Appendix 1 – Policies and Guidance relevant to these Orders

All Staff must follow the Authority policies, in particular those relevant to these Orders, which are listed below:

The Procurement Standing Orders – Guidance for Staff

The Constitution:

Section D1 General Standing Orders

Section D3 Financial Regulations

Section C2 Scheme of Delegated Functions

Manuals:

CPS02 02 Disposals of Equipment, Materials and Land

CPS01 01 Delegated Financial Management

CP02 06 ESFRS Purchasing Card Policy

CPS02 ESFRS Procurement Policy

COS02 11 Responsible Procurement Policy

HR02 18 Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest

CPS06 14 Local Code of Corporate Governance

CPS06 11 Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

Procurement in the UK is regulated by:

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

SECTION D 3

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Index Page No.

Introduction	2
1 GENERAL	3
2 CONTROL OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS	4
3 ACCOUNTING	5
4 AUDIT	6
5 BUDGET PROCEDURES	7
6 BUDGETARY CONTROL	8
6.1 Revenue Budget	8
6.2 Capital Programmes	9
6.3 Personnel Budget	11
7 ORDERS FOR SUPPLIES, WORKS AND SERVICES	11
8 CONTRACTS	12
9 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS	13
10 PAYMENT OF SALARIES, WAGES AND PENSIONS	14
11 INCOME	15
12 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS	16
13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, BORROWING AND INVESTMENTS	17
14 SECURITY OF ASSETS	18
15 ESTATES	19
16 INSURANCES	19
17 EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS	20
18 TRAVELLING, SUBSISTENCE, FINANCIAL LOSS AND ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE	20
19 VOLUNTARY FUNDS	21
20 VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) AND INCOME TAX	21
21 FINANCIAL LIMITS	22

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer	September 2023	All	September 2025

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

Introduction

East Sussex Fire Authority ("the Authority") has been established as a body corporate in accordance with the Combination Scheme ("The Scheme"), attached to the East Sussex Fire Services Combination Order 1996. Under paragraph 7 of the Scheme, the Authority has appointed a Treasurer, to ensure that proper arrangements are made for the administration of the Authority's financial affairs.

In accordance with the Treasurer's role, these Regulations outline the system of financial administration to be operated by the Authority and its fire & rescue service, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. All references in these Regulations to the Authority include East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. The role of Treasurer is currently combined with the post of Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, hence this reference is used throughout the document.

Where reference is made to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) this means those postholders who are full members of SLT i.e. Principal Officers and Assistant Directors acting both collectively and individually.

Local Government Acts and other regulations or codes of practice are quoted in these Financial Regulations where they are applicable in accordance with The Scheme or have been adopted by the Authority.

These Regulations outline the system of financial administration to be operated by the Authority and it shall be the responsibility of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive to ensure that they are observed.

Where the Authority has delegated powers to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive these shall be exercised in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Financial Regulations shall be deemed to be part of Standing Orders insofar as they relate to the conduct of business in the meetings of the Authority and its Panels.

The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall consult with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer in respect of any matter within their responsibilities which may affect the finances of the Authority before any provisional or other commitment is made, or before reporting thereon to the Authority and its Panels.

In these Financial Regulations, references to an employee of the Authority shall include any officer of the Authority and references to an officer of the Authority shall include references to an employee of the Authority, unless, in either case, the context requires otherwise.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 The purpose of these Financial Regulations is to provide a framework of control, responsibility and accountability for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs and to enable the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and other officers to carry out their statutory duties.
- 1.2 In addition, Financial Regulations have an important role in establishing a sound system of corporate governance for the Authority and supporting its Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy. All officers have individual and collective responsibility for ensuring that the fundamental principles of openness, integrity and accountability are established and maintained through compliance with Financial Regulations.
- 1.3 For the purposes of Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is responsible for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs. Furthermore, under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is required to report where they believe the Authority or an officer is likely to make a decision or take a course of action which would lead to unlawful expenditure or is likely to cause a loss or deficiency, or where the Authority's expenditure is likely to significantly exceed the available resources. To enable the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to carry out these duties the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and officers with delegated authority must provide such information as requested within any timescale set for the provision.
- 1.4 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be the chief financial adviser to the Authority and shall keep the Authority informed of the financial implications of all new policies and changes of policy.
- 1.5 Copies of notifications from Government Departments including consents, approvals, regulations, circulars, letters, etc. in any way relating to finance shall be forwarded by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive immediately to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer
- 1.6 Notices of all meetings and copies of all agenda, reports and minutes of the Fire Authority and its Panels shall be sent to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer as soon as they are available.
- 1.7 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team shall consult the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer on any matter containing financial implications for either the Revenue Budget or Capital Programme before reporting thereon to the Authority. Any report must, where the Assistant Director

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

Resources/Treasurer considers it appropriate, include their views as well as those of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.

- 1.8 Financial Regulations endorse the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy statement "The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Financial Administration in Local Government" in respect of the role of the Chief Finance Officer.
- 1.9 Nothing in these Regulations shall prevent the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, in consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer incurring expenditure essential to meet the needs of an emergency or disaster subject to their action and any resulting costs being reported to the Policy & Resources Panel at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.10 All payments to and out of the Fire Service Account shall be made under the direction of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 1.11 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall consult the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer prior to the Authority entering into any formal legally binding partnership arrangement, including a joint venture or a pooled budget or where the Authority becomes an Accountable Body. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall ensure that adequate and appropriate technical and financial appraisal of all partners is undertaken and ensure that adequate accounting and governance arrangements are established, including internal audit access, in consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 1.12 Where the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive arranges for staff to exercise powers delegated to them in accordance with a scheme of authorisation, a record including appropriate documentation of such authorisation shall be maintained. Those staff to whom authorisation is given shall be responsible for establishing sound systems of internal control and ensuring compliance with Financial Regulations.
- 1.13 These Financial Regulations are subject to Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015 or subsequent) issued by Government under S23 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. Accounts and Audit Regulations establish statutory provisions for accounting arrangements, for audit arrangements and for financial control within the Authority.

2 CONTROL OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS

- 2.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team shall conform with and follow the Authority's IT Strategy and will seek advice from the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer on the introduction of new systems and

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

processes, especially to ensure that both adequate controls are in place and value for money is achieved.

- 2.2 Any proposal to purchase or develop an IT system (whether hardware, software or communications equipment) shall be the subject of a business case in an approved form and in accordance with the Authority's IT Strategy. In the same manner, such proposals will also be subject to post implementation review.
- 2.3 Minimum standards of control for any new system or development of an existing system that involves a financial operation or produces output that may influence such an operation must be agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 2.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall be responsible for the control of systems in operation within the Authority and the security and privacy of data necessary to accord with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). When accessing systems external to the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive will also be responsible for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed.
- 2.5 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer must be consulted on the development of any financial systems whether computerised or manual at the earliest practicable stage and the approval of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is required prior to implementing such systems.

3 ACCOUNTING

- 3.1 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer has overall responsibility for the operation of financial processes within the Authority and shall ensure that adequate controls are in place. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team shall ensure compliance with all financial controls and processes within their areas of the Service.
- 3.2 Accounting systems, financial accounts and supporting records shall be determined by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and other Accounting Codes and Standards. It shall be the responsibility of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to ensure that such accounts and systems are kept up to date either through the staff under the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer's control or other appointed agents.
- 3.3 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining full and accurate records sufficient to process the necessary financial and statistical information to enable them each to report fully and accurately on the finances of the Authority.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 3.4 Where it is a requirement of an awarding body, or where the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer requires it, before claims for grant or reimbursement are submitted to any government department or other body, they shall be sent to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer for examination and certification.
- 3.5 Bids for external funding shall be prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by, or in consultation with, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Where required, before applications are submitted to any government or other body, they shall be sent to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer for examination and to confirm that financial implications have been fully assessed.

4 AUDIT

- 4.1 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Authority's accounting records and its systems of internal control in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall submit an Internal Audit Strategy and Plan and an Internal Audit Report to the Authority annually for approval, following consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.
- 4.2 The agents for carrying out internal audit shall have the authority to:
- i. enter any Authority premises or land at any reasonable time, without prior notice;
 - ii. have access at all times to all records and documents (including email and correspondence) relevant to the business of the Authority as maintained by the Authority or third parties on its behalf including (but not limited to) external contractors and consultants;
 - iii. require and receive any information and explanations considered necessary to the audit;
 - iv. require any employee or agent of the Authority to account for assets under their control.
- 4.3 Immediately an employee suspects an irregularity affecting income, expenditure, cash, stores or any other resources of the Authority, including any suspected cases of money laundering, it is the employee's duty to report the matter to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. The Assistant Director People Services and the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall agree what action should be taken to investigate and report on the suspected irregularity, including reporting the matter to the police.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 4.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall be responsible for ensuring that all employees are informed of the Fire Authority's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Whistleblowing Policy, and that copies of the appropriate documents are provided to all new employees.

5 BUDGET PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall jointly prepare annual estimates for both revenue and capital expenditure for presentation to the Authority at such time and for such period as may be determined by the Authority. The estimates shall be in a form agreed by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and shall be in accordance with any criteria set by the Authority.
- 5.2 Each year, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall report on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy (or otherwise) of the Authority's reserves to the Authority when they consider the budget and setting the Council Tax.
- 5.3 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall prepare a Medium Term Financial Plan setting out the Authority's government and local funding, directorate budgets and any other known funding, commitments or pressures for the next five years, or such other minimum period as may be prescribed by the Authority.
- 5.4 It is the responsibility of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to advise the Authority on prudent levels of reserves, having regard to assessment of the financial risks facing the Authority. This duty is set out in Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Authority's Reserves Policy will be reviewed annually and approved when the budget is set.
- 5.5 As a Precepting authority, the Authority shall comply with the statutory timetable for issuing precepts to Billing Authorities. The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, duly authorised by the Authority, shall issue the appropriate precept to each Billing Authority.
- 5.6 As part of the approved budget, a contingency provision may be approved each year by the Authority. Once approved, allocations will only be made from the contingency provision with the specific approval of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 5.7 Where a scheme of delegated financial management has been developed and approved by the Authority, detailed estimates shall be prepared in accordance with the scheme. These are as set out in Section 21.

6 BUDGETARY CONTROL

6.1 Revenue Budget

- 6.1.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall be responsible for managing and directing resources to achieve the objectives of the budget. This will involve monitoring of expenditure and income and the regular review of performance. Where budgets are delegated to members of the Senior Leadership Team and other officers (“budget managers”) they are charged with the same responsibilities.
- 6.1.2 No expenditure shall be incurred which is not covered by an approved budget. If the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, or another officer to whom a budget has been delegated, is of the opinion that a budget will be or is likely to be overspent then they must advise the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and jointly investigate and put forward to the Policy & Resources Panel a financial proposal for dealing with the overspend.
- 6.1.3 Budget transfers (virements) may be made in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 21.
- 6.1.4 Earmarked income received for a specific purpose may only be spent for the purpose it was received. In addition, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer must be satisfied that the proposal will not incur additional commitments for future years. Where commitments do arise, the approval of the Policy & Resources Panel must be obtained.
- 6.1.5 During each financial year, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall submit revenue budget monitoring statements, including forecasts for the full financial year, to the Policy & Resources Panel in a format and at such intervals as the Panel may determine.
- 6.1.6 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer will report on the outturn of expenditure and income to the Policy & Resources Panel as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year.
- 6.1.7 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall certify that the Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations and that the statement represents fairly the financial position of the Authority.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

6.2 Capital Programmes

- 6.2.1 Capital expenditure will be considered as part of the capital programme where items fall within Government or statutory definitions or exceed a minimum threshold value. The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer will periodically review the minimum threshold value below which projects cannot be charged to capital.
- 6.2.2 Capital projects shall be incorporated in a Capital Programme having regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy. The Capital Programme shall be considered by the Authority, in conjunction with the annual revenue budget process, detailing the phasing of expenditure on such projects and the full year revenue cost associated with each project, and having regard to the level of available resources and the Prudential Code.
- 6.2.3 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, will determine the resources available for the Capital Programme, taking into consideration the availability of reserves and balances, funding from other bodies and the affordability of borrowing.
- 6.2.4 No expenditure shall be incurred on capital projects which are not included in the approved capital programme and no contracts entered into or tender accepted unless the Authority is satisfied that the necessary borrowing powers or other resources, and if applicable, Government approvals have been received.
- 6.2.5 The Capital Programme may be varied with the agreement of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, if no additional unfunded commitments for future years are incurred, in the following circumstances where:
- i. budget provision is transferred to capital expenditure financed from the revenue account (CERA) up to a maximum of 5% of the Revenue Budget in any financial year;
 - ii. where earmarked capital receipts and grants or other specific funding are spent for the purpose they were received, provided that capital resources are enhanced by the amount received and that the capital receipts are received either before the payments are made, or within the same financial year.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

All other variations to the Capital Programme must be approved by the Policy & Resources Panel.

- 6.2.6 The Fire Authority's Capital Programme and Project Management processes must be followed for all Capital Schemes.
- 6.2.7 Any significant alteration to the size, content or specification of a scheme which increases the cost by more than 10% must have the prior approval of the Policy & Resources Panel. Variations within 10% of a scheme's budget can be agreed by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, where funding has been identified (as outlined in 6.2.5 above) and must be reported to the Policy & Resources Panel in a timely manner.
- 6.2.8 If a tender price is higher than the estimated total cost by 10% of the scheme and would result in the capital provision being exceeded then, with the exception of major Government approved projects, provision may be transferred from one approved project to another with the approval of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, in consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. If such a transfer is not possible then the approval of the Policy & Resources Panel must be obtained before the tender is accepted.
- 6.2.9 Once a contract for a Capital Scheme has been entered into, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and Monitoring Officer must be consulted in relation to any proposed contract variation which would render the contract substantially different in scope and cost and approval sought as set out in the financial limits Section 21.
- 6.2.10 During each financial year, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, shall submit capital programme monitoring statements, including forecasts for the full financial year, to the Policy & Resources Panel in a format and at such intervals as the Authority may determine.
- 6.2.11 The final cost of each capital scheme chargeable against the capital programme shall be reported by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to the Policy & Resources Panel. If the final cost exceeds the provision in the capital programme by 10% or more, as soon as possible after completion together with explanations for variances from the estimated cost.
- 6.2.12 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer will report on the outturn of capital expenditure to the Policy & Resources Panel as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

6.3 Personnel Budget

- 6.3.1 Within the total financial estimate provision approved by the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall be entitled to vary the numbers and composition of staffing in order to meet service requirements provided such variations do not commit the Authority to increased expenditure in future years.
- 6.3.2 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive must adhere to all approved personnel policies and consider all Government guidance which relate to human resources, personnel management and training.
- 6.3.3 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall ensure that personnel information is maintained in a form necessary to comply with the Authority's Human Resource Management and related personnel policies and practices and to ensure that any system(s) used to process personnel data or remunerations is properly maintained in accordance with these Financial Regulations.

7 ORDERS FOR SUPPLIES, WORKS AND SERVICES

- 7.1 Official purchase orders in a form agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be issued for all supplies, works and services required by the Authority except:
 - i. Purchases made via purchase card and in compliance with the purchase card user policy;
 - ii. Items of a minor nature paid for via petty cash; and
 - iii. VAT only invoices.
- 7.2 Official purchase orders must not be issued for purchases of a private nature for employees.
- 7.3 It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that the most favourable terms for price, delivery and quality have been obtained having regard to the Authority's Procurement Strategy, Procurement Standing Orders and any other policies or manual notes regarding procurement.
- 7.4 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall maintain a list of all officers authorised to approve purchase orders and invoices in line with the Financial Limits set out in Section 21 of the Financial Regulations.
- 7.5 In the case of urgency, oral orders may be given provided they are recorded by prompt completion of an official purchase order.

Section D 3

Financial Regulations

- 7.6 Orders, which shall be serially numbered, shall indicate clearly the nature and quantity of the supplies, works or services to be supplied and details of agreed or estimated prices, relevant discounts and delivery terms. When the account has been passed for payment the order shall be marked accordingly.
- 7.7 Where orders are to be transmitted electronically, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall approve the necessary arrangements made to safeguard the interests of the Authority.
- 7.8 Where orders are by purchase cards, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall approve the necessary arrangements made to safeguard the interests of the Authority.

8 CONTRACTS

- 8.1 All contracts and agreements entered into shall comply with European Commission Directives and United Kingdom Legislation relating to public procurement, conform to the Authority's Procurement Standing Orders, and must be covered by an approved budget. If there is no appropriate standard form, the officer responsible for the contract or agreement shall ensure that a form suitable for the Authority's purpose is used.
- 8.2 Prior to the letting of a contract the relevant Director or Assistant Director shall ensure that an adequate technical and financial appraisal of the tenderers is undertaken in a form approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 8.3 A register of formal contracts entered into and a record of payments made thereunder together with details of the final account and certificate of completion shall be kept in a form approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer for all contracts valued at £5,000 or more.
- 8.4 Where the contract requires that interim and final payments shall be made on certificate, that certificate shall be:
- i. In a form agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
 - ii. Signed personally by an officer in line with the Financial Limits set out in Financial Regulations
 - iii. Issued in sufficient time to enable payment to be made within the time specified.
- 8.5 Such documents as may be necessary shall be made available to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to enable them or their appointed agents, to audit a contract. If contracts are supervised and managed by persons other than officers of the Authority, the agreement with that person (or persons) shall provide that all

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

documents relating to a contract shall be available for inspection by officers of the Authority if required.

- 8.6 Where during the currency of a contract valued at £100,000 or more, it becomes apparent that expenditure against the contract will exceed the contract value by £25,000 or 10%, whichever is the greater, other than as a result of a price fluctuation clause, the relevant Director / Assistant Director shall present a full report to the Policy & Resources Panel, as soon as possible. Where a contract period is likely to be exceeded, so as to significantly affect service provision, the relevant Director / Assistant Director shall present a full report to the Policy & Resources Panel, as soon as possible, giving reasons for the delay and making any recommendations as to claims after consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 8.7 Any variation to a contract for building or civil engineering work will be authorised in writing by an employee, or, where employed, a consultant, in accordance with the approved scheme of authorisation of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
- 8.8 When the final certificate of completion of any contract is issued by the appropriate officer, private architect, engineer or consultant a copy shall be produced to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer together, if required, with a detailed statement of account and other relevant documents.
- 8.9 Leasing or contract hire arrangements for vehicles, plant or equipment may be undertaken by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive or other officers with delegated authority provided that the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is satisfied that the method of finance is appropriate for the asset concerned and that the best terms available have been secured.

9 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- 9.1 All payments for supplies works and services should be supported by an invoice or proper account. An authorised officer will check these in the directorate concerned before certification. Payments in advance of receipt of goods or services can be made within financial limits detailed in Section 21.

Certification by authorised officers means:

- i. That the expenditure has been properly incurred, that there is relevant budget provision or other authority to spend; and that payment is lawful and in accordance with the Authority's policy and instructions and complies with the Authority's Standing Orders and other regulations.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- ii. That the supplies, works and services have been received or carried out, examined as to quantity and quality and approved.
 - iii. That appropriate entries have been made in inventories or stores records.
 - iv. That the prices, discounts and other allowances are correct.
 - v. That the account is arithmetically correct in accordance with the procedures issued by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
 - vi. That the account has not previously been paid.
- 9.2 All payments shall be made under arrangements agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 9.3 The authorised officer shall not be the person who ordered or received the supplies and no officer shall certify an invoice or claim for reimbursement of expenditure to themselves. The officer checking the correctness of an invoice shall not also authorise its payment.
- 9.4 Where payment of accounts by electronic means is proposed, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer must approve the system and certification procedures.
- 9.5 Where payment of accounts is by purchase cards, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer must approve the system and certification procedures.
- 9.6 Where invoices are paid and retained under a delegated financial management scheme, it shall be the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive to ensure that invoices, vouchers and other records are retained and stored in a secure way and are readily available for inspection by authorised persons.
- 10 PAYMENT OF SALARIES, WAGES AND PENSIONS**
- 10.1 The payment of all salaries, wages, pensions, compensation and other emoluments to all employees or former employees shall be made under arrangements approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 10.2 Managers shall notify the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, or their appointed agents, as soon as they are aware and in such a form as the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer may require of all matters affecting such payments, in particular:
- i. Appointments, resignations, retirements, suspensions, dismissals, secondments or other transfers.
 - ii. Absences from duty for sickness or other reason, apart from paid leave.
 - iii. Changes in remuneration, including normal increments and pay awards and agreements of general application.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- iv. Information necessary to maintain records of service for, inter alia, superannuation, income tax, and national insurance.
- 10.3 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall ensure that the appointment of all employees is made in accordance with the policies of the Authority, the approved budgets, grades and rates of pay.
- 10.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall maintain a record of authorised officers, and their signatures, able to certify relevant pay documents and time records on the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive's behalf in a form agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Copies of the complete record shall be deposited with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

11 INCOME

- 11.1 The arrangements for the collection of and accounting for, all income due to the Authority shall be agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.. An officer authorised to raise an account shall not be permitted to amend or cancel accounts raised by that officer.
- 11.2 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be notified promptly of all money due to the Authority including details of contracts, leases or agreements and shall make suitable arrangements for:
 - i. The recording of all sums due to the Authority.
 - ii. The prompt collection, custody and deposit of all cash due.
- 11.3 Any amounts received by officers, or the Authority's appointed agents, shall be banked intact, in accordance with any timescales and arrangements approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Personal cheques may not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Authority. On handing cash to another person, all officers shall ensure that they receive a suitable written acknowledgement.
- 11.4 Officers, or the appointed agents, banking money must enter on the paying-in-slip the amount of each cheque and sufficient information to identify the transaction and enter on the reverse of each cheque sufficient detail to identify the service area or establishment.
- 11.5 Every sum received by an officer or the appointed agents, of the Authority shall be acknowledged immediately by the issue of an official receipt, ticket or licence - except in the case of amounts received by cheque - or other arrangement approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 11.6 All receipt forms, books, tickets and other such items shall be ordered and issued by the Authority subject to the arrangements for their control being agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 11.7 No payment to the Authority will be accepted in cash if it exceeds £2,000 and if attempted it should be reported under Regulation 4.3 above.
- 11.8 The write-off of debts may be carried out as detailed in Section 21 financial limits. A record of debts written off shall be maintained by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 11.9 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall, at least once a year, review all fees and charges for supplies, works or services provided by the Authority. The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall be consulted before any proposal is submitted to the Authority for the introduction, revision or implementation of scales of fees and charges for supplies, works and services.

12 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

- 12.1 The Authority shall approve all banking contract terms and conditions. All other arrangements with the Authority's bankers shall be agreed by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer including:
- i. The authorisation to operate such accounts, including Post Office accounts.
 - ii. Bank accounts for imprest holders and delegated financial management schemes.
 - iii. The provision of credit card / purchase card facilities.
 - iv. The ordering and safe custody of all cheques, including Post Office payment forms.
- 12.2 Cheques drawn on the Authority's main banking accounts, including Post Office accounts, shall bear the facsimile signature of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer or be signed by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer or officers authorised by the Authority. For the purposes of this Financial Regulation, any officer holding or acting up as holder of the following posts shall be deemed to be authorised (CFA 06/2022: Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, Finance Manager, Principal Accountant Treasury & Taxation (East Sussex County Council), Principal Accountant Financial Accounting (East Sussex County Council). Cheques over the value of £500,000 must be signed by two signatories.

Section D 3
Financial Regulations

- 12.3 Where payments are to be transmitted electronically, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall approve the necessary arrangements made to safeguard the interests of the Authority.
- 12.4 All Authority funds shall be banked to the corporate accounts of the Authority or such other accounts in the name of the Authority approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. No other account shall be used for transacting or transferring Authority funds.

13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, BORROWING AND INVESTMENTS

- 13.1 Approval of the capital programme by the Authority shall constitute authority to borrow in respect of projects to be financed from loan provided any appropriate guidance from the Government is followed.
- 13.2 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall report annually to the Authority and make recommendations on the following:
- i. The overall borrowing limit.
 - ii. The short term borrowing limit.
 - iii. The maximum proportion of borrowing which may be at variable interest rates.
 - iv. Other financial indicators as required by the Prudential Guidance.
- 13.3 The Authority will authorise the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer to borrow all monies and to arrange the temporary investment of funds within the approved borrowing limit and in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy. Borrowing or lending or investing of monies not within the Treasurer's delegated powers will not be permitted without the approval of the Authority.
- 13.4 All loans and investments shall be made in the name of the Authority.
- 13.5 All securities, the property of, or in the name of the Authority or its nominees shall be held in safe custody under arrangements approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 13.6 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer or the Authority's bankers shall be the Authority's registrar of stocks, bonds and mortgages as appropriate. Proper records of all borrowing of money by the Authority shall be maintained as approved by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 13.7 At or before the start of the financial year the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall report to the Fire Authority on the strategy for treasury management it is proposed to adopt for the coming financial year.
- 13.8 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall report to the Authority by 30 September of the succeeding financial year on the activities of the treasury management operation, the exercise of delegated treasury management and the treasury management relating to the previous financial year.

14 SECURITY OF ASSETS

- 14.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall ensure that property security is maintained at all times for all vehicles, buildings, furniture, equipment, stocks, stores, cash, etc. under the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive's control. Maximum limits for cash held shall be agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and must not be exceeded.
- 14.2 Inventories shall be kept of all items of moveable furniture, equipment, vehicles and plant. Where appropriate, security marking shall be used, in accordance with the appropriate policies. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive in consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall prescribe the value and type of items to be included in an inventory. In consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall maintain an asset register in such form to record sufficient details to meet the requirements of capital accounting practice.
- 14.3 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive is responsible for the receipt, care, safe custody and issue of stocks and stores. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall supply the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer with such information, as the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer requires in relation to stores for the financial records of the Authority.
- 14.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall arrange for periodic independent checks and verification of stocks and recorded stores, at least once a year. The write-off of stocks may be carried out as detailed in Section 21 financial limits. The appropriate record of such actions shall be maintained by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.
- 14.5 Stocks shall generally be maintained at minimum levels consistent with operational requirements. A certificate of the value of stocks held as at 31 March each year shall be provided to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 14.6 Where equipment or materials become unusable or obsolete, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive may arrange for it to be written off in accordance with arrangements agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Where equipment or materials have a scrap value or resale value, disposal shall be at the best price obtainable following the procedure for disposal, issued by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive in consultation with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Leased vehicles, plant or equipment may not be disposed of without the prior approval of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. This Financial Regulation shall not operate to prevent the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive from exercising the powers delegated to them to approve the donation to appropriate causes of time expired appliances and/or equipment that have no material value.
- 14.7 The Authority's property shall not be removed otherwise than in accordance with the ordinary course of business or used otherwise than for the Authority's purpose except in accordance with the specific instructions by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
- 14.8 Keys to safes and similar receptacles must be carried on the person of those responsible at all times. The loss of any such keys must be reported immediately to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

15 ESTATES

- 15.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall be responsible for maintaining a register of all properties owned by the Authority, recording the location, extent, plan reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable, and purpose for which the property is held.
- 15.2 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall have custody of all title deeds under secure arrangements agreed with the Monitoring Officer and shall supply to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and Monitoring Officer all information required by them in accordance with their duties. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive may arrange for the Monitoring Officer to discharge this Regulation.

16 INSURANCES

- 16.1 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall put in place all necessary insurance cover and negotiate all claims, in consultation with other officers where necessary.
- 16.2 Members of the Senior Leadership Team shall notify the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer immediately of:
- i. all new risks and liabilities which may require to be insured;

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- ii. any alteration which may affect existing insurance;
- iii. any loss, damage, claim or event which might give rise to a claim by or against the Authority;
- iv. any acquisition or disposal of interests in property which involves an amendment to insurance cover.

- 16.3 All appropriate employees of the Authority shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.
- 16.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall consult with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer in respect of the terms of any indemnity which the Authority is requested to give.
- 16.5 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall ensure that employees, and anyone covered by the Authority's insurances, do not admit to liability or offer to pay compensation that may prejudice the assessment of liability in respect of any insurance claim.
- 16.6 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive shall co-ordinate and facilitate risk management policies and procedures, and conduct reviews of risk in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

17 EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS

- 17.1 Ex-gratia payments may be made as detailed in Section 21 financial limits subject to the Authority being satisfied that there are sufficient powers to make the payment in any particular case. The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall maintain a complete record of ex-gratia payments made.

18 TRAVELLING, SUBSISTENCE, FINANCIAL LOSS AND ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE

- 18.1 All claims by employees for payment of car allowances shall be submitted to the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer in a form (manual or electronic) and at such intervals as approved by them. Payment of car allowances, and other travelling and subsistence allowances, will be made upon receipt of the appropriate form, duly certified by an authorised officer and to be paid in accordance with arrangements set out in Section 9 (Payment of Accounts) or Section 10 (Payment of Salaries, Wages and Pensions).

Section D 3 Financial Regulations

- 18.2 Payment to Members and co-optees of the Authority who are entitled to claim any allowance under the Authority's Member Allowance Scheme shall be made by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.
- 18.3 Certification of a claim shall be taken to mean that the journeys were authorised and the expenses properly and necessarily incurred and that the allowances are properly payable by the Authority in accordance with the Member Allowance Scheme or any other policy relating to travel and expenses that the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer shall issue.

19 VOLUNTARY FUNDS

- 19.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that all voluntary funds held, where money and/or assets are handled by an employee in the course of their employment or office, which have not been issued by the Authority, are properly administered and that they are audited under arrangements agreed with the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. Where cash is held in a bank account or building society account or such similar arrangements a record must be maintained accordingly by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer.

20 VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) AND INCOME TAX

- 20.1 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring the correct financial management of VAT and Income Tax, in respect of both income and expenditure, following guidance issued by the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team should seek financial advice from the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer on any VAT or Income Tax issues particularly where new initiatives for the delivery of services are being considered by the Authority.
- 20.2 The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is responsible for the Authority's VAT returns and Income Tax to HM Revenue and Customs. All communication with HM Revenue and Customs for the Authority shall be co-ordinated through the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer or a delegated officer.

**Section D 3
Financial Regulations**

21 FINANCIAL LIMITS

21.1 Ex-gratia payments may be made following approval as detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1 - Approval levels for Ex-gratia Payments	
Up to £5,000	Over £5,000
Principal Officer after consultation with the AD Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer	Fire Authority

21.2 Debt write-off may be actioned following approval as detailed in Table 2 below:

Table 2 - Approval Levels for Debt Write off	
Up to £5,000	Over £5,000
Principal Officer after consultation with the AD Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer	Fire Authority

21.3 Stock write-off may be actioned following approval as detailed in Table 3 below:

Table 3 - Approval Levels for Stock Write off	
Up to £5,000	Over £5,000
Principal Officer after consultation with the AD Resources/Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer	Fire Authority

21.4 Payments in advance of goods or services being received can be made as follows: Assistant Director up to £1,000, Finance Manager up to £10,000 and with the agreement of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer for £10,000 and over.

Section D 3
Financial Regulations

- 21.5 Purchase Orders, invoices and contracts may be approved as detailed in Table 4 below:

Table 4 - Approval Levels for Purchase Orders, Invoices and Contracts				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
up to £5,000	£5,001 - £20,000	£20,001 - £50,000	£50,001 to £250,000	Over £250,000
Station Managers	Station Managers	Group Managers	Assistant Directors	Principal Officers
Support Staff equivalent	Support Staff equivalent	Head of Service and other Support Staff equivalent		AD Resources /Treasurer
Other staff as determined by the AD Resources/ Treasurer	Other staff as determined by the AD Resources/ Treasurer			

The Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer has discretion over the assignment of authority within Levels 1 and 2 to ensure that approvals reflect different structural models and budget management arrangements. This may mean that not all Station Managers and Support Staff equivalents are granted approval at each level and/or for every budget. In some circumstances staff at lower grades may be granted delegated authority where the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is satisfied that suitable controls are in place.

- 21.6 All staffing budget transfers (virements), whether permanent (year on year changes) or non-permanent (in year changes only), require SLT approval. Budget transfers that result in a policy change or restructure require the approval of Authority either in advance or retrospectively as detailed in Table 5 below.

Section D 3
Financial Regulations

Table 5 - Approval Levels for Budget Transfers (Virements) – Staffing and Policy Change / Restructures		
Staffing	Policy Change / Restructures	Policy Change / Restructures
All	£250,000 to £500,000	Over £500,000
SLT	Reported to Policy & Resources Panel retrospectively	Requires Policy & Resources Panel approval in advance

21.7 Budget transfers (virements) for non-staffing budget headings either on a permanent (year on year changes) or non-permanent (in year changes only) basis may be approved as detailed in Table 6 below.

The approval requirements are designed to ensure relevant officers are engaged based on whether the budget transfers are:

1. Within a functional area;
2. Between functional areas but **within** Assistant Director remit; or
3. Between functional areas **and** Assistant Director remits.

Table 6 - Approvals Levels for Budget Transfers (Virements) – Non Staffing				
		Non staff	Non staff	Non staff
		Permanent and Non-permanent	Permanent and Non-permanent	Permanent and Non-permanent
		Up to £25,000	£25,001 to £100,000	Over £100,000
Within a Functional Area		Finance Business Partner & Budget Manager	Finance Manager & Budget Manager	SLT
Between Functional Areas but within Assistant Director Remit		AD & Finance Manager	AD & AD Resources/ Treasurer	SLT

Section D 3
Financial Regulations

Between Functional Areas and Assistant Director Remits	Both ADs	Both ADs and AD Resources/ Treasurer	SLT
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- 21.8 The approval and reporting requirements for in year contract variations are as detailed in Table 7 below:

Table 7 - Contract Variations	
Cumulative Variance	Action
Less than £10,000 or 5%, whichever is the greater	Service Manager to provide retrospective notification to Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and relevant Assistant Director Where costs cannot be contained within budget prior approval of Senior Leadership Team is required.
Between £10,000 and £25,000 or 5% and 10%, whichever is the greater	Report to Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer and relevant Assistant Director to seek approval, before any cost increases are incurred. Where costs cannot be contained within budget prior approval of Senior Leadership Team is required.
Between £25,000 and £50,000 or 10% and 15%, whichever is the greater	Report to Senior Leadership Team to seek approval before any cost increases are incurred.
Over £50,000 or 15%, whichever is the greater	Approval required from the Policy & Resources Panel before any cost increases are incurred, other than in exceptional circumstances when the delay incurred would, in the opinion of the Chief Fire Officer & Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer, be impractical in which case this must be reported retrospectively.

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SECTION E1 (a)

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- 1 [New Member Induction](#)
- 2 [Member Development Handbook](#)
- 3 [121 Support & Guidance](#)
- 4 [Members' Seminars](#)

Responsible Officer	Section Issued	Section amended/ updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	December 2014	December 2016 July 2019 June 2020 September 2021	

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Fire Authority is committed to ensuring its Members are supported in developing the range of skills that they need in order to be outstanding community leaders.

1 New Member Induction

1.1 A comprehensive induction programme is available to all Members of East Sussex Fire Authority providing a foundation in the work of the Service and the essential knowledge needed in order for them to contribute effectively to the work of the Fire Authority in a short space of time.

1.2 The Member Induction programme includes:

- Welcome & Introduction to the Fire Authority
 - *Home Office & UK Government relationships*
 - *What is a Combined Fire Authority & how has it evolved?*
 - *Treasurer role & statutory functions*
 - *Monitoring Officer role & statutory functions*
 - *Governance - Constitution, Fire Authority & Panels*
 - *Member Role, Responsibilities & Expectations*
- Introduction to East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
 - *Overview of ESFRS as an organisation & how it works*
 - *ESFRS Purpose & Commitments*
 - *ESFRS Vision & Values*
 - *Overview of organisational structure, strategic direction and plans of the Fire Authority including community risk management planning (CRMP)*
- Fire Finance
- Media Training
- Scrutiny & Audit Training

1.3 Additionally there are visits arranged to key locations and sites including Headquarters, Lewes. Service Training Centre, Maresfield and community fire stations if appropriate.

1.4 Other resources available to Members including:

- Guidance from ESFRS staff, e.g. Senior Leadership Team, Monitoring Officer, Treasurer and Democratic Services
- Local Government Association at:
<http://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development;jsessionid=616D1921284B12C85FB05F517461DFB8>

2 Member Development Handbook

- 2.1 A comprehensive Member Development Handbook has been produced providing Members with a simple way of finding out what learning opportunities are available to them and includes those provided internally and by external partner organisations including The Local Government Association and South-East Employers.
- 2.3 The training opportunities available to Members include a mixture of online learning, in-house workshops, external courses and events all helping to provide a balanced approach and maintain flexibility.
- 2.4 It is understood that Members are required to take part in training and development programmes at their constituent authorities and every effort has been made to avoid duplication, however there will be some courses which all Members are required to complete, including annual Safeguarding training.

3 1-2-1 Support and Guidance

- 3.1 Newly appointed Fire Authority Members are supported during their first months of office through a 1-2-1 programme. Each new member is allocated a Senior Leadership Team Officer to act as their 1-2-1 contact.
- 3.2 Members will have regular meetings and updates as part of their 1-2-1 programme and will also be encouraged to use their allocated SLT Officer as a first point of contact for any issues or advice they need.

4 Members' Seminars

- 4.1 A series of six Members' Seminars are held each year. These half-day events are held both virtually and at locations across the Service area including community fire stations, Headquarters and the Service Training Centre.
- 4.2 The intention of these Seminars is to help Members understand some of the unique aspects of the Fire Service and provide an opportunity to meet colleagues from across the organisation.

- 4.3 At selected Seminars an operational demonstration is provided to ensure that Members can see our Firefighters displaying their skills and answering questions on processes, skills and equipment.
- 4.4 Members are provided with the dates and locations of the Seminars at the start of the year as soon as they have been timetabled and are reminded regularly of forthcoming dates.

Code of Conduct for Members

East Sussex Fire Authority: [Code of Conduct for Members](#)

Appendix A – [The Seven Principles of Public Life](#)

Appendix B – [Registering Interests](#)

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	December 2021		

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

The East Sussex Fire Authority is comprised of elected councillors appointed to the Fire Authority by its two constituent authorities: Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council. As Members of the East Sussex Fire Authority, they provide a key governance function in relation to the Fire and Rescue Service.

The legal requirements in the Localism Act 2011 which require all local authorities to adopt a Members Code to govern the conduct of elected councillors apply also to Fire Authorities. East Sussex Fire Authority has chosen to adopt a Code of Conduct which is based on the model Local Government Association Code and which is founded on the Seven Principles of Public Life.

This Code of Conduct for Members is consistent with the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services – England ('the Core Code'). The Core Code describes the fundamental principles which underpin the behaviours expected of staff of the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. This Code of Conduct for Members reflects the same key values and vision. It evidences the Fire Authority's commitment to supporting the Fire & Rescue Service's use of the Core Code to inform its future development.

Section E 1 (b) Code of Conduct for Members

Introduction

All Fire Authorities ('Authorities') are required to adopt a Member Code of Conduct to regulate the behaviour of their Members. The East Sussex Fire Authority has chosen to adopt a Code which is based on the Local Government Association's Model Member Code of Conduct, which was developed in association with key partners and relevant authorities.

This Code of Conduct covers all of those elected Members of Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council who have been appointed to the East Sussex Fire Authority, whenever they are acting as a Member or representative of the Fire Authority or behaving in a way which meets the description described in the paragraph entitled 'Application of the Code of Conduct' below.

The requirements outlined in this Code regarding the Declaration of Interests at Meetings apply to formal meetings of the Authority and its Panels and sub-Panels. Members are also encouraged to voluntarily declare at all meetings - both formal and informal - any facts which they consider may be relevant to the perception of their decision-making. This Code does not apply when Members are acting or appearing in the perception of a reasonable person to be acting in a purely private capacity.

When applying and interpreting this Code of Conduct, Members should have regard to the Fire Authority's policies and documents (as amended from time to time).

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a "*councillor*" or "*Member*" means a Member or co-opted Member of the Fire Authority.

A "*co-opted Member*" is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4). It is a person who is not an elected Member of the Fire Authority but has both been co-opted onto one of its Panels or Sub Panels and is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of it.

The requirement to appoint at least one "*Independent Person*" and a description of that role is in Section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011.

"*Authority*" or "*Fire Authority*" means the East Sussex Fire Authority.

"*the Monitoring Officer*" or "*your Monitoring Officer*" means the Monitoring Officer of the East Sussex Fire Authority.

Section E 1 (b) **Code of Conduct for Members**

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you as a Member in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow Members, officers and the reputation of the Fire Authority. It sets out the general principles of conduct expected of all Members and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in your role as a Member and in that of the Fire Authority in its governance role in relation to the Fire and Rescue service.

General Principles of Member Conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, Members and Authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of Member.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty;
- I act lawfully;
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Member.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person;
- I avoid conflicts of interest;
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my Authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you are appointed as a Member of the Fire Authority by your constituent Authority or (if you are a co-opted member) attend your first meeting and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Member of the Fire Authority. The expectation that you will apply appropriate standards of confidentiality to all information provided to you in your capacity as a member is ongoing, and shall continue after you cease to be a member.

Section E 1 (b) Code of Conduct for Members

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Member of the Fire Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, this Code does not apply to you when you are acting in any other capacity, including in a purely personal capacity. The Code will apply when:

- you misuse your position as a Member, or
- your actions may or could give the impression to a reasonable member of the public, with knowledge of all the facts, that you are acting as a Member, or are such as to create the risk that such an impression could be generated.

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and to show leadership at all times when acting as a Member.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from them on any matters that relate to it.

Standards of Member Conduct

This section sets out **in bold type** your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a Member. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is provided below each obligation to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a Member:

- 1.1. I treat other Members of the Authority and members of the public with respect.**

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

1.2. I treat Authority employees as well as employees and representatives of partner organisations with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Member, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personalised attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and its confidence in Members.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the Authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow Members, where action could then be taken under the Code of Conduct for Members, and Authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the Code of Conduct for Member and Employee Relations.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a Member:

2.1. I do not bully any person.

2.2. I do not harass any person.

2.3. I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on public bodies. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of Officers

As a Member:

3.1. I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Authority.

Officers work for the Authority as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try to force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

3.2. When reaching decisions on any matter, I have regard to any relevant advice provided to me by—

- (a) the Fire Authority's chief finance officer; and/or**
- (b) the Fire Authority's monitoring officer, where that officer is acting pursuant to their statutory duties.**

3.3. I give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the Authority.

The Authority's statutory officers play a key role in ensuring that the Authority discharges its functions lawfully. For this reason, Members are required to have regard to any advice provided to them by those officers.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a Member:

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

4.1. I do not disclose information:

- a) given to me in confidence by anyone
- b) acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - iv. the disclosure is:
 - 1) reasonable and in the public interest; and
 - 2) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Authority.

4.2. I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a Member for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3. I do not interfere with anyone seeking to obtain information which they are entitled to by law.

Fire Authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the Authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a Member:

5.1. I do not bring my role or the Authority into disrepute.

As a Member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

you, other Members and/or your Authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your Authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your Authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the Authority and fellow Members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by it whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a Member:

- 6.1. I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

Your position and influence as a Member of the Authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of Authority resources and facilities

As a Member:

- 7.1. I do not misuse the Authority's resources.**
- 7.2. I will, when using the resources of the Authority or authorising their use by others:**
- a) act in accordance with the Authority's requirements; and**
 - b) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a Member.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

- access and use of Authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a Member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the Authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Member:

- 8.1. I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my Authority.**
- 8.2. I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**
- 8.3. I do not attempt to interfere in any aspect of the investigation, administration or hearing of any complaint or matter.**
- 8.4. I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a Member to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the Authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Authority

9. Interests

As a Member:

- 9.1. I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the Authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, Authority employees and fellow Members know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other Members when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision-making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in Table 1, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

If in doubt about how to apply the Code's detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a Member:

- 10.1. I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Authority or from persons who may apply to the Authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2. I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 within 28 days of receipt.**
- 10.3. I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a Member. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

APPENDIX A

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

The principles are:

1 Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2 Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

3 Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4 Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5 Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6 Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7 Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

APPENDIX B

REGISTERING INTERESTS

Within 28 days of being appointed or re-appointed as a Member of the Fire Authority, you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

These are an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below. In this context, "Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

Non participation in case of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Where a matter arises at a meeting of the Fire Authority, one of its Panels or sub-Panels which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Table 1, you must:

- disclose the interest
- not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and
- leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

Note: if your interest is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

NB. It is a criminal offence to fail to notify the Monitoring Officer of a disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined in **Table 1**), to take part in discussion or votes at meetings or to take a decision, where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information to the Monitoring Officer in connection with the registration and/or declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Section E 1 (b) Code of Conduct for Members

Other Registerable Interests

Members may have an interest in a matter under consideration even where they do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. You must register your Other Registrable Interests which are defined as follows (also duplicated in **Table 2** below):

- Any body of which you are in a position of general control or management
- Any gift or hospitality which you have accepted by virtue of your office and which has an estimated value of £50 or more.

Other Interests which need not be registered

There is a further category of 'Other Interests' which do not need to be registered. These are as follows:

- Any interest of a financial nature which is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, whether of you, your spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners

Non-participation in the case of an Other Interest

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to any Other Interest (whether Registrable or not), then you must declare that interest at the meeting.

In order to determine whether – after declaring your interest – you may remain in the room and take part in any discussion or vote on the matter then you must consider:

whether a) your interest is affected by the matter under consideration more than the interests of the majority of people in the area affected by the matter, and if so,

whether b) a reasonable Member of the public would think your judgement of the public interest would be adversely affected by your interest.

If you consider that a) and b) apply, then you may speak on the matter only if Members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting, but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Note: if, having applied the above test, you consider you may continue participating in decision-making once you have declared your interest, then you will have a declarable **non-prejudicial interest**. Where you consider yourself unable to participate in decision-making then it will be because your interest is deemed to be a **prejudicial interest**.

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

Sensitive Interests

A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the Member, or a person connected with the Member, being subject to violence or intimidation. Where you believe you have a 'sensitive interest' then you must notify the Monitoring Officer, explaining the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a sensitive interest then you are not required to disclose the nature of your interest, although you must nonetheless declare the fact that you have an interest and must follow the rules regarding participation.

Dispensations

On a written request made by a Member, either the Scrutiny and Audit Panel or the Fire Authority's Monitoring Officer may grant a dispensation on the basis outlined below.

A dispensation may be granted to a Member to enable them to participate in a discussion and/or vote on a matter at a meeting where they would otherwise not be allowed to where either the Scrutiny and Audit Panel or the Monitoring Officer believes:

- 1) that the number of Members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would be so great a proportion of the relevant body as to impede the transaction of the business; or
- 2) considers that without the dispensation the representation of different political groups would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote; or
- 3) considers that it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Authority's area to allow the Member to take part; or
- 4) considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Members are not required to register or declare an interest that is shared with ordinary Members of the public living or working in the area, that arises simply from being a Member; or where the interest is otherwise de minimis.

It is at all times the responsibility of each individual Member to monitor whether they have any disclosed or as yet undisclosed interests in matters under consideration and to declare and register these where necessary.

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Note: All references to '*the council*' should be read as referring to '*the East Sussex Fire Authority*'.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the Member during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by them in carrying out their duties as a Member, or towards their election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the Member or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

Land and Property	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the Member or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
Licenses	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
Corporate Tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the Member, or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the Member, or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the Member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

Section E 1 (b)
Code of Conduct for Members

* 'director' includes a Member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registerable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your Authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:	
	any body of which you are in a position of general control or management, or
	Any gift or hospitality which you have accepted by virtue of your office and which has an estimated value of more than £50.

**Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches
of the Code of Conduct for Members**

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	December 2021		

1. Introduction and Legal Framework

- 1.1. This Procedure is made in accordance with section 28(6) of the Localism Act 2011, which requires the East Sussex Fire Authority ('the Authority') to have in place arrangements for investigating and determining allegations that a Member of the Authority has failed to comply with its Code of Conduct for Members.
- 1.2. This version of the Procedure supersedes all previous versions.
- 1.3. The Code of Conduct to which this Procedure relates was originally adopted by the Fire Authority in 2012 in accordance with section 27 of the Localism Act 2011. It is set out in the Authority's Constitution [insert link](#)

2. Principles

- 2.1 The principles underpinning this Procedure are:
 - (i) the imperative of generating and maintaining member and public confidence that allegations of member misconduct will be dealt with effectively, efficiently and proportionately;
 - (ii) that all parts of the process will reflect the Authority's commitment to resolving complaints against members in a way that is proportionate, transparent and fair to all parties;
 - (iii) that complaints are only referred for formal investigation and thereafter (if relevant) for determination by a Standards Hearing Panel where doing so is considered to be proportionate and necessary in the public interest;
 - (iv) that Standards Hearing Panel hearings are conducted openly wherever possible.

3. Making a Complaint

- 3.1 If a person wishes to make a complaint about Member conduct, they may write to the address provided below:

The Monitoring Officer
c/o Democratic Services
East Sussex Fire Authority
Service HQ
Church Lane
Lewes BN7 2DZ

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 3.2 The complainant will be asked to provide their name and a postal or email address. Only complaints from named individuals will be accepted.
- 3.3 Fire Authority officers wishing to complain about Member conduct are recommended to use the Code of Conduct for Member and Employee Relations but still have the option of using the complaints Procedure set out here.
- 3.4 The Monitoring Officer will inform the complainant that their complaint will be assessed against the Code of Conduct for Members and that they may if they wish seek the views of one of the Authority's Independent Persons.
- 3.5 The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days of receiving it and will send the complainant standard information about the Fire Authority's policy on disclosing their identity, as set out in paragraph 4.2 below.
- 3.6 Once a complaint has been made to the Monitoring Officer, it may only be withdrawn by the complainant where the Monitoring Officer considers (in accordance with the principles outlined at para 2 above) that doing so is proportionate and necessary in the public interest.
- 3.7 At an early stage in communications, the Authority will discourage all parties – both the complainant and the subject member, as well as any other parties - from seeking actively to publicise the matter before the complaint has been fully determined.
- 3.8 The potential for a conflict of interest to arise will be considered when the complaint is first received in and will be kept under subsequent review. If any actual or potential conflicts are identified, then appropriate arrangements will be made to prevent them impacting negatively on the process.
- 3.9 All complaints are expected to be determined promptly and without undue delay.

4. Information Provided to the Member Complained About

- 4.1 The Member against whom the complaint is directed (the 'subject member') will be notified that a complaint has been received as soon as possible and in any event within 5 working days of the Authority receiving it, unless the Monitoring Officer considers that doing so may prejudice any investigation into the complaint.
- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer will provide the subject member with all documentation relevant to the complaint, including the identity of the complainant except where doing so might compromise the complainant's safety (see also paragraph 6.2 below).

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 4.3 When notifying the subject member of the complaint, the Monitoring Officer will offer them the opportunity (within a defined timescale) to provide information and/or make any representations which they consider may assist at preliminary assessment stage.
- 4.4 The subject member will be alerted at an early stage that they may - if they wish - obtain input from an Independent Person not otherwise involved in the complaint at preliminary assessment stage. If they indicate they wish to do so, then the Monitoring Officer will facilitate a process whereby they receive confidential input from the Independent Person. This input will be provided in accordance with the Independent Person's statutory role and may involve their expressing their view on possible next steps in the handling of the complaint.

5. Preliminary Assessment

- 5.1 Subject to paragraph 5.2, the Monitoring Officer will, in consultation with one of the Independent Persons, carry out a preliminary assessment in order to determine what action should be taken.
- 5.2 The Monitoring Officer reserves the right to refer the preliminary assessment to the Standards Hearing Panel in respect of any complaint.
- 5.3 The Monitoring Officer will seek to complete their preliminary assessment promptly and in any event within 28 days of receiving a valid complaint. This process may on occasion take longer if additional information is required from the complainant or subject member (or both) for a proper assessment to be made.
- 5.4 Pursuant to paragraph 5.3, the Monitoring Officer may – having regard to the views of the relevant Independent Person – undertake preliminary enquiries directly related to the complaint to help determine whether a formal investigation is required.
- 5.5 In the course of the preliminary assessment, the Monitoring Officer may decide **not** to progress the complaint having first consulted with the Independent Person and having applied the following tests:

a) can we investigate the complaint?

- Is the person being complained about currently a Member of the East Sussex Fire Authority?
- Did the conduct occur within the last six months?
- Is the conduct something that is covered by the Code?

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

b) should we investigate the complaint?

- Is there sufficient evidence to support the complaint?
 - Is the conduct something which it is possible to investigate?
 - Would a formal investigation be proportionate and necessary in the public interest?
- 5.6 Throughout the process, the Monitoring Officer will keep under review all informal options available to them for resolving the complaint, including informal settlement (whether by apology or other remedial action, or mediation), including as outlined in para 5.8 below.
- 5.7 Where the complaint is considered to satisfy the tests outlined in paragraph 5.5 a) and b), the Monitoring Officer may:
 - (i) seek to resolve the complaint informally in accordance with paragraph 5.6, or
 - (ii) arrange for the complaint to be formally investigated;
- 5.8 An informal resolution may involve the Member accepting that their conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, and/or some other action on their part. Where the Member makes a reasonable offer of informal resolution, but the complainant is not willing to accept that offer, the Monitoring Officer will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation. In any event, the Monitoring Officer retains the discretion to resolve matters informally having consulted with the parties as well as with one of the Independent Persons.
- 5.9 Where the complainant and subject member have consented to resolve the complaint informally by a particular means (for example, by written apology), the member should co-operate with and adhere to the terms of that resolution, in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Members.
- 5.10 Complaints settled informally, whether at this stage or during the course of a formal investigation, will be reported to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel without naming the parties involved. Complaints which proceed to formal hearing and which conclude with the finding of a substantive breach will normally be reported to the next meeting of the full Authority in any event.
- 5.11 Where the parties attempt to resolve the matter informally but fail to reach a mutually agreeable outcome, the matter may be referred for formal investigation after the tests in para 5.5 a) and b) have been applied. In any subsequent report to a Standards Hearing Panel, it will be stated that informal resolution was attempted but did not succeed, although a detailed account of the negotiations will not be published.

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 5.12 If the complaint identifies conduct by any person which, on the face of it, is or may be a criminal offence or regulatory breach, the Monitoring Officer may refer the matter to the Police and/or appropriate regulatory body as well as, or in lieu of, an investigation by the Authority.
- 5.13 On completion of the preliminary assessment, the Monitoring Officer will inform the complainant and subject member of their decision regarding next steps, giving reasons.

6. Formal Investigation

- 6.1 If the Monitoring Officer has applied the tests outlined above in para 5.5 and has additionally considered all available options for informal resolution (paras 5.6 and 5.8) and nonetheless decides that a complaint merits formal investigation, they will appoint an Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer may be another officer of the Authority, an officer of another fire authority or local authority or an external investigator. The Investigating Officer will, subject to any direction from the Monitoring Officer, have discretion as to how the investigation is carried out.
- 6.2 The Investigating Officer will ask the complainant and the Member to provide their detailed explanation of events and will identify what documents they need to see and whom they need to interview. In exceptional cases, it may be appropriate to keep the identity of the complainant, witnesses, or key documents confidential where disclosure might prejudice the investigation.
- 6.3 The Investigating Officer will produce a draft report and send copies, in confidence, to the complainant and subject member, to give both an opportunity to identify any matter in the report which they feel requires more consideration.
- 6.4 Having received and taken account of any comments on the draft report, the Investigating Officer will send their final report to the Monitoring Officer. If the Monitoring Officer is not satisfied that the investigation has been conducted properly or that aspects of the report require revision or clarification, they may ask the Investigating Officer to reconsider their report.
- 6.5 Copies of the final report will be sent to the complainant and to the member concerned.
- 6.6 During the investigative process, the Investigation Officer will keep the Monitoring Officer informed regarding progress. At any point during the investigation process, the Monitoring Officer may review the complaint against the tests in para 5.5, halting the investigation if necessary to actively consider options for resolving matters informally pursuant to paras 5.6 and 5.8.

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 6.7 If informal resolution is contemplated, then the Monitoring Officer will consult the parties on their views as an alternative to continuing with the formal investigation. The process of consultation will involve offering the complainant and subject member the opportunity to make representations, which will be taken into account by the Monitoring Officer when making their decision. While resuming the formal investigation (if one is already underway) would remain an option in such a situation, the Monitoring Officer retains the discretion to resolve matters informally where they consider that an informal resolution is proportionate and in the public interest having first consulted with the parties as well as with one of the Independent Persons. Where a matter is determined by informal resolution after it has been referred for formal investigation, then reasons will be provided to the parties when they are notified of that outcome.

7. Investigation Outcomes

- 7.1 On completion of a formal investigation, the Investigating Officer has available to them a series of options in respect of each element of the allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct. These are:
- (i) To make a preliminary finding that no breach(es) have occurred
 - (ii) To outline the facts and highlight material considerations without making a preliminary finding or taking an indicative view.
 - (iii) To take an indicative view that one or more breaches (whether technical but minimal or substantive) has or have occurred.

Preliminary finding of no breach

- 7.2 If the Investigation finds no breach of the Code of Conduct, and the Monitoring Officer considers – after consultation with the Independent Person – that there is no public interest in pursuing the matter further, they will contact both parties to ask if they accept the finding and are willing to end the matter there. If they respond in the affirmative, the Monitoring Officer will confirm to the parties in writing that the complaint will be taken no further. If either party rejects the finding or is not willing to conclude the matter, they may make representations to the Monitoring Officer as to why the complaint should nonetheless be referred to the Standards Hearing Panel. However the Monitoring Officer retains the discretion to decide to resolve the matter informally, without referral to a Panel.
- 7.3 Similarly the Monitoring Officer may, having consulted one of the Independent Persons, refer the complaint to the Standards hearing Panel, even where the investigation finds no breach and the parties are willing to terminate the matter.

Outline of the facts without making a preliminary finding

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 7.4 Where the Investigating Officer does not make a finding or take an indicative view as to whether or not a breach has occurred, then it is for the Monitoring Officer to decide in consultation with the Independent Person whether referring the complaint to a Standards Hearing Panel for determination is proportionate and necessary in the public interest or whether to resolve matters informally. The Monitoring Officer may make this decision themselves or refer this decision to a Panel, as long as the parties to the complaint have first been given the opportunity to make representations which have been taken into account and the Independent Person has been consulted. Reasons for such a decision will be given

Indicative view: substantive breach

- 7.5 Where the Investigating Officer finds that the subject member has substantively breached one or more elements of the Code of Conduct, the Monitoring Officer will normally refer the complaint to the Standards Hearing Panel for determination.
- 7.6 However where the Monitoring Officer considers exceptionally that it would not be proportionate and necessary in the public interest to refer the breach to a Standards Hearing Panel, and has consulted with one of the Independent Persons, then provided that that Independent Person agrees, the Monitoring Officer may recommend to the parties that the matter be settled informally and invite the parties to make representations regarding whether or not they agree. While either the complainant or the subject member may request that the matter be referred to a Panel for determination, the Monitoring Officer will retain the discretion to resolve matters informally having consulted with all of the parties.

Indicative view: technical but minimal breach.

- 7.7 This finding reflects a set of circumstances where the conduct complained of does – on a strict interpretation – amount to a breach of the Code, but little or no culpability attaches to the subject member. This could occur, for example, where the member had made an unintentional and minor administrative error on their declaration of interests by recording relevant information but under the wrong class of interest.
- 7.8 Where the Monitoring Officer, after consultation with one of the Independent Persons, considers that it would not be in the public interest to refer a technical but minimal breach to a Standards Hearing Panel, he will recommend to the parties that the matter be settled informally. While either party may request that the matter is referred to a Panel for determination, the Monitoring Officer will retain the discretion to resolve matters informally having consulted with all of the parties.

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

8. Standards Hearing Panel

- 8.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after referring a completed investigation to the Standards Hearing Panel for hearing and determination, the Monitoring Officer shall convene a meeting of the Panel.
- 8.2 The Monitoring Officer shall select the persons to comprise a Standards Hearing Panel, in accordance with the following criteria:
 - 8.2.1 Membership of a Standards Hearing Panel is restricted to persons who –
 - (a) are a member of Scrutiny and Audit Panel; and
 - (b) have attended any training or briefing session considered necessary by the Monitoring Officer
 - 8.2.2 The Standards Hearing Panel shall consist of 3 elected members. It shall also include one Independent Person who shall chair the Panel but not vote.
 - 8.2.3 If more than three members are considered to be qualified (pursuant to paragraph 8.2.1) to attend and are also available for a particular Panel, selection will be done in a way that ensures a spread of experience across the Panel.

9. Arrangements for and Conduct of the Standards Hearing Panel Hearing

- 9.1 There is a presumption of openness with regard to Panel hearings. Hearings will be conducted in open session unless the Panel resolve that the public be excluded on one or more of the grounds permitted under Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 9.2 Where the hearing itself is open to the public, the Panel's deliberations following the hearing will be held in private.
- 9.3 Care is needed to ensure that the published report detailing the allegation and investigation does not unlawfully disclose personal or sensitive personal data of any party. Accordingly, the Monitoring Officer shall have discretion to redact material from the published report where necessary for data protection purposes.
- 9.4 Where the complaint concerns the use of an offensive word or expression, the wording will not be repeated in the Panel report more than is necessary and in any event placed within inverted commas, to indicate the words were those allegedly used by the subject member.

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- 9.5 To coincide with the publication of the hearing report, the Fire Authority shall (unless the Panel is being advised to consider excluding the public from the hearing) issue a press release about the hearing, which shall include an explanation of the Independent Person's role. Advice will be sought from the Communications team regarding the precise content of the release.
- 9.6 The Independent Person, in their capacity as Panel chair, may – after consulting the Monitoring Officer – issue directions as to the manner in which the hearing is to be conducted.
- 9.7 Adequate security must be in place throughout the hearing, to protect Panel members and other parties actively involved in the hearing against threats or intimidation.
- 9.8 Arrangements must be made to ensure the privacy of the Panel while in recess following the hearing.
- 9.9 Arrangements must enable the Panel to conduct their deliberations in recess without feeling pressurised to reach a decision within a set time.

10. Reaching a Decision

- 10.1 In accordance with statutory requirements, the voting members of the Standards Hearing Panel must seek and take into account the views of the Independent Person before reaching their decision in respect of the allegation.
- 10.2 The Panel should, where possible, reach their decision by consensus and vote by acclamation. Where there is disagreement, the matter shall be put to a vote with Members voting for or against the proposal.
- 10.3 The decision of the majority of the Panel Members shall constitute the decision of the Panel. The Chair, being an Independent Person, shall not be permitted to vote or exercise a casting vote.
- 10.4 In the event that no majority decision can be reached (e.g. where one voting member felt unable to decide the allegation), the Panel will make no finding and a fresh Panel shall be appointed to re-hear the complaint.
- 10.5 The decision of the Panel should be owned collectively by all its Members and Panel Members should, as far as reasonably practicable, avoid statements or actions that undermine public confidence in the complaints process.

11. Range of decisions available to the Standards Hearing Panel

- 11.1 Having heard the allegation, the Standards Hearing Panel may –

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

- (i) find that the subject member **did fail** to comply with the Code of Conduct for members in one or more respects;
 - (ii) find that the subject member **did not fail** to comply with the Code of Conduct for members;
 - (iii) **make no finding** in respect of the allegation(s). It is open to the Panel merely to note the issues raised by the complaint and, if appropriate, to make recommendations which address them.
- 11.2 Even where the Panel finds a breach, it is not obliged to take action in respect of the member. In accordance with section 28(11) of the Localism Act, it must have regard to the failure in deciding whether to take action and, if so, what action to take.
- 11.3 Neither the Standards Hearing Panel nor any other body of the Fire Authority has power to suspend or disqualify a member or to withdraw their basic or special responsibility allowance.
- 11.4 Where a Panel finds that a substantive breach has occurred then it will normally both:
- (i) publish its findings in respect of the member's conduct; and
 - (ii) report its finding to the next full Fire Authority meeting for information in any event.
- 11.5 Actions the Panel may take in relation to a member who has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct include:
- (i) writing a formal letter to the member, which could include recommended actions such as an apology;
 - (ii) recommending to the Fire Authority that it does not appoint the relevant member onto any body which is within its gift;
 - (iii) recommending to the Fire Authority that it takes one or more of the actions listed here;
 - (iv) formal censure;
 - (v) recommending to the member's Group Leader that they be removed from any or all of the Panels or sub Panels;
 - (vi) recommending that the Monitoring Officer offer appropriate training

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

12. Publicising the Panel's Decision

- 12.1 At the end of the hearing or as soon as possible thereafter, the Chair will state the decision of the Standards Hearing Panel as to whether the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and any actions which the Standards Hearing Panel resolves to take.
- 12.2 As soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, the Monitoring Officer shall prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Hearing Panel, send a copy to the complainant and the member, make that decision notice available for public inspection and report the decision to the next convenient meeting of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel. It will normally also report its finding to the next meeting of the full Fire Authority for information.

13. Right of Appeal

- 13.1 Subject to paragraphs 13.2 to 13.4, the complainant and subject member may each appeal the decision of the Standards Hearing Panel.
- 13.2 A request for an appeal must be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer and set out reasons for the request, with reference to the grounds set out in paragraph 13.4.
- 13.3 The appeal request must be received by the Monitoring Officer within 10 working days of the original Panel hearing.
- 13.4 The appeal request will only be granted if one or more of the following criteria are met:
 - (i) the hearing was procedurally flawed; a relevant consideration was not taken into account; or an irrelevant consideration was taken into account;
 - (ii) new evidence or material has arisen with a direct and significant bearing on the allegation; or
 - (iii) the Panel's decision was irrational, meaning it was so unreasonable that no sensible Standards Hearing Panel, having applied its mind to the complaint, could have arrived at that decision.
- 13.5 The decision as to whether the appeal request does fulfil one or more of the above criteria, resulting in the request being granted, shall be in the sole discretion of the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person.
- 13.6 In the event that an appeal is granted, a Standards Hearing Panel composed of different members to the one that heard the original case will consider the entire

Section E 1 (c)
Code of Conduct Breaches

case. The appeal Panel may dismiss or uphold the appeal. If they uphold the appeal, they may substitute the original decision with a new decision. If the appeal Panel considers that essential information was not included in the investigation, they may refer the complaint back to the investigation stage.

13.7 There is no internal right of appeal from the decision of the appeal Panel.

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SECTION E1 (d)

CODE OF CONDUCT – MEMBER/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Roles and Responsibilities](#)
3. [Information for Members](#)
4. [Respect and Courtesy](#)
5. [Contact between Members and Employees](#)
6. [Correspondence Between Members and Employees](#)
7. [Undue Pressure](#)
8. [Familiarity](#)
9. [Redress](#)
10. [Political Activity](#)
11. [Conclusions](#)

[Appendix A](#): Requests for an Employee to Address Group Meetings and Related Points

[Appendix B](#): East Sussex Fire Authority Publicity Conventions about Press Releases

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	Oct 2005	March 2104 Sept 2015 July 2019 September 2021	

Code of Conduct – Member/Employee Relations

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Standards of conduct for Members and employees of the Authority are contained in separate Codes of Conduct. Whilst these are detailed documents, they do not cover explicitly some of the issues arising from the close working relationships which are needed between the two if high value quality services are to be delivered and the mutual confidence of Members and employees is to be maintained.
- 1.2. Good working relations between Members and employees are critical to the successful delivery of the Authority's business. Any misunderstandings about the roles and acceptable standards of behaviour may harm the effectiveness of these relationships. This document aims to strengthen the good working relationships which already exist, clarify possible areas of doubt and offer advice as to how any difficulties which might arise can be resolved properly.
- 1.3. Much of that which is contained in this document primarily concerns the relationship between Members and the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (CFO/CE) and other senior managers, but the same principles apply to all employees.
- 1.4. The following Appendices support this document: Appendix A covers the detailed process of Political Activity between employees and Party Groups, and Appendix B deals with Press Releases and Authority publicity.
- 1.5. The Members' Code of Conduct is set out elsewhere in this Constitution.
- 1.6. This document applies to officers appointed to serve the Authority (e.g. the Monitoring Officer (MO)) who are not Authority employees, and to their representatives, as if they were employees.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members

- 2.1 The Members of the Fire Authority are all Councillors. The role of a Councillor is defined by the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.2 In law, Members have responsibilities similar to trustees. No decisions on behalf of the Authority can be taken by individual Members, except in limited circumstances on matters of procedure, such as procedure at meetings.

2.3 All Members are required by law to:

- (a) observe the Code of Conduct for Members;
- (b) comply with the Authority's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; and
- (c) comply with all relevant statutory provisions applicable to the Authority and its Members and employees.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of individual Members to ensure they have proper advice. If Members are ever in doubt in terms of the law, any Authority Code, Standing Orders, general propriety, conflicts of interest etc. then they should consult either the MO or, if financial, the Treasurer.

The Chairperson

2.4 The role of Chairperson is only legally recognised for procedural purposes (e.g. in conducting meetings and exercising a casting vote). In practice, the Chairperson is recognised as the member who will undertake the following roles:

- (a) presenting reports at Fire Authority meetings and responding to questions (as defined in Standing Orders);
- (b) responding to the press and making public statements on behalf of the Fire Authority;
- (c) liaising closely with the CFO/CE in developing policy and service plans; and

2.5 The Vice-Chairperson, the Panel Chairperson and Lead Members have similar, but less prominent roles.

Employees

2.6 Employees are employed by, and serve, the Fire Authority. They provide advice to the Fire Authority and its Panels, and are responsible for ensuring that decisions are effectively implemented. All employees are required to exercise political neutrality whilst undertaking their duties. Some employees have their neutrality enforced through the political restrictions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. All employees are required to abide by the

Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and by the Code of Conduct for Employees.

- 2.7 Employees are responsible to their line managers and ultimately the CFO/CE. The CFO/CE has professional responsibilities and accountabilities for the proper management of the Authority's employees in addition to their specific responsibilities as a statutory office holder.
- 2.8 The CFO/CE and senior employees will work closely with Members to ensure effective policy development and decision-making.

3 Information for Members

- 3.1 It is important for the CFO/CE and employees to keep Members informed about the major issues concerning the Authority and about issues and events affecting the areas that they represent.
- 3.2 Members' rights to information are subject to legal rules and, if a Member has a legitimate interest in a matter and is able to demonstrate a 'need to know' then employees may, after consulting their line manager, provide the relevant information, including confidential information. When issuing this information consideration should be given as to whether the information should be shared with the Group Leaders.
- 3.3 Members will need to explain why information is needed, in order to establish that there is a legitimate 'need to know'. Members who ask for complex or substantial quantities of information must be flexible in their requests if compiling will result in significant cost to the Authority. Information will be provided electronically.
- 3.4 The Members' Code of Conduct and Standing Orders both restrict disclosure of confidential information which has been obtained as a Fire Authority Member. Members must be aware that confidential information may include individual's personal data which is protected from disclosure under the Data Protection Act. Confidential information must not be made available by the Member concerned to the public or shared with another Authority Member who cannot demonstrate a similar 'need to know'.
- 3.5 If Members have difficulty in obtaining information they feel they need and are entitled to in order to carry out their duties they should contact the CFO/CE. If they remain dissatisfied they should contact the MO and set out their concerns.

4 Respect and Courtesy

- 4.1 Mutual respect, trust and courtesy must be demonstrated by all Members and employees in all meetings and contacts both formal and informal. Good behaviour plays a vital part in the Authority's reputation. It is important that Members and employees remember their respective obligations to enhance the Authority's reputation and do all they can to avoid criticism of Members, or employees, in public places.
- 4.2 Members are entitled to constructively criticise reports, actions and work of departments, Directorates or the Authority where they perceive such criticism is merited. However, Members must remember employees are constrained in the response they may make to public comments about them by Members. Members must not make personal or abusive comments about employees in public or through the press nor undermine any employee's position by abuse, rudeness or ridicule.
- 4.3 Employees must show respect and courtesy to Members. They must act professionally and impartially in the Authority's interests. They must be even-handed towards all Members. The Authority can expect their lawful policies to be put into effect, even if at variance with employees' personal views.
- 4.4 If a Member believes they have reason to criticise the work of an employee, the proper approach is to contact the relevant Assistant Director or to the CFO/CE. If employees feel they have good cause to criticise a Member, they should raise the issue with their Assistant Director or the CFO/CE.
- 4.5 Employees who are disrespectful or discourteous to Members will be liable to disciplinary action.
- 4.6 Members who are disrespectful or discourteous to an employee, can expect their Group Leader to treat the matter extremely seriously. Bullying and compromising the impartiality of employees are breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members. A complaint under the Code, if substantiated after a formal investigation and hearing, will render a Member liable to a range of penalties.

5 Contact between Members and Employees

- 5.1 Regular contact between Members and some employees is necessary to ensure the efficient working of the Authority. It is the responsibility of the Authority's principal officers to identify the employees who should have regular contact with Members, having regard to the nature of the roles they perform and the Member contact envisaged.

- 5.2 Members should follow established lines of communication. If different employees are approached they may not obtain the advice, help or information envisaged and could potentially undermine the formal accountability of employees to their line managers. If Members have any concerns about these arrangements, they should bring them to the attention of the appropriate principal officer.

6 Correspondence between Members and employees

- 6.1 Correspondence between Members and employees must comply with the respect and courtesy obligations of this Code and, unless the correspondence is obviously confidential, it may be copied by the sender or recipient to others, subject to the following consideration.
- 6.2 An employee should not normally copy correspondence with a Member of one political group to a Member of another political group without consent. This does not preclude the employee from advising another Member of the general nature of the matter, where it is relevant to a role which that Member is undertaking for the Authority, for example as Chairperson, or Panel Chairperson.

7 Undue Pressure

- 7.1 Members should be aware that it is easy for employees to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where Members hold official and/or political office.
- 7.2 Members must not apply undue pressure on an employee either to do anything they are not empowered to do or to undertake work outside normal duties or normal hours. Particular care must be taken in connection with the use of Authority property and services.
- 7.3 Employees must not seek to use undue influence on individual Members to make a decision in their favour, raise personal matters to do with their job or make claims or allegations about other employees. There are formal procedures for consultation, grievance and discipline.
- 7.4 Reports to the Authority or its Panels should be written by the CFO/CE or another employee authorised by them to do so. Reports are discussed with the Chairperson or relevant Panel Chairperson at regular briefings held with the CFO/CE and senior employees. The Chairperson may make suggestions as to the contents of a report however, the report is the employee's and any

amendments can only be made by the CFO/CE in consultation with either the MO and/or Treasurer.

8 Familiarity

- 8.1 Close personal familiarity between individual Members and employees can damage the principle of mutual respect. It may also, intentionally or accidentally, lead to the passing of confidential information or information which should not properly be passed between them, e.g. personal details.
- 8.2 Such familiarity could also cause embarrassment to other Members and/or employees and even give rise to suspicions of favouritism.
- 8.3 For the above reasons, close personal familiarity must be avoided.

9 Redress

- 9.1 If Members consider they have not been treated with proper respect or courtesy and it cannot be resolved through direct discussion with the employees concerned, they should raise it with the relevant Assistant Director without delay. Members may raise such issues with the CFO/CE if they remain unresolved where appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against employees.
- 9.2 If employees feel the same way about any Members, they should raise the matter with their Assistant Director or Principal Officer as appropriate without delay, especially if they do not feel able to discuss it with the Member concerned. The CFO/CE will take such action as is appropriate either by approaching individual Member and/or the relevant Group Leader. The CFO/CE will inform the Monitoring Officer if a Group Leader is involved, or any other case deemed appropriate.

10 Political Activity

- 10.1 Unless exempted by the CFO/CE, employees holding politically restricted posts cannot be local authority councillors, MPs or MEPs; act as election agents; be an officer of a political party; canvas on behalf of a political party or speak or publish written work for the public at large or to a section of the public with the apparent intention of affecting support for a political party. The following staff are regarded as holding politically restricted posts - Principal Officers and any employee whose duties involve giving advice to the Authority or Panels on a regular basis or speaking on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters on behalf of the Authority.

- 10.2 In accordance with the Authority's Code of Conduct for Employees, employees must not be involved in advising any political group of the Authority nor attend any of their meetings in an official capacity without the express consent of the CFO/CE. The procedure for such a situation is contained in Appendix A.
- 10.3 The above does not obviate the necessity for regular contact on matters affecting the Authority between the CFO/CE, senior employees and Group Leaders, and on matters affecting Panels between the CFO/CE, other senior officers, and Panel Chairperson.
- 10.4 Authority decisions can only be made by the Full Fire Authority, or Panels or the CFO/CE or other employees, acting under delegated authority. Decisions by political groups do not constitute Authority decisions. All relevant representations made in respect of any matter must be reported to the Authority.

11 Conclusions

- 11.1 Mutual understanding and openness on these sort of sensitive issues and basic respect are the greatest safeguard of the integrity of the Authority, its Members and employees.
- 11.2 If Members or employees have any concerns about the content of this Code or would like any interpretation or advice on its contents, they should contact the CFO/CE or the MO.

Annex A

Requests for an Employee to Address Group Meetings and Related Points

1. In accordance with the Code of Conduct for Employees, approved by the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (CFO/CE) must be made aware of any invitation by an Authority political group or any part of a group (such as group Members on a particular Panel) for an employee to address a group meeting, in sufficient time to enable the stages outlined in paragraphs 2 and 3 below to be completed before the meeting.
2. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive should be made aware of:
 - i. the reason(s) why an employee is being invited to address the group meeting;
 - ii. the name of the employee(s) concerned if known; and
 - iii. the topic(s) to be covered or on which information or a report is sought.
3. The CFO/CE, after consultation with the Monitoring Officer (MO) and individual employee(s) concerned, will decide whether permission can be given, in whole or in part, to the employee(s) concerned for them to address the meeting. The request can be agreed, in whole or part, and the CFO/CE will notify the relevant Group Leader or Member together with the other Group Leaders and indicate that similar arrangements will be made for them if they wish. This is to ensure integrity of all concerned is preserved through openness and equal access.
4. Since legally, employees (including the CFO/CE, MO and Treasurer) serve the Authority, and not individual political groups, their attendance at political group meetings is voluntary.
5. Employees are entitled to have their political neutrality respected should they agree to attend the group meeting, and must be treated in a fair and proper way. Employees must not be placed in a position where they feel at a disadvantage or their political impartiality or integrity are put at risk.
6. To safeguard both employees and Members, matters which have not been mentioned under 2 above should not be raised in the presence of the employee(s). Employees will be instructed on each occasion that they must leave a meeting if there is any suggestion that they are to be asked to comment on matters beyond the brief agreed in advance, or if they feel vulnerable or that their integrity were to be put in question.

7. Any breach of these arrangements by either Members or employees will be viewed seriously and appropriate action taken by Group Leaders or the CFO/CE respectively. The MO will also be informed.

Annex B

East Sussex Fire Authority Publicity Conventions about Press Releases

The purpose of this note is to set down as conventions long standing rules and practices which govern press releases. The aim being to avoid misunderstanding and facilitate effective action and maintain constructive relationships between Members and employees.

- Section A – Basic Rules Governing Authority publicity.
- Section B – Group Publicity.
- Section C – Conventions.

Any press activity within the Authority will take account of the priorities of the Authority's agreed Strategies as amended from time to time and the Convention needs to be read and operated in that context.

A Basic Rules Governing Authority Publicity

- 1 Any press activity within the Authority must follow the principles laid down in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Publicity (the Code) introduced with the Local Government Act 1986 (issued in March 2011).
- 2 The Code recognises:
 - (a) The role of employees who deal with public relations in helping to make the public more aware of the services which the Authority provides to the community and the functions it performs; and
 - (b) The need for the Authority to explain its policies, objectives and priorities to electors and council taxpayers and in general to improve local accountability.
- 3 The Code lays down guidance on what is not appropriate publicity for public relations officers or a Local Authority Public Relations and Press Office. The main points are:
 - i. A Local Authority should not publish material designed to affect public support for a political party.

- ii. Publicity should be relevant to the functions and powers of the Local Authority.
- iii. Publicity describing a Local Authority's policies and aims should be as objective as possible, concentrating on facts and explanations/justifications.
- iv. Advertising may be appropriate subject to cost effectiveness and meeting the provisions of the Code.
- v. Comments on proposals of Central Government, other Local Authorities and public bodies should be objective, balanced, informative and accurate.
- vi. Publicity touching on issues that are controversial should be handled with care.
- vii. A Local Authority should not use public funds to mount publicity campaigns, the primary purpose of which is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy; although publicity campaigns to promote the effective and efficient use of facilities and services, or to attract tourism or investment, or to influence public behaviour or attitudes on e.g. health, crime prevention or race relations, may be permissible.
- viii. Publicity about individual Members may include the contact details, the positions they hold and their responsibilities. Whilst objective and explanatory publicity may be given which acknowledges the part played by the individual Members as holders of particular positions on a Local Authority, personalisation of issues or personal image-making should be avoided.
- ix. Particular care needs to be taken when publicity is issued immediately prior to an election, to ensure that this could not be perceived as seeking to influence public opinion, or promote the image of a candidate or candidates. This operates once Notice of Election has been given.

- 4 To summarise, Authority press releases can only reflect the policies and decisions of the Authority and its Panels. Quotes from individual Members can only be as representatives of the Authority, e.g. the Chairperson of the Authority or Panel Chairperson, and must be confined to policy or comments in response to particular events which call for a particularly speedy reaction from the Authority.

B Group Publicity

- 1 The advantage of publicity produced by Groups or individual Members is that political and other considerations can be communicated, fulfilling a role that Authority publicity cannot.
- 2 The Authority's employees who deal with public relations cannot be involved in the preparation or distribution of Group or individual Member publicity since that is not Authority publicity.
- 3 There is no provision to Group or individual Member press releases to be typed or distributed by Authority employees. However, if the publicity relates to Authority affairs, and will not include any political party publicity, e.g. that people should vote for a particular party then advice and guidance on content will be provided, in the first instance Democratic Services should be contacted. Any distribution costs are to be met to the Group concerned or to the individual Member since the law requires that no costs of Group publicity should fall on the Authority.
- 4 A nominated Authority employee, (usually the Media and Communications Officer) without contravening these rules, will always try to help a Member in relation to handling the media.

C Conventions

- 1 The Code re-states the constitutional legal position which still applies to Combined Fire Authorities, even though it has changed for many other Councils - i.e. the Authority discharges its functions corporately through the Authority. Decisions are taken by the Authority or its Panels. The Chairperson cannot in law be given executive authority in relation to their Panels' services.
- 2 Publicity by the Authority has to comply with the Code and the specific accounting rules governing such expenditure: particular care will be taken once Notice of Election has been given.
- 3 Publicity must not report the view of individual Members, except where they are formally representing the Authority. A statement of comment or explanation of official Authority or Panel policy by a Chairperson is included where that is appropriate. Press releases with a quotation from the Chairperson can be issued in advance of an issue coming before the Authority or Panel by making it clear that the Authority or Panel will be considering it. Only the Chairperson can formally comment on official Authority policy (or on what the Authority/Panel may decide).

4. In a limited number of situations, it may be permissible for a press release to contain a quotation from a Member who is not the Chairperson or a Chairperson of a Panel. This would apply, for example, where a Member has been specifically authorised to represent the Authority, particularly at international events. Such press releases and any quotations would be subject to consultation and agreement with the Chairperson of the Authority.
5. Clearly, it is important for Chairperson of any Panel to be aware of any major issues which feature in press releases etc. from their Panel as they may be approached by the media as well on the issue. In such circumstances, the Authority's employees who deal with public relations will seek to ensure contact and liaise with the Chairperson and Panel Chairpersons.
6. Employees seek to operate with common sense and flexibility but they have to operate within what is legitimate within the rules. The Authority's employees who deal with public relations will, on occasions, have to make judgements, advised by the Monitoring Officer, who may also have to make decisions as to what is, and what is not permissible within the rules.

SECTION E1 (e)

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

This section sets out the allowances that may be claimed by Fire Authority Members and how to do so. It also explains how these payments may affect your finances.

Members Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances will be paid directly and taxation of allowances, National Insurance contributions will be calculated by ESFRS.

Members Allowances may alter you Income Tax and Welfare situation. Because the rules relating to these are complex and subject to change, this guidance can only be a general nature.

The Members' Allowance Scheme includes the following sections:

- 1 [The Scheme and Allowances Payable](#)
- 2 [Travel and Subsistence Allowances](#)
- 3 [How to Claim](#)
- 4 [How allowances are paid](#)
- 5 [Election not to receive payment](#)
- 6 [Dependents Carers Allowance](#)
- 7 [Tax and Insurance](#)
- 8 [Statutory Sick Pay](#)
- 9 [Social Security Benefits](#)
- 10 [Insurance](#)
- 11 [Updating of Allowances](#)

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director of Planning & Improvement	November 2005	March 2017 December 2017 September 2021	

1 The Scheme and Allowances Payable

The Scheme

- 1.1 The East Sussex Fire Authority Members' Allowance is based on the provisions contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. It also has regard to relevant Government guidance.
- 1.2 A year, for the purposes of the Scheme, starts on 1 April and ends on 31 March.

Allowances Payable

Basic Allowance

- 1.3 A basic allowance of £2,472 is payable to each Member of the Fire Authority and is the same for all. Any Member appointed for part of a year is paid on a pro rata basis.
- 1.4 The allowance is paid as recognition of the requirement for Members to attend meetings of the Authority as part of their duties and to recompense for out of pocket expenses incurred and other ancillary work.
- 1.5 The basic allowance is subject to Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

Special Responsibility Allowances

- 1.6 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) are additional payments made to recognise the greater responsibilities required by some roles on the Fire Authority and are of varied amounts.

Role	Allowance per Annum £
Chairperson of CFA	10,818
Vice-Chairperson of CFA	5,409
Leader of a Political Group (except where the Group includes either or both the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Fire Authority)	2,493
Chairperson of Panels	1,994
Panel membership for Policy & Resources, Scrutiny & Audit (and their respective Working Groups) and Urgency Panels	860

The Local Pension Board (equivalent to half the Special Responsibility Allowance for membership of a Panel)	430
An Independent Chair of the Local Pension Board (equivalent to half the Basic Allowance)	1,236

1.7 Each Member may only receive one SRA. If a Member is appointed to more than one post carrying different SRAs then they will receive the greater amount.

1.8 SRAs are subject to Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

2 Travel and Subsistence Allowances

2.1 These claims are payable in respect of the following approved duties:

- a meeting of the Authority or any of its Panels or Working Groups;
- a meeting of a bodies (or a committee or sub-committee of such a body) to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations;
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the Authority, or any of its Panels or a joint committee of the Authority and any other authority; and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited;
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the Authority is a member;
- a visit or tour for Members of the Authority area;
- training sessions, Members Seminars and visits arranged for the better performance of duties and responsibilities or to enable better understanding of the Authority's functions;
- any duty including Officer Panels which have a single (or more) Member(s) of the Authority on them, Member briefings, Group meetings with the Chief Fire Officer or other Officer of Authority, Chairpersons' visits to Stations, Chairpersons' attendances at major incidents, Chairpersons' visits to organisations pursuant to the Authority's business.

Travel Rates

Car Mileage Allowance	45p per mile
Bicycle Allowance	20p per mile
Motorcycle Allowance	25p per mile

- 2.2 Fuel receipts must be provided alongside a completed claim form in order to be valid. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.

Passengers

- 2.3 An additional allowance of 5p per mile per passenger (in addition to the standard mileage allowance) is payable for conveying another Member or an officer to the same event which is an approved duty.

Car parking

- 2.4 Members can be reimbursed for car parking charges by completing the relevant section of the travel claim form. Claims for such charges will only be paid when supported by a valid receipt. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.

Public Transport

- 2.5 When travelling by train or coach Members should obtain a ticket at the most preferential rate available and reclaim the expense. Either the ticket or receipt must be attached to the claim. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.
- 2.6 Taxi fares may be claimed but only in cases of urgency or for meetings outside normal working hours (8.30 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.) where there is no suitable public transport available or for those Members suffering from mobility problems where it is left to the discretion of the Chief Fire Officer. A receipt must be produced in order to make a claim.

Subsistence Rates

- 2.7 Subsistence may be claimed in exceptional circumstances. If a Member believes that they are like to undertake a duty that will require a subsistence claim to be made they must contact Democratic Services in advance.
- 2.8 Members are not entitled to claim subsistence to the extent that suitable accommodation is provided for them while they are undertaking the

approved duty. Accommodation will be booked for Members and the Authority will pay direct.

- 2.9 If a subsistence claim is approved and submitted receipts must be provided in order for the claim to be paid. Members must provide these when submitting a claim form. If a receipt is not provided, claims for Subsistence Allowance will be subject to deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance.

Day Subsistence

- 2.10 The subsistence rates applied to LGS support are also applied to Members also. The rates below are the maximum that can be claimed. Eligibility is based on the time of day meals are taken and time away from home, as follows:

Breakfast	More than four hours absence before 11.00am	£6.13
Lunch	More than four hours absence including 12 noon – 2.00pm	£8.47
Tea	More than four hours absence including 3.00pm – 6.00pm	£3.34
Evening Meal	More than four hours absence ending after 7.00pm	£10.49

Overnight Subsistence

- 2.11 If an overnight stay is required, subsistence for bed and breakfast may be claimed up to a maximum of:

London/Conference Rate	Not exceeding	£180.00
Standard Rate	Not exceeding	£90.00

- 2.12 For overnight stays, up to £21.62 can be claimed for an evening meal. Receipts must be produced for all subsistence claimed.

3 How to Claim

- 3.1 There is no need to claim the basic flat rate allowance or any special responsibility allowances these are paid automatically.

- 3.2 Claims for Travel and/or Subsistence Allowance should be submitted monthly on the standard forms. These forms can be requested from Democratic Services and must be returned by the 7th of that month to ensure they are in your monthly allowance payment.
- 3.3 Claims should be submitted no later than 2 months after the date of the duty attended. Claims over 6 months old will not be paid, unless the express approval of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is obtained.
- 3.4 Members must ensure that all claim forms are completed correctly and in full and all relevant receipts are attached. It is your responsibility to fill in the details of the meetings and the amounts that you are claiming for travel or subsistence. You must also ensure that the meetings in question are eligible for such allowances as listed in section 1. When you sign your claim form you are declaring that all the information is present and correct. Any incomplete claims will be returned to you.
- 3.5 Claims for Travel Allowance are subject to deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance for journeys between home and ESFRS Headquarters (designated place of work) but not for journeys to/from other locations.

4 How allowances are paid

- 4.1 One-twelfth of the basic allowance and any special responsibility allowance is paid each month together with any travel and subsistence allowances which have been claimed. Payment is made direct to a bank account and a payslip showing a breakdown of pay and deductions is provided electronically.

5 Election not to receive payment

- 5.1 A Member may elect to forgo entitlement or any part of their entitlement to allowances under the Scheme, by notifying the Chief Fire Officer in writing. In practice this relates to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance, which are the allowances which will otherwise be paid automatically.

6 Dependents' Carers' Allowance

- 6.1 It is outside the powers of the Authority to approve Dependents' Carers' Allowance. However, it is possible for the Constituent Authorities to pay Dependents' Carers' Allowance to Members of the Authority in limited circumstances. Members should contact their Constituent Authority to find out if they are entitled.

7 Tax and Insurance

- 7.1 It is Members responsibility to satisfy themselves personally that their tax and insurance arrangements are in order and they should consult their own advisers as they think fit about these matters.

8 Statutory Sick Pay

- 8.1 Provided certain requirements are satisfied, Members can claim Statutory Sick Pay from their respective Constituent Authority to whom they should approach for further details as being the primary employer in this respect.

9 Social Security Benefits

- 9.1 The receipt of allowances may affect Members who are receiving Social Security Benefits. All allowances should be declared to the DWP who will be able to advise Members about the way in which allowances affect benefits such as Income Support.
- 9.2 Members should note that failure to disclose any allowances to the DWP may result in prosecution.

10 Insurance

- 10.1 The Authority provides some insurance cover for Members when they are engaged on business which relates to their activities for the Authority. The insurance does not cover Party Political activities.
- 10.2 The insurance covers certain risks in the following broad categories:
- Public Liability
 - Officials Indemnity
 - Libel and Slander
 - Employers Liability
 - Personal Accident Insurance
 - Business Travel Insurance.
- 10.3 For further details relating to the extent of this cover Members should contact the Fire and Rescue Service's Finance Manager.

11 Updating of Allowances

- 11.1 The rates of basic and special responsibility shall be upgraded by using the national headline increase applied to Local Government Support (LGS) staff.

- 11.2 The upgrade shall take effect on and from 1 April, based upon the headline increase of the previous year's national pay award for LGS staff.
- 11.3 The Chief Fire Officer shall keep the travel and subsistence rates under review
- 11.4 The Policy & Resources Panel shall monitor this and other Combined Fire Authorities' (CFAs) allowance schemes to ensure that it remains equitable and fair.

SECTION E2 (a)

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- A. [Access to Information legislation relating to meetings](#)
 - i. [Exempt/confidential information](#)
 - ii. [Publication of agendas, notices and reports for meetings](#)
 - iii. [The Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 \(section 40 – Access to Local Government meetings and documents\)](#)
 - iv. [The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 \(SI 2014 No. 2095\)](#)
- B. [Accounts](#)
- C. [Reports of the Local Government Ombudsman](#)
- D. [Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004](#)
- E. [Additional Rights of Elected Members](#)
- F. [GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018](#)

Responsible Officer	Section Issued	Section amended/updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement	December 2014	December 2016 July 2019 September 2021	

A. Access to Information legislation relating to meetings of the Authority

The Local Government Act 1972, (amended by the Access to Information Act), sets out the rights of access to meetings, agenda and papers, both for members of the public and elected Members.

Detailed information about this legislation relating to local authority meetings can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/part/VA>

i. Exempt/confidential information

The Authority may exclude the public, (including the press), from a meeting whenever it is likely that there would otherwise be a disclosure of exempt information to the public.

The descriptions of Exempt Information are:

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes -
 - a) To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b) To make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Information which falls within any of these paragraphs is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The public and press must be excluded from a meeting when it is likely that confidential information would be disclosed in breach of the obligation of confidence. Confidential information is that which has been provided on a confidential basis by a government department and information the disclosure of which has been prohibited by statute or by Court Order

Whenever it is likely that a report contains exempt (or confidential) information, the relevant report on the agenda will specify the particular paragraph(s) of the exemption that should be applied, and the approval of the Fire Authority or Panel will be sought to exclude the press and public during consideration of those reports.

Members are reminded that in law, and also under the Code of Conduct for Members and the Authority's Standing Orders, they should not disclose any information that is deemed to be exempt from publication, or which is confidential.

Members are also reminded of the need to comply with the Data Protection Act requirements and not disclose any personal information.

Information about Members' need to maintain confidentiality is covered in the Member Code of Conduct.

ii. Publication of notices, agendas and reports for meetings

The Local Government Act 1972, (amended by the Access to Information Act), also sets out requirements about the publication of notice of meetings, as well as agenda and reports.

Written time and place of the meeting must be given at least five clear working days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, and Bank and Public Holidays), before the meeting, or if the meeting is convened at shorter notice, then at the time that it is convened. A copy of the agenda and reports must also be available at least five clear working days before the meeting. A reasonable number of the agenda and reports is always made available at meetings to which the public may attend.

The press and public also have a right to inspect agenda, reports and minutes (that do not contain exempt or confidential information), for a period of up to six years. They may also inspect any background papers referred to in reports, as soon as the reports are published, for a period of up to four years. Any request to inspect documents should in the first instance be made to Democratic Services.

iii. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (section 40 – Access to Local Government meetings and documents)

Amendments have been made to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 that allow members of the press and public to film, photograph or make sound recordings of proceedings at a meeting of the Authority or its Panels/Committees. This includes the use of social media such as tweeting and blogging to report the proceedings of all meetings that are open to the public. It is advisable that anyone wishing to do so informs Democratic Services (democraticservices@esfrs.org) so that reasonable facilities may be provided.

Any person can provide a written commentary during a meeting as well as an oral commentary outside or after the meeting. The rules do not permit oral commentary to be provided during a meeting as this would be disruptive to the good order of the meeting. The Authority may require any such recording to stop if at any stage the meeting becomes a private meeting.

The law of the land applies, including the law of defamation and the law on public order offences. Freedom of speech within the law should also be exercised with personal and social responsibility, showing respect and tolerance towards the views of others.

The regulations can be found at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2095/contents>

Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-and-accountable-local-government-plain-english-guide>

iv. The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (SI 2014 No. 2095)

Recording of Officer Decisions

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 introduce new requirements regarding officer decisions. With effect from 6 August 2014, certain Officer decisions have to be recorded and published. The record of the decision has to include prescribed information.

This depends on whether the officer decision is taken under specific express authority or general authorisation. Specific express authority is authority given to an officer by a resolution of the Authority or a Panel (committee). This

is ad-hoc authority for an officer to take action or make a decision on behalf of the Authority. It is not ongoing, permanent authority to be exercised as and when needed. General authorisation is authority given to Officers under the scheme of delegations to Officers, which forms part of the constitution.

Any decision taken under specific express authority always has to be recorded and published irrespective of how important it is.

If an Officer decision is taken under general authorisation, the decision needs to be recorded if it falls under one or more of the following 3 categories:

- a) granting a permission or licence;
- b) a decision that affects the rights of an individual; or
- c) a decision that involves the award a contract or incurring of expenditure which materially affects the Authority's financial position.

Officer records have to include:

- The date the decision was taken;
- The decision taken along with the reasons for the decision;
- Details of alternative options considered;
- If the decision was under specific authority, the name of any Member who declared an interest at the meeting when the authority to the officer was granted.

There is no requirement to publish confidential or exempt information. This would be decisions covered by the category of exempt information (the same categories used for Authority/Panel reports.) There is no requirement to issue a record of a decision under the regulations if there is existing legal requirement to record and publish the decision with reasons.

The regulations require the record to be produced as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision is made. Failure to produce a record could be the subject of legal challenge or a complaint to the Ombudsman. Refusing to provide written records on request or refusing access to background papers is an offence under the regulations.

The regulations can be found at
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2095/contents/made>

B. Accounts

Any Member of the Authority, and any local government elector within the area of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, may inspect the

accounts of the Fire Authority. Under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, they may also inspect documents related to the accounts, such as all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts, provided that this does not contain personal information. Further details about the accounts can be obtained from the Treasurer.

For further information about people's rights to see the accounts, see www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-local-councils-more-transparent-and-accountable-to-local-people/supporting-pages/peoples-rights-to-see-council-accounts

C. Reports of the Local Government Ombudsman

The Commission for Local Administration, which runs the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO), was set up under the Local Government Act 1974 (amended in 2007). The LGO is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. The LGO has the same powers as the High Court to obtain documents, and although the LGO's decisions cannot be appealed, they can be challenged in the High Court on a point of law. The LGO may make recommendations relating to the complaint, but the LGO has no powers to enforce any action. The findings of the LGO are published, but the people in the report are not identified, and the LGO has discretion not to publish in certain circumstances. Findings are published no earlier than three months after the date of the decision.

Elected Members and members of the public can inspect the reports of the LGO on the Local Government Ombudsman website, along with information about how this service operates at: <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>

D. Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004

The aim of this Act is to encourage more open and accountable government by establishing a statutory general right of access to official records and information held by public authorities.

The public has the right under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request, in writing, information held by the Authority. The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 enables the public to make requests (not necessarily in writing) for information. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has a history of openness in terms of providing information to whoever seeks it. Provided the rights of the individual employee or service user are protected, and personal information is not disclosed, we should be able to respond to all reasonable requests.

The Freedom of Information Act requires all organisations to adopt and maintain a publication scheme that sets out key corporate documents that are available on request. The East Sussex Fire Authority publication scheme has been adopted and is published on our website at: <http://www.esfrs.org/freedomOfInformation/>.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is an independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals. In addition to providing guidance to organisations and the public, the ICO works closely with the Ministry of Justice and can take action against organisations who fail to comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation and guidance, including the Data Protection Act, Environmental Information Regulations and Freedom of Information Act. The ICO's action can include, amongst other things, issuing enforcement notices, criminal prosecutions against individuals and organisations, and imposing fines, which can be substantial.

Information on the Freedom of Information Act is available on the Information Commissioner's website at: www.ico.org.uk

Members are reminded that information held by them in their capacity as a Member of the Authority would be disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act, (subject to it not being personal data or confidential data), and Members are asked to appropriately destroy data as soon as possible. Further information and assistance with destroying documents can be obtained from Democratic Services.

E. Additional Rights of Elected Members

Elected Members of the Authority may have rights under common law to inspect such documents held by the Authority as are reasonably necessary for them to perform their duties.

Additionally, the following rights are given to elected Members:

- i. Any document in the possession or under the control of the Authority which contains material relating to any business to be transacted at a meeting is open to inspection by a Member of the Authority subject to (ii) below:
- ii. Where a document discloses certain specified categories of exempt information it need not be open to inspection by a Member. These categories relate mainly to personal information relating to crime or legal proceedings, or matters concerned with negotiations or industrial relations.

A Member must have good reasons for access. Generally, when a Member of the Fire Authority needs access, membership of the Authority will give him or her a good reason for access to all ESFRS records irrespective of their categorisation, but subject to the preservation of confidentiality by the Member. In other respects, the entitlement of Councillors to access is the same as that of ordinary members of the public. Councillors do not have the right to a “roving commission” to go through ESFRS records. Information is provided on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Members are also referred to Standing Order 34 (Inspection of Documents). Members can make application to the Monitoring Officer to inspect any document that has been considered by a Panel of the Authority so long as it is for the purpose of carrying out their duty as a Member.

Members should not knowingly inspect or ask for documents relating to a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or any other interest required to be disclosed under the Authority’s Code of Conduct for Members.

F. GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018

Personal data is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data includes any information about a living identifiable individual, including their name, address, phone number, E-Mail address, and any other information about the individual. Any organisation holding paper or electronic data that relates to identifiable living individuals must comply with the legislation. This will include data held by Members.

Personal data is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data includes any information about a living identifiable individual, including their name, address, phone number, E-Mail address, and any other information about the individual. Any organisation holding paper or electronic data that relates to identifiable living individuals must comply with the legislation. This will include data held by Members.

Members must ensure that they do not retain any personal data about individuals either in paper or electronic form any longer than is necessary, and must ensure that they do not release any information about individuals. Further information about the implementation of the GDPR & Data Protection Act can be obtained from the DCFO. Democratic Services can assist with the destruction of documents.

Information on the GDPR & Data Protection Act is available on the Information Commissioner’s website at: www.ico.org.uk

Section E 2 (b)
Guidance for Members on Correspondence

GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS ON CORRESPONDENCE
including SOCIAL MEDIA

Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director Planning & Improvement (Communications & Marketing Manager)	December 2021		

Section E 2 (b)

Guidance for Members on Correspondence

Introduction

The increasing prevalence of email and social media, with its potential for communications to be received instantaneously, has increased pressures on elected Members. The ease with which multiple emails may be sent – and additional parties copied in – has resulted in far greater volumes of communications being sent, not all of which necessarily require each recipient to respond individually. This guidance aims to clarify what may reasonably be expected of Members in relation both to correspondence received by email and also – where Members choose to use it – in relation to Social Media.

This Guidance does not impose additional requirements on Members over and above those specified in the Code of Conduct for Members. Instead it offers guidelines to assist Members in staying within the rules.

Key principles

The fundamental principle is that the same standards of behaviour and conduct are expected of Members online as are required offline. In other words, members are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct in all areas when acting in their capacity as Members, whether they are doing so by email or online, via social media or in person. Members are welcome to contact the Monitoring Officer at any time if they have any queries regarding any aspect of the regulatory framework which binds them.

A MEMBER CORRESPONDENCE – BOTH HARD COPY AND EMAIL

Key expectations:

Member discretion

It is for each Member to judge the particular circumstances of any communication and to act in a way which is proportionate and respectful. While it is for each Member to decide whether a particular communication necessitates a personal response from them, such a response may only be reasonably be expected where the communication they receive relates to matters of relevance to their duties as a Member.

Multiple recipients

Stakeholders may expect a response to every direct communication they send to an individual Member. However, the volume of communications received by Members (particularly via email) means that this is not always possible - nor may it be necessary. In a situation where more than one Member and/or officer have been joined into an email, then it will be for each individual Member to decide whether they need to respond personally rather than allowing a fellow Member or officer to respond on behalf of the Authority, as that person sees fit.

Section E 2 (b) **Guidance for Members on Correspondence**

'Cc'd'-only emails

In any case where a Member is only 'copied' or 'cc'd' into an email as opposed to being a primary recipient of it, then the following applies:

- Members may (depending on workloads) need to prioritise those emails which are directed to them as primary recipient. This may mean that they do not read all emails which they are merely copied or 'cc'd' into.
- In any case, the normal expectation is that Members will not be expected to respond individually to emails which they have only been cc'd into.

Managing expectations via automated messages

Members are in any event encouraged to make use of automated 'out of office' tools to manage expectations, especially where there is likely to be a delay to their normal response times due to holidays, illness or workloads.

It is recognised that on occasion Members may find themselves overwhelmed by a sheer volume of correspondence, particularly when a controversial issue arises. A delay in replying caused by unmanageable volume of correspondence or an occasional failure to respond would not normally constitute a breach of the Member's Code of Conduct. However, Members should be aware that repeated failure to respond promptly or at all to substantive correspondence directed at them individually which meets the criteria above could amount to failure to treat people with respect and/or be deemed to be conduct which brings their office or the Authority into disrepute.

Repetitious or otherwise inappropriate communications

It is also recognised that some correspondents – whether because they do not receive the reply they are seeking, or for some other reason - repeat the same request or points in a series of emails or letters, continuing the conversation (and on occasion cc'ing in other parties) after the Member has made their position clear. In this situation, it is for the individual Member to decide on a reasonable course of action. This may involve deciding not to respond further: a decision which is normally taken after they have first made their position clear to the other person and informed them that they consider the conversation to be at an end.

Similarly, the expectation of respectful behaviour applies to all parties in a conversation. Members are not expected to engage or to continue to engage in exchanges in which the other party/ies is acting in a way which is disrespectful, abusive or otherwise inappropriate. In such a situation, they will normally be expected to send a single communication indicating that they are not minded to engage giving brief reasons. This is however at the individual Member's discretion and there may be

Section E 2 (b)

Guidance for Members on Correspondence

circumstances where the other person has behaved in such a way that no response can reasonably be expected.

B SOCIAL MEDIA

Members are not required to set up any kind of social media account and are free to communicate and engage however they wish to. However, these guidelines will be relevant to any Member who is using or planning to use social media in connection with their work as a Member, or who is already using it another capacity (including in their private capacity).

Members are not expected to maintain any kind of social media presence in their capacity as Members of the Fire Authority and retain discretion re. how they communicate with others in the discharge of their functions. Where they do choose to maintain a social media account in that capacity, they are not expected to monitor information posted on other forums or to respond to posts or messages within specific timeframes/ at all. Where they do choose to use social media to engage on an occasional basis, this is not to be read as creating an expectation that they will monitor responses on a regular basis or at all.

Potential issues

- While any form of communication is capable of being misunderstood, the rapidity of social media exchanges can lend itself to problems.
- “Misfiring”, or being misunderstood, particularly where comments are perceived as being controversial, may lead to rapid circulation and therefore escalation.
- Although social media lends itself to a conversational tone, posting comments is still publishing as it creates a written record. It is therefore important that online content is accurate, informative, balanced and objective.
- While Members are free to communicate politically in appropriate contexts, it is recommended that they do not post anything that they would not be comfortable justifying at a public meeting.
- Where Members use social media to make comment (whether political or otherwise) about an individual or organisation, it is recommended that they alert that person to their comment by ‘tagging’ them (or otherwise alerting them) so that they are aware of the post. This ensures that they are identified correctly as well as giving them the opportunity to respond.

Section E 2 (b)

Guidance for Members on Correspondence

Legal issues

- **Prosecutions and Criminal Investigations**

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) is involved in both bringing criminal prosecutions in its own right and assisting other agencies including the police with criminal investigations. Comments on these or related topics could lead to contempt of court and other legal complications. Members are therefore advised not to comment outside of the official statements issued by ESFRS/its partners.

- **Libel**

If Members publish an untrue statement about a person which is damaging to their reputation, that person could initiate an action for libel. The same thing may happen if, for example, someone else publishes something libellous on a Member's social media page and they do not take swift action to remove it. A successful libel claim would be costly to defend and could result in an award of damages.

- **Copyright**

Placing images or text on any site from a copyrighted source (for example extracts from publications or photos), without obtaining permission, is likely to breach copyright laws. Again, a successful claim for breach of copyright would be likely to lead to an award of damages.

- **Data Protection**

Members are data controllers in the eyes of the ICO insofar as the personal data which they hold on ward or division business (in their capacity as members of their constituent authorities) is concerned. Members must in any event have regard to the requirements of current Data protection legislation and amongst other things must not publish the personal data of individuals without their express permission.

- **Bias and Predetermination**

If Members are involved in making planning, licensing or other quasi-judicial decisions, it is important that they do not indicate via any media that they have made their mind up on an issue that is due to be formally decided upon. While a Member's likely view on a particular application may be well known, only those Members who are able to show that they have attended the panel or hearing prepared to take on board and weigh all the evidence and arguments, and are genuinely persuadable to a different view, should be taking part in Fire Authority decision-making. If not, then the decision may be challenged. Where a person

Section E 2 (b)

Guidance for Members on Correspondence

has suffered some sort of detriment as a result of an invalid decision, they may have a claim against the Authority for damages.

‘Acting as a Member’ and the Issue of Blurred Identities

- The key to whether an individual Member’s online activity is subject to the Code of Conduct is whether they are, or even just appear to be, acting in their capacity as a Member of the Fire Authority rather than as a private individual.
- Members may have “blurred identities” in a situation where they maintain a social profile which sees them comment both as a Member and as an individual (which may or may not involve making political statements). Although Members may be clear that they are acting in a private capacity, it may be less clear to others.
- One way of avoiding blurring the lines between an individual’s personal (or political) communications and those they make in their capacity as a Member of the Fire Authority is to consider maintaining an online account as a Member which is entirely separate from that where the same individual communicates in a personal capacity. This is a decision for each Member and some Members may find the convenience of having one account outweighs the advantages of two or more accounts, which in any event may only be created and maintained where doing so doesn’t breach the relevant social media platform’s terms and conditions. The Communications team will assist if specific advice is needed.

Recommendations for Social Media use by Members

- Members will need to consider setting appropriate privacy settings – especially if they have a private, non-political blog.
- Members need to monitor their social media accounts for defamatory or obscene posts from others and remove them as soon as possible to avoid the perception that they condone such views.
- The potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication via social media is increased, and Members may wish to bear this in mind.
- Where Members feel it to be necessary to ‘block’ an individual from communicating with them, whether because the communication has crossed the line and is considered to be abusive or for some other reason, then members are expected to be mindful of the need to be clear and transparent in their actions. This may (depending on the Member’s assessment of the situation) involve communicating directly with the individual and informing them of the decision and of the reasons for it.

Section E 2 (b)

Guidance for Members on Correspondence

- Members are asked to consider keeping their personal and Member profiles on social networking sites separate as a means of maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- Members are expected to ensure they use the Authority's facilities appropriately and to bear in mind the likelihood that posts about the Fire Authority, or which use information accessed in their capacity as a Member of the Authority are likely to be viewed as made in their official capacity. Any requests to use fire stations and other ESFRS premises must be submitted to the Communications team in the first instance.
- While Members may wish to make political points, it is recommended that they take care not to be too specific or personal if referring to individuals. An attack on individuals may be seen as disrespectful, whereas general comments about another party or genuine comments on policy are less likely to be viewed as disrespect.
- Where Members do make a personal or a political comment about an individual or organisation on social media, it is recommended that they 'tag' them in their post. As well as identifying the correct person, this practice alerts the other party to the comment and gives them the opportunity to reply to it.
- Members are advised not to request or accept an ESFRS employee, volunteer, Cadet or contractor providing services to the Authority as a "friend" on a social networking site when they are using their personal accounts. This suggests close personal association. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not apply to sites which are intended as a neutral, professional connections registry (such as LinkedIn or ESFRS-registered accounts, a list of which is available from the Communications team.)
- Members are encouraged to share messages about incidents and prevention from official ESFRS sources. They are encouraged to undertake ESFRS media training to ensure that sensitive information is handled correctly.

CONCLUSION

This Guidance aims to assist Members in avoiding the various risks associated with the types of communication in scope. The Monitoring Officer and the Communications Team are happy to help Members by providing additional advice and guidance as appropriate.

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SECTION E 2 (c)

LEGISLATION

The following legislative extracts designed to assist Members both with regard to their individual duties and responsibilities and with regard to procedural matters and are posted to our website at: <http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/constitution>

Summary of Extracts

1. The East Sussex Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996
2. Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004
3. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
4. Civil Contingencies Act 2004

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ESFRS Estates Strategy 2018-2025



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



Contents

1.	Foreword - Chief & Chair	P4
2.	Introduction	P6
3.	Strategic Context	P7
4.	Strategy Considerations	P8
5.	Scope	P9
6.	Our Estate	P11
7.	Current Estate Assessment	P12
8.	Ensuring the Optimum Estate for Future Needs	P14
9.	Income Generation	P14
10.	Project Delivery Priority	P15
11.	Governance of the strategy	P15
12.	Financial implications	P16



The Fire Authority is proud to continue its work to make our communities safer by:

- Delivering high performing services
- Educating our communities
- Developing a multi-skilled, safe & valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resources.

This commitment is underpinned by delivery of the 2018-2025 Estates Strategy.

The Estates Strategy marks a new chapter in how we manage the Authority's estate. Our estate is at the heart of everything that we do, and delivery of the Strategy will transform how we use our portfolio. It is where we deliver our services from, where we work, where we engage with our community and increasingly where we collaborate with our partners.

The Strategy sets challenging targets for improving the condition and functional suitability of our buildings and for having a positive impact on the environment. With this Strategy, appropriate investment can be properly targeted and I look forward to seeing continued improvement and development of an estate which, for the Authority, is key to transforming the way we operate and collaborate to improve efficiency and deliver the best service we can to the community we serve.

John Barnes
Chairman





The 2018–2025 Estates Strategy outlines our vision and ambition for our estate, reflecting our commitment to provide effective, efficient and sustainable buildings that support the work of the Fire Authority at a local and county level and that help to keep our communities safe.

Despite times of economic uncertainty, it remains important to invest in our community buildings and we are committed to delivering this Strategy and to the implementation of best value and best practise. We will continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with partners to share buildings where improved effectiveness and efficiency can be achieved.

Our property assets are important to the Fire and Rescue Service's overall function as a base for support and operational staff, volunteers and partners, as well as being a fundamental and integral part of our community work. Our properties provide a hub for community integration and they also provide a base for our community outreach work. Along with advancements in security, technology and crucially firefighter safety, health and well-being, the Strategy will ensure that we have the best possible environment for our staff, our partners and our visitors well into the future.

Dawn Whittaker
Chief Fire Officer

Introduction

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) is seeking to ensure that the provision of the physical estate supports and improves the delivery of rescue services in a safe, affordable and cost effective way.

This 2018–2025 Estates Strategy, describes the current estate and ESFRS objectives for the future of the estate. It is an iterative document and will be reviewed annually.

The Strategy builds on work already completed over the last 12 months and has delivered the ESFRS Station Design Guide (see Appendix B) and ongoing collaborative work around the One Public Estate programme.

It sets out the general direction that the Estate will take through to 2025, the approach taken in getting there and the policies that will be applied to decision making, governance and audit requirements and it will also be the foundation for the effective management of the Estate.

It will provide the necessary agility and flexibility to adapt to changing influences and circumstances impacting on ESFRS operations.



Strategic Context

The direction of the Strategy is driven by the Organisational Purpose and its Commitments which are at the heart of everything ESFRS do.

Our purpose – We make our communities safer.

We will commit to doing this by:

- Delivering high performing services
- Educating our communities
- Developing a multi-skilled, safe and valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resources.



Strategy Considerations

The Strategy is framed by a number of key considerations:

1. Approach to efficiency

The aim of the Strategy is to deliver efficiencies and ensure value for money in a number of areas. It is planned that we will address the efficiency and operational effectiveness of our properties with regard to energy efficiency and space utilisation, but more importantly, by implementing the principles of the design guide through the capital investment programme, we will substantially increase day-to-day operational efficiency

2. Equality and diversity

ESFRS are committed to proactively approaching everything we do with fairness and impartiality, engaging and supporting all aspects of diversity in our communities. The Strategy considers equality and diversity and ensures that each element of delivery will be subject to an Equality Impact Analysis

3. Environmental impact

Environmental impact is a key consideration for ESFRS. The need to ensure that works contribute in a positive way to the environment is a guiding principle embedded in the core project briefing for each project that is taken forward

4. Sustainability

It is important that the strategic programme of works is supported by a robust delivery model.

The delivery model will be informed by the Project Management Office, with day to day delivery being managed by the core estates team and supported by the use of external consultant teams.

Further work will need to be carried out to ensure that sufficient capacity, resilience and expertise from within the estates team can be allocated for the delivery of the Strategy. We will work with partner organisations to achieve best value, both in terms of knowledge base and cost

5. Collaboration

The Strategy is underpinned by the One Public Estate Programme, proactively seeking opportunities to partner with other blue light service providers and other public bodies where beneficial for all parties

6. Measuring success

Delivering the Strategy will have an immediate and positive impact on the built estate. The success of the Strategy will be measured against the aims and objectives of the Strategy and associated KPIs, as set out in the action plan in Appendix C.

7. Performance measurement & review

Post approval of the Strategy, an Estates Strategy Delivery Board will be set up to manage and monitor the progress of the Strategy as per the action plan attached in Appendix C.

Scope

Aims & Objectives of the Strategy

The strategic long-term planning for the future ESFRS building stock is driven by the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and is also determined by future operational need. It is therefore a dynamic strategy that underpins and supports operational and corporate strategy.

In line with the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Corporate Plan and the Smarter Working principles, the Estates Strategy will ensure improvements to the property portfolio, whilst also reducing estate costs and risk.

The Estates Strategy supports the strategic Estates Objectives to:

- Provide facilities that are fit for purpose and meet future business needs with the flexibility and agility to deliver on:
 - Impact of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) including growth - ensure the estate supports operational delivery and effectiveness in line with IRMP taking account of long-term developments both housing and commercial
 - Fit for the future - provide a flexible and efficient workplace with consideration given to a safe working environment, delivering welfare requirements which support changing working practices
- Ensure effective use of our estate through:
 - Collaboration with partners - support collaboration with other blue light service providers and the wider public estate, where this improves our operational performance or the services we provide

- Smarter working - reflecting the needs of supporting IT, Training and Fleet strategies
- Reducing revenue costs - address backlog maintenance issues and improve the condition of the property portfolio
- Income generation - achieve an overall reduction in estate costs by looking at ways to maximise rental income whilst also protecting and promoting future inherent property values
- Community use - be a sustainable, environmental, safe and accessible estate for all our occupants, visitors and members of the general public that supports equality and engages with the community
- Sustainability - ensure long term value for money promoting energy efficiency and ensuring minimal environmental impact.

The action plan outlining how each objective will be delivered is set out in Appendix C.



**East Sussex**
Fire & Rescue Service
RYE
Community Fire Station
www.esfrs.org 0845 130 8855



Our Estate

The East Sussex Fire and Rescue portfolio is located across the county of East Sussex and the city of Brighton & Hove. The estate comprises 26 individual sites plus shared facilities at HQ in Lewes and The Sussex Control Centre in Haywards Heath.

The majority of the portfolio are stand-alone fire stations either purpose built or properties adapted to suit, but there are some buildings shared with other blue light service providers.

The portfolio is broadly in the right locations across East Sussex and Brighton & Hove but specialisms provided at each station and ongoing strategic locational decisions will continue to be informed by the IRMP.

Current Estate Assessment

In consultation with stakeholders across the organisation, an ESFRS Station Design Guide (Appendix B) has been developed which sets out the parameters for design and alteration of all fire stations in the county.

External consultants have surveyed all properties, under a number of headings, with compliance to the design guide being a fundamental element of the review.

The survey results have been analysed and an overview is outlined below.

Detailed information can be provided if requested. This work has been further informed by the internal Estates Intelligent Client Function resulting in a refinement of financial planning.

1. Overall estate

In terms of the overall current estate ESFRS occupy some 19,811 sqm of floor area GIA valued in excess of £45 Million.

2. Functional Suitability

Each property has been analysed against the ESFRS Station Design Guide (Appendix B).

A station-by-station assessment in percentage terms is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

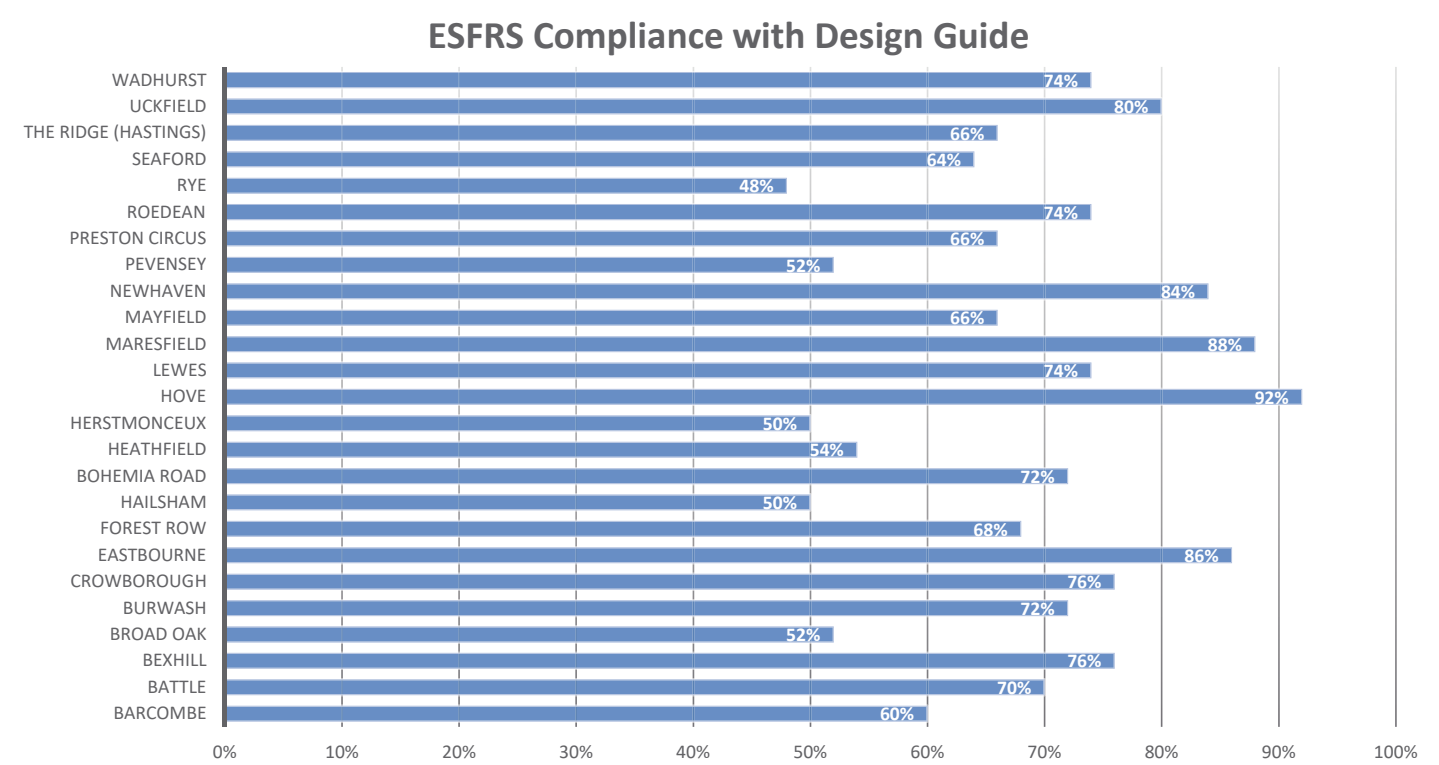


Figure 1 – % Station compliance with the ESFRS Station Design Guide December 2018.

3. Physical Condition

The physical condition profile of the estate is overall rated as Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors condition B – sound, operationally safe and exhibiting only minor deterioration.

The planned to reactive maintenance spend % is currently 60% planned and 40% reactive which is positive and reflects both the condition of the estate and the proactive maintenance plans already in place.

4. Energy Consumption

Each station was measured in terms of energy consumption assessed against nation Building Energy Rating statistics.

Annual Energy Cost in £ per square metre is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

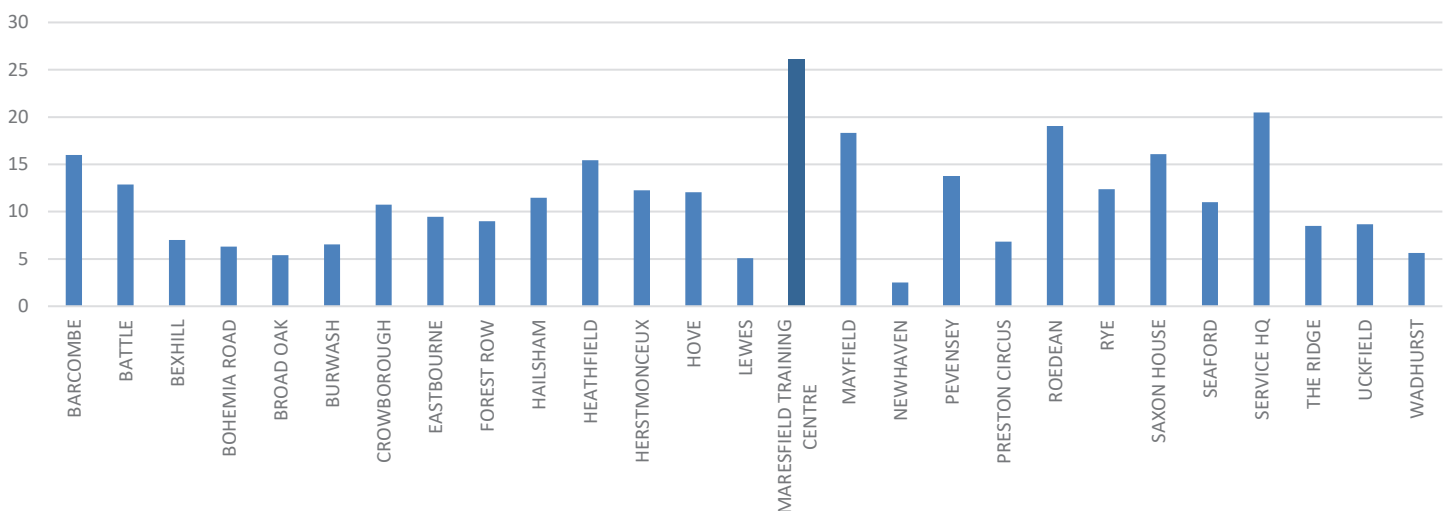


Figure 2 – Station energy consumption in £ per square metre December 2018.

Ensuring the Optimum Estate for Future Needs

The detailed survey work indicates that a spend of £4.55 million will be required over the next six years to deliver a planned preventative maintenance programme, ensure statutory compliance and improve key areas.

Over the same period £4.25 million will be required to fulfil the criteria of the Design Guide and leverage opportunities to reduce the estates cost base.

See detailed breakdown of financial implications in Appendix D.

To address this need proposed changes to the estate are generally categorised into 2 key areas.

Redevelop – Where we retain sites and no suitable alternative opportunities exist we will redevelop the sites to, where possible given physical constraints, and in consultation with end users and representative bodies, meet the parameters of the design guide and implement improvements as prescribed by the planned preventative maintenance schedule. This will ensure that we make efficient use of space and create a safe working environment, delivering welfare requirements which support changing working practices.

Sites currently in this category are: Rye, Broad Oak, Bexhill, Burwash, The Ridge, Hastings, Pevensey, Wadhurst, Herstmonceux, Hailsham, Mayfield, Crowborough, Forest Row, Seaford, Barcombe, Roedean, Preston Circus, Hove, Eastbourne and the STC at Maresfield.

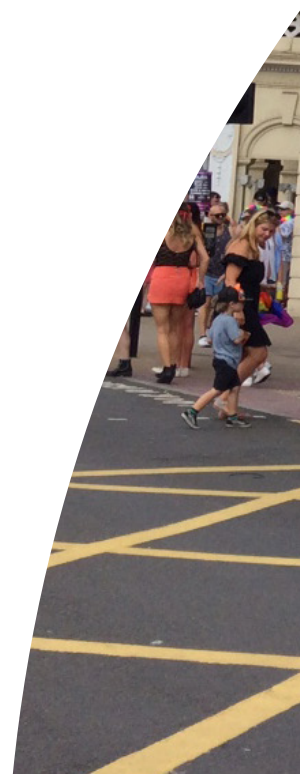
Re-provide – Where buildings are not in the right location, are costly to maintain and are incapable of being redeveloped to meet operational need, we will look to re-provide our services in a better location, ideally with partners. This will allow us to improve the services we provide, give opportunities to reduce the cost base and facilitate capital receipt.

We have already re-provided services in Newhaven and Headquarters with plans to investigate opportunities at Lewes, Battle, Uckfield, Heathfield and also a joint vehicle workshop. We currently have a vacant site in Newhaven.

Other opportunities will be assessed on a site-by-site basis as they arise.

Income Generation

The Strategy facilitates the site by site identification, in line with upgrades and partnership projects to assess opportunities for income generation for approval



Project Delivery Priority

The priority of the delivery of projects will be assessed against a weighted matrix with consideration to cost and current compliance with the ESFRS Station Design Guide, and agreed by Estates Strategy Delivery Board. The priority of delivery will also take account of build complexity and operational impact of construction activity across each Borough.

This will be a standing agenda item on the Estates Strategy Delivery Board for ongoing review.

Governance of the Strategy

The strategy will be managed, monitored and reviewed by the Estates Strategy Delivery Board. This Board will include the lead member for estates and will report to Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis and periodically to Scrutiny & Audit Panel.



Financial Implications

The financial implications of the Strategy are outlined in Appendix D.

The spend has been categorised over four key budget lines:

- General Schemes - to upgrade key station elements - £4.55m
- Investment Schemes – to deliver the station upgrades to meet the design guide - £4.25m
- Strategic Schemes – to deliver on wider initiatives - £0.83m.

Shared Investment Schemes - £4.55m

The total investment required over the six year period is £13.8m. This includes additional funding of £240,000 for the existing BA Chamber scheme which will be subject to a separate report to P&R Panel in January. When compared to the Estates Schemes in the current Capital Programme and taking account of the additional two years of General Scheme costs in 2023/24 and 2024/25 the additional cost of this investment is approximately £5.6m.

The Strategy will be funded by a combination of existing one-off resources (Capital Receipts and Capital Programme Reserve), revenue contributions from the base budget and new borrowing. Further work is needed to populate the Capital Asset Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24 and confirm the revenue impact of new borrowing (currently assumed to be an additional £150,000 each year from 2020/21).

Further work is also required to assess the potential for the investment to reduce the net running cost of the Estate by:

- Challenging the cost of Business rates
- Reducing our footprint
- Generating income primarily from sharing accommodation with partners
- Energy saving measures including increased investment in renewables
- Reducing Maintenance costs.

The target as per the action plan in Appendix C is to achieve 15-25% reduction over the five year period

Current yearly revenue expenditure = £2.427m
see Appendix E.

Target 15% reduction = £364k

Target 25% reduction = £606k





East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

Communications, Engagement and Consultation Strategy

2021-2024





Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 10
Approach to efficiency	Page 12
Environmental	Page 13
Sustainability	Page 13
Collaboration	Page 14
Measuring success	Page 15
Performance measurement, quality assurance and review	Page 15
Strategy Themes	Page 16
Theme 1 - Internal communications and engagement	Page 16
Theme 2 - Quality engagement with the community	Page 19
Theme 3 - Inclusion and Diversity in communications and engagement	Page 22
Three Year Action Plan	Page 24

Strategy Foreword

Roy Galley Chairman

Effective communication, engagement and consultation is necessary for the success of any organisation but even more so for a public service.

Our last strategy set out a focus on key protection and prevention themes of home safety, business safety, road safety, water safety and health and on continuous improvement.

This new strategy builds on the successes we have had and feeds in the learning from a wide range of activities and campaigns, including our Local Government Association co-funded behavioural insight Brighton Tribe campaign on reducing accidental dwelling fires – a national first.

It seeks to build on those foundations and enhance the way that we carry out these key functions across the whole of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and East Sussex Fire Authority.

The HMICFRS Public Perceptions survey allows us insight into how our communities view us and it is only right that we use this as a benchmark when it comes to improving our performance. On top of this we also aim to introduce new ways to ensure the voice of the public is heard when we plan our future.



Dawn Whittaker Chief Fire Officer

It is so important for both the Fire Authority and the service to engage effectively with our diverse communities.

We plan to widen our community engagement, learning from our success with events such as Pride in Brighton, Hastings and Eastbourne, the White Ribbon campaign against domestic violence, International Women's Day, International Men's Day and many more.

Neurodiversity is one new area of focus, with the service working to increase understanding that brain differences are normal, rather than deficits. This concept can help reduce stigma around learning and thinking differences.

Language barriers and barriers in accessing information can lead to perceptions that service-providers do not care, do not listen or are even irrelevant to individuals. This is not true or acceptable. We want to leave the phrase "hard to reach" behind, recognising we need to further adapt our approach to communication and engagement.

Ultimately both the service and the community will benefit, with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds contributing language skills, new ways of thinking, new knowledge and different experiences.



Strategic Context

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, along with all other public sector organisations, faces an unprecedented period of change with a drive to deliver services to the public at a significantly lower cost. The need to deliver efficiencies whilst delivering better services and retaining a high level of staff motivation and performance means we are operating in a challenging environment.

This strategy focuses on our intended response to the challenges, risks and opportunities in terms of communications and consultation and outlines our broad commitments and planned actions in the coming years.

East Sussex Fire Authority is responsible for providing prevention, protection and response services to the communities of Brighton and Hove and East Sussex.

In September 2020 the Fire Authority approved a new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the Service. An IRMP is a key planning document and describes how we will keep our residents, and those that work or travel through our area, safe over the coming years. It describes the main risks to our communities and how we are proposing to use our available resources efficiently to reduce those risks.

Key drivers and projects

These are our key drivers and projects behind our strategy.

Integrated Risk Management Plan delivery

The IRMP was approved by the Combined Fire Authority in June 2020 and a programme of work to implement the plan. It is one of the biggest change programmes the service has ever undertaken. This will require considerable communication and engagement with staff, Fire Authority members and the public.

Strategic Assessment of Risk and Station Profiles

Our Strategic Assessment of Risk helps us understand what we need to do as a service to keep our communities safe and is used to produce Community Fire Station Risk Profiles. It analyses and describes a wide array of information, how it can impact our Service and influences how we allocate and target resources for fire/home safety, business safety, road safety and water safety.

Successful communication and engagement is the foundation for this work, with community initiatives and effective evaluation.

Grenfell

With the public inquiry continuing and new legislation due in 2021, ESFRS resources are committed to delivering a wide ranging programme of changes relating to building safety. It is essential to have effective communication and engagement with staff, members of the public and the housing and building industries among others.

Our Building Risk Review programme will therefore be a priority.

HMICFRS and public survey

In 2019, HMICFRS commissioned BMG Research to undertake a study of the public's perceptions of local fire and rescue services across England. The study covers the public's views and experiences of local fire and rescue services' activities.

This highlighted the need to better explain the importance of the different roles played by the service in the community, including our prevention and protection work. The survey can be found here:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/public-perceptions-of-fire-and-rescue-services-in-england-2019/

Our inspection report also highlighted a number of areas for us to focus on which are linked to communication, engagement and consultation:

- the way it prevents fires and other risks
- promoting the right values and culture
- getting the right people with the right skills
- managing performance and developing leaders
- ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

National Fire Chiefs Council

Person-Centred approach for Home Fire Safety Visits

The NFCC believes that at the core of FRS prevention work is the explicit aim to reduce fire risk; to do this the individual or community must be at the centre of all that we do. The NFCC has endorsed a person-centred approach to prevention which encourages FRS to work in partnership with others to address the underlying causes of fire fatalities and injuries.

Equality of access

The NFCC have produced Equality of access documents to provide a range of information about different groups of people and ideas, and the actions which services could take to make a positive difference. These documents have been produced to support the NFCC plan to improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and support cultural change across the sector, promoting discussion, capturing learning and encouraging research locally and the sharing of good practice improvements across the sector.

Local Government Association peer review

In February 2020, the service invited a team from the Local Government Association to carry out a peer review of the communications function in the service. A number of the recommended actions have already been completed, with the following to be delivered in the lifetime of this strategy.

These include improvements around:

- Internal communications
- Campaigns
- Community Communications and Engagement
- Collaboration and efficiency.

Influencing behaviours and behavioural insights

The service has the opportunity to build on the success of previous behaviour change work, internally and externally. The use of behavioural insights is an established practice which requires investment of both time and other resources. It drives our understanding of risks and can positively influence cultures and behaviours internally and externally.

Financial constraints

As with all functions within Fire and Rescue Services, communications and engagement needs to be cost-effective with proven results. The Local Government Association review highlights the importance of campaign evaluation and collaboration. More than this, the service needs to demonstrate it is using the most cost-effective methods to reach the target audiences across all its communications, engagement and consultation activities.

Purpose of the Strategy

The service's purpose to make our communities safer cannot be effectively delivered without a strong and robust communications and engagement strategy which is owned and delivered across the whole of ESFRS.

The table below illustrates how this is achieved by supporting other strategies and corporate plans:

	Strategy/Plan
Delivering high performing services	Safer Communities Strategy Integrated Risk Management Plan IT Strategy
Educating our communities	Safer Communities Strategy
Developing a multi-skilled, safe and valued workforce	People Strategy Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy Estates Strategy
Making effective use of our resources	Integrated Risk Management Plan Medium Term Financial Plan Procurement Strategy Estates Strategy Collaboration Framework IT Strategy



Approach to efficiency

Every aspect of what we do in the service has to be effective and efficient due to public money – communications, engagement and consultation are no exception.

Effective communication and engagement aims to result in a change in behaviour which benefits the community and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

Successful public campaigns and education should drive down demand on the response element of our work, allowing resources to be re-allocated to other activities.

Similarly effective internal behavioural campaigns can assist in reducing undesirable behaviour which can be time-consuming to investigate.

By ensuring we are measuring effectiveness of campaigns and engagement, we will ensure how we are using public money effectively.



Environmental

We will:

- Ensure our commitment to environmental sustainability is clearly visible in all relevant communications and by making information on environmental policies and progress freely accessible to staff and the wider community to support positive behavioural change
- Provide opportunities for the community to give feedback on environmental policies and progress; there should be a two-way communication as much as possible
- Use different communication channels appropriately and creatively to demonstrate commitment to environmental issues, taking into account the environmental impact of those channels.

Sustainability

This strategy should encourage local action and decision-making, improve the sense of community and take account of and/or empower underrepresented groups.

The delivery of this strategy relies on the continuing investment not only in the Communications team, but in other functions including People Services and Safer Communities.

The strategy has been built on the premise that no additional funding will be available and that we can dial up or dial down activity based on the core funding available.

Collaboration

The duty to collaborate with local and national partners is reflected within the strategy, recognising how important it is to align messages and support each other as we all seek to improve the delivery of our community engagement and education.

Areas of focus include engagement with partners on business as usual activity to make sure the public are informed and that key safety messages have a greater impact.

This strategy relies on increasing collaboration between organisations as illustrated in the Local Government Association peer review action plan.



Measuring success

As identified by the Local Government Association review, campaign evaluation needs to improve and this will form part of this strategy's action plan.

In addition, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) will be introduced for internal communication and public engagement.

We will use mechanisms such as the HMICFRS Public Perceptions Survey and our Staff Engagement Survey to measure these as well as collating information and feedback from channels such as the After the Incident Survey and post Business Safety Inspections survey, complaints and compliments.

Performance measurement, quality assurance and review

Performance of the strategy will be reported through the following main routes:

- Project based – for example the introduction of the Leadership and Behavioural Framework
- KPI reports and campaign evaluation reports to the Senior Leadership Team
- Business Plan reports
- Continuous improvement
- Quality assurance and improvement plans from peer review/community reviews.

THEME 1 - Internal communications and engagement

Internal communications and engagement is everything that you think, feel and do with the organisation you work for, the people around you and the work that you do. Delivering good communications means that you have listened to your people, understood them and now they are sharing ideas and making positive change.

Leaders play a critical role during times of change, they need to create a line of sight and guide employees through what's ahead.

Internal communication is too important to be left to one individual or team, it is everyone's responsibility:

- We will review and enhance our internal communications framework, supporting the People Strategy with its staff engagement and leadership themes
- We will support the delivery of major change programmes in the service including the Integrated Risk Management Plan and HMICFRS inspections
- We will identify and measure against Key Performance Indicators which demonstrate whether the service is effectively communicating with its staff, Volunteers and Fire Authority members
- We will provide support for leaders at all levels where required so they can deliver against expectations in the Leadership and Behavioural Framework
- We will continue to invest in communication around the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy. We will focus on how we can improve the delivery of critical safety information, promote wellbeing champions and a positive health and safety culture, organisational wellbeing and our health and safety management systems

- We will embrace the “don’t tell me – show me” principle through the use of video, diagrams and other visual aids
- We will continue to improve internal communications and engagement around the assurance of and learning from our response activity and prevention programmes
- We will engage with and support staff networks to help with communications.

By the end of this strategy period we will be able to demonstrate progress against the KPIs set within individual projects or within the Communications team.

Our target audiences will report that they feel communications and engagement has been appropriate and effective.





THEME 2 - Quality engagement with the community

While there are almost as many definitions out there as there are people trying to define it, in its simplest terms community engagement seeks to better engage the community to achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes, processes, relationships, discourse, decision-making or implementation.

Community engagement employs a range of tools and strategies to ensure success. It also places a premium on fostering and enhancing trust as a critical element in long-term, sustainable engagement and effective governance.

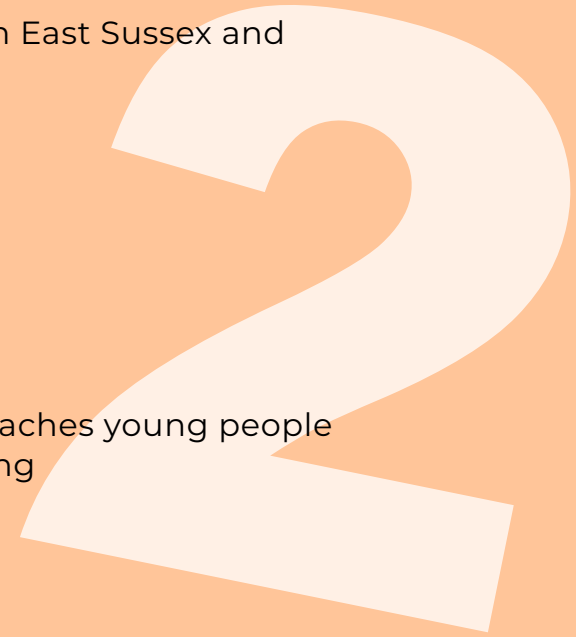
Community engagement can be complex and labour-intensive and require dedicated resources such as time, funding and people with the necessary skills.

Building on success

We already deliver a wide range of public engagement through our thematic plans of fire / home safety, road, water and business safety. These activities underpin the Directorate Plan and Prevention and Protection Strategy.

Examples include:

- Safer Business Training – aimed at small and medium sized businesses within East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, the course provides information on:
 - ▶ The Fire Safety Order
 - ▶ Fire Risk Assessment
 - ▶ Fire Prevention.
- Station Open Days and community events
- Safe Drive Stay Alive – this seeks to provide an educational experience that teaches young people not only the dangers but also the consequences of poor and dangerous driving



- 'Safety in Action' – these events encourage children to recognise hazards and take action to keep themselves and others safe:
 - ▶ We will put in place a stronger framework for engagement with the community throughout each year, exploring the potential of citizen panels, town hall meetings and other routes for sharing ideas and feedback. This will cover a range of topics including gaining insight into the public's understanding of our role and where they see we can add value
 - ▶ We will continue to promote Combined Fire Authority meetings among the public, encouraging more public questions and reporting back on outcomes
 - ▶ We will develop our post incident survey and post Business Safety Inspection feedback mechanisms
 - ▶ We will continue to ensure we effectively feedback the findings or consultations and other formal engagement, as set out above, developing ongoing relationships with new organisations.
 - ▶ We will improve our evaluation processes to allow us to sense check whether we are having an impact through communication and engagement activities, using surveys, forums and assessments
 - ▶ We will engage with community groups to get feedback on our social media and campaign work.
- We will have an improved relationship with a range of organisations
- Our target audiences will report that they feel communications and engagement has been appropriate and effective.

These will be demonstrable through our KPIs and evaluation processes.



THEME 3 - Inclusion and Diversity in communications and engagement

Inclusion and Diversity is about our commitment to be inclusive, fair and equitable to all our colleagues, Volunteers, communities and stakeholders. It is about listening and responding to all our diverse communities.

Inclusion and Diversity for us is about people being central to our work. We recognise that if we integrate the principles of equality within communications and engagement, this will ultimately contribute to improving our outcomes for our communities and internal audiences.

- We will refine and improve targeting and accessibility of our agreed communications and engagement programme for prevention and protection activities
- We will review our communications and equality guide and ensure it is launched and embedded within the service
- We will create new conversations to enhance the work of partners including the National Fire Chiefs Council, Fire Kills, Royal Life Saving Society, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute and Safer Sussex Roads. We will focus on ensuring that these are better targeted, more accessible and reflect the needs and cultures of our diverse communities
- Communications, engagement and consultation activities will support the following aims from the People Strategy:
 - ▶ Take positive action to help encourage recruitment from underrepresented groups
 - ▶ Using the benefits of diversity to better understand the communities we serve
 - ▶ Promoting cultures of dignity and respect with the public and within our workforce so that engagement may flourish, making us more flexible, innovative and create environments where people feel valued.



- Social media channels will better reflect our community and the way they wish to be engaged with.

Our target audiences will report that they feel communications and engagement has been appropriate and effective.

These will be demonstrable through our KPIs and evaluation processes.



Three Year Action Plan

Priorities for year 1

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Who is involved	Performance targets/ success measures
Carry out internal communications review including research to establish how staff and members prefer to be communicated with	Survey Summer 2021 Implement Close down April 2022	Communications Training and Assurance Ops Planning and Policy	Staff survey Feedback
Deliver internal campaign on Leadership and Behavioural Framework and appraisals framework	Quarterly updates Close down May 2022	HR and OD Communications Training and Assurance	Staff survey Feedback
Increase staff engagement through staff survey/pulse surveys and staff networks	Rolling programme linked to service needs	HR and OD Communications	Number of responses Quality of information
Refine and improve targeting of our agreed communications and engagement programme for prevention and protection activities	Confirming programme of work Sept 2021 Annual programme of work from Jan 2022	Safer Communities Communications Analysts – Community Risk Inclusion and Diversity Adviser Local community groups	Evaluation reports
Support the People strategy: Take positive action to help encourage recruitment from underrepresented groups	Summer 2021 recruitment opens	HR and OD Communications Training and Assurance Inclusion and Diversity Adviser Local community groups	Recruitment stats Evaluation
We will support the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan	As specified in project plan. Includes: Staff engagement Public engagement	IRMP Implementation Team Communications Local authorities	As specified in project plan
We will support the delivery of the HMICFRS inspection and findings	Rolling programme	SPOC for HMICFRS Communications	HMICFRS report findings

Roll out a new programme of media and communications training for station managers	Scoping Summer 2021 Autumn 2021 launch Completion Spring 2022	Communications	Feedback
Provide media training for Fire Authority members on fire and rescue service themes	Scoping Summer 2021 Autumn 2021 launch Completion Spring 2022	Communications Democratic Services	Feedback
Clarify out of hours arrangements in Communications to add more resilience, and explore opportunities for sharing responsibilities with partners	Scoping Winter 2021 Options report Jan 2022 Implementation by Spring 2022	Communications	System evaluated
We will continue to promote Combined Fire Authority meetings among the public, encouraging more public questions and reporting back on outcomes.	CFA meetings	Communications Democratic Services	Attendance numbers Numbers of questions
We will continue to ensure we effectively feedback the findings or consultations and other formal engagement, developing ongoing relationships with new organisations.	Timetable to be confirmed due to IRMP implementation	IRMP implementation team Communications	Number of participants Quality of information
We will continue to invest in communication around the Health Safety and Wellbeing Strategy. We will focus on how we can improve the delivery of critical safety information, promote wellbeing champions and a positive health and safety culture, organisational wellbeing and our health and safety management systems	Wellbeing calendar confirmed each year Channel development linked into Internal Communications Review	Health, Safety and Wellbeing team Wellbeing Group Communications	Readership numbers Staff survey

Priorities for year 2

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Who is involved	Performance targets/ success measures
We will put in place a stronger framework for engagement with the community throughout each year, exploring the potential of citizen panels, town hall meetings and other routes for sharing ideas and feedback.	Scoping April 2022 Business case June 2022 Funding approval Sept 2022 Implementation by April 2023	Communications	Attendance Engagement levels
Develop better segmentation and benchmarking of internal communications, building on internal communications review. We will identify and measure against Key Performance Indicators which demonstrate whether the service is effectively communicating with its staff, volunteers and members.	Scoping April/May 2022 Decision August 2022 Implementation dependent on budget	Communications	Engagement levels
Review social media protocols/policies for stations' social media accounts. Ensure Communications have a good understanding of all the accounts that are being used under the ESFRS name, in order to be sure they are administered consistently and adhere to the organisation's policies and guidelines.	Deliver Spring 2022	Communications	Streamlined approach Greater oversight Control measures Co-ordination improved Increased social media engagement
Contribute to the creation of external resource group	From April 2022	HR and OD Communications Inclusion and Diversity Adviser	Engagement levels Attendance Influence on service work

Review the approach to Internal and Diversity and accessibility within engagement and communications We will review our communications and equality guide and ensure it is launched and embedded within the service	Winter 2022	Communications	External review Stakeholder feedback
Create new conversations to enhance the work of partners including the National Fire Chiefs Council, Fire Kills, Royal Life Saving Society, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute and Safer Sussex Roads. We will focus on ensuring that these are better targeted and reflect the needs and cultures of our diverse communities.	Campaign calendar agreed each year	Communications Safer Communities	Campaign evaluation
Carry out audit of communications spending across ESFRS to review existing approach to commissioning campaigns	Summer 2022	Communications Finance	Report on spend able to highlight value for money
Refine and improve targeting of our agreed communications and engagement programme for prevention and protection activities.	Confirming programme of work Sept 2022 Annual programme of work from Jan 2023	Safer Communities Communications Analysts – Community Risk Inclusion and Diversity Adviser Local community groups	Evaluation
We will support the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan.	As specified in project plan. Includes: Staff engagement Public engagement	IRMP Implementation Team Communications Local authorities	As specified in project plan

Priorities for year 3

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Who is involved	Performance targets/ success measures
We will put in place a stronger framework for engagement with the community throughout each year, exploring the potential of citizen panels, town hall meetings and other routes for sharing ideas and feedback.	Programme rolled out from April 2023	Communications	Attendance Engagement levels
Refine and improve targeting of our agreed communications and engagement programme for prevention and protection activities.	Confirming programme of work Sept 2023 Annual programme of work from Jan 2024	Safer Communities Communications Analysts – Community Risk Inclusion and Diversity Adviser Local community groups	Evaluation
We will develop our post incident survey and post Business Safety Inspection feedback mechanisms.	Begin April 2023	Communications Business Services Safer Communities	Feedback from public
We will support the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plan.	As specified in project plan. Includes: Staff engagement Public engagement	IRMP Implementation Team Communications Local authorities	As specified in project plan
Provide enhanced media training for Fire Authority members on IRMP	Timescales to be confirmed – will be in line with 2024 IRMP	Communications Democratic Services	Feedback



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People Strategy

2021-2025

Page 255



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 10
Approach to Efficiency	Page 12
Environmental	Page 14
Collaboration	Page 14
Measuring Success	Page 15
Performance Management & Review	Page 16
Scope	Page 17
Our Values	Page 18
Our People Deliverables	Page 19
Our People Themes for 2021 – 2025	Page 22
Priorities for Each Theme Years 1 – 5	Page 36

Strategy Foreword

Roy Galley Chairman

I am delighted to present the People Strategy 2021 - 2025. This strategy underpins the Integrated Risk Management Plan that was approved by the Fire Authority in September 2020 and seeks to address the improvements required as identified with our Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services inspection outcome report following our inspection in 2019.

There are many challenges facing us as an organisation moving forward and this strategy seeks to support further improvements in our service performance through developing our people, equipping you with the necessary skills, abilities and behaviours to deliver in both current and changing future environments.

We need to develop our employees and our managers so that you all feel equipped to identify and implement new ideas and better ways of working, in how we do our jobs and to work more collaboratively with each other and our partners



Dawn Whittaker Chief Fire Officer

We employ just over 850 people in both full and part-time roles, some operational, some professional, but each and everyone has a key role to play in delivering our purpose to make our communities safe through prevention, protection and response .Our staff work within multi-disciplinary teams and collaborate with partners and other agencies to deliver our services to the public and we will strive for continuous improvement in the way we do that. This people strategy sets out our ambition for our employees for the next 5 years.



Strategic Context (External)

There have been a number of external reviews of the fire and rescue sector and external factors which impact on the People Strategy and have influenced the development of this strategy. These are listed below:

- The Government Fire Reform Programme
- The Thomas Review
- The National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) People Strategy
- The NFCC Leadership Framework
- The NFCC Draft Code of Ethics
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
- HMICFRS Inspection Report*
- HMICFRS State of Fire & Rescue – Annual Assessment of Fire & Rescue Services in England 2019
- NFCC Professional Standards
- Apprenticeship Levy

In addition there is significant uncertainty about future funding of local government, including the fire service, which makes planning over the short to medium term challenging

*In 2019, the HMICFRS inspection into ESFRS identified some areas for improvement within the People strand of the Inspection process

Strategic Context (External)

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, along with all other public sector organisations, faces an unprecedented period of change with a drive to deliver services to the public at a significantly lower cost. The need to deliver efficiencies whilst delivering better services and retaining a high level of staff motivation and performance means we are operating in a challenging environment. This strategy focuses on our intended response to the challenges, risks and opportunities in terms of people and outlines our broad commitments and planned actions in the coming years.

East Sussex Fire Authority is responsible for providing prevention, protection and response services to the communities of Brighton and Hove and East Sussex.

In September 2020 the Fire Authority approved a new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the Service. An IRMP is a key planning document and describes how we will keep our residents, and those that work or travel through our area, safe over the coming years. It describes the main risks to our communities and how we are proposing to use our available resources efficiently to reduce those risks.

Our People Strategy underpins the IRMP and articulates what focus we will have on our people in order to fully implement the IRMP over the next 5 years.

The latest Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP) indicates a revised funding gap of £1.7 million in 2021/22 rising to £3.0 million in 2024/5 plus there is a risk that current one off pensions grant does not continue into 2021/22 adding a further £1.7 million to the savings required each year.

This will require the Authority to adopt a more strategic approach to delivering efficiencies across all areas of the service, including our people resources. Staffing costs currently make up 75% of our total budget of £39.7m (2020/21) and this means we will need to consider how our People Strategy can contribute to this strategic approach.

Moving forward, the key drivers of this strategy are the efficient and effective use of our people and processes. We will also continue to review opportunities for collaboration.

Our Service operates from 24 Community Fire Stations, a Training Centre, Vehicle Workshops, Fire Control Centre and our Joint Service Headquarters at Lewes. Our staffing comprises:

- East Sussex Fire Control – receive emergency calls, mobilise fire appliances for firefighting, rescue and humanitarian services, and also support the management and collection of operational information. From September 2021 this service will be delivered through a collaboration with Surrey & West Sussex Fire Services.
- Wholetime and Retained Duty System Fire Fighters – based at our community fire stations they provide the key intervention responses to incidents and proactive safety advice to the community.
- Specialist Staff – who provide community fire safety advice and legislative fire safety services to the public and businesses.
- Senior operational managers and specialist advisors located at Joint Service Headquarters in Lewes.
- Support Staff – providing core services including information management, financial and procurement services, engineering services, estates management, health & safety, human resources (which includes inclusion & diversity, payroll and occupational health), training services, performance management, communications and key administration services

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) is committed to its purpose of “making our Communities safer” and it has the following commitments to support this intention:

- Delivering high performing services
- Educating our communities
- Developing a multi-skilled, safe and valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resources

Our Service values support our purpose and commitments by making sure the way we operate is guided by strong principles (page 18).

The People Strategy has a number of People Services key documents and plans that sit underneath and support this strategy, which include:

- Strategic Workforce Plan
- People Services Annual Business Plan
- Gender Pay Gap Report and action plan
- Leadership and Behavioural Framework

These documents are aligned to and derived from the Services' overarching strategic plans (the IRMP and the corporate annual plan) and have given due consideration to the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) national documents.



Purpose of the Strategy

The People Strategy is an integral part of the way we work and ownership for its delivery rests across the Service. Our staff are our most important assets. We have a wide range of professionals working in the Service, not just our firefighters but technical specialists, qualified inspectors, community safety practitioners, control room operators, analysts, IT experts, health and safety and HR advisers, communication specialists, accountants and more.

Our People Strategy (2021-2025) will support and refine the culture for the Organisation to ensure everyone who is working here now, or joins us in the future, understands our ambition, our expectations of each other and how it should 'feel' to work here.

Our People Strategy sets out our ambition and aspirations for our teams, our key workforce priorities and importantly how we aim to support and develop our workforce to deliver the very best service possible to our communities.

The strategy directly underpins the Integrated Risk Management Plan (2020-2025) and the Corporate Annual Plan, focusing on providing our talented people with the support, development and a working environment that efficiently and effectively enables delivery of our Strategic Purpose & Commitments.

This strategy is supported by the National Fire Chiefs Council People Strategy and the NFCC Equality, Diversity & Integrity Strategy and offers a response to the recommendations the HMICFRS report following our inspection in 2019 and the HMICFRS State of the Fire & Rescue Service Report published in 2019 (as well as previous reports by Sir Ken Knight 'Facing the Future', and Adrian Thomas 'Independent Review of Conditions and Service for Fire and Rescue Staff in England' report). It has been developed to support the local delivery of the Fire Authority's purpose and commitments and strategic plans including the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Integrated Risk Management Action Plan (IRMP). It draws out the main drivers for change over the next five years and the impact on our people. The delivery of this strategy will be monitored through the HR Strategic Group and through a detailed action plan, with regular reporting both to Senior Leadership Team and the Fire Authority.



APPROACH TO EFFICIENCY

There are a number of ways that the work articulated within this strategy will create efficiencies within our people both within People Services and more broadly across the Service.

Digitising our processes will enable us to consider alternative operating models both within People Services and across the Organisation. Using our systems such as Firewatch and the Business Intelligence System effectively, will ensure that managers are provided with real-time data thus providing them with the intelligence they need to better equip themselves to manage their teams and departments.

Further to that, streamlining and digitising HR processes will enable the HR department to move away from the transactional services that currently take much of their time and energy to focus on delivering strategic and value added services.

The next 5 years is heavily focussed on ensuring our managers and leaders have the necessary skills and knowledge in order for the Service to thrive in ambiguous times. Development of people management capability in all line managers is paramount in achieving efficiencies.

Fundamentally part of that journey of upskilling our managers is to ensure our people policies and processes are simple to follow and are understood by all

We continue to consider approaches to collaboration and different delivery models to ensure efficiencies can continue to be found.

This strategy can deliver financial efficiencies through reduced levels of sickness absence, support for wellbeing and by taking a more holistic approach to mental and physical health to provide resilience in the work force. Streamlining of HR processes will improve operational productivity and reduce our administrative costs.

Improvements in the Occupational Health provision will ensure better case management of absences due to injury or ill health service helping to support our staff to return to work and also mitigating any potential mental health impacts that can be associated with long term absences. Improving and contributing to employee and organisational health and wellbeing is a multi-faceted approach to support employees to remain at work, or return more quickly, whilst building individual resilience, embedding positive messaging and developing healthy lifestyle habits.



ENVIRONMENTAL

It is recognised that the People Strategy and the underpinning work can contribute in making the Service environmentally friendly. We commit to ensuring our underpinning work falling from this strategy follows the Green Human Resources Management (GHRM) approach meaning that our policies, practices, and systems stimulate an environmentally conscious behaviour across the Organisation in order to create an environmentally sensitive, resource efficient and socially responsible workplace and overall organisation. This behaviour will underpin other organisational strategies and approaches.

COLLABORATION

We do have a number of collaborations already in place, such as our joint approach to Occupational Health and Wellbeing with Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and Surrey and Sussex Police forces which started in July 2018.

We will continue to seek out opportunities for collaboration across the People Services strategy with our partners where they offer opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. We will also continue to review the collaborations we already have in place to ensure the best possible delivery solution is being achieved whilst continuing to drive efficiencies.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The success of the Strategy will be measured against the aims and objectives of the Strategy and associated KPIs, as set out in Appendix A of this strategy. We will seek an improvement in our feedback from the HMICFRS across the People Pillar and will use the inspection process to assess our improvement journey.

Further to that we will have managers that are confident in managing their staff and navigating people processes when needed and have a motivated workforce where dialogue is entered into at every level of the Organisation.

Formal management processes such as disciplines and grievances will be dealt with at a line management level and therefore, creating capacity both for our managers and our HR team.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & REVIEW

This strategy covers the period from 2021 to 2025 and will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure alignment with the Corporate Plans and other key priorities.

The Organisation has both an established Strategic HR Group and an Equality, Diversity & Integrity Group made up of key stakeholders from across the Service. The progress of the work outlined within this strategy will be scrutinised on a quarterly basis at both of these meetings to provide assurances against progress.

As part of our commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion we also have a Lead EDI Fire Authority Member that further provides scrutiny over the activity we are undertaking as well as ensuring EDI is championed at the Fire Authority.

Further to that, quarterly updates providing strategic oversight will be provided to both our Senior Leadership Team and the Fire Authority's Scrutiny & Audit Panel.

We will monitor our progress through our Staff Survey and associated pulse checks and stress surveys as that ensures we understand and act on all feedback that influences our staff morale, through our Occupational Health, HR, Training and our health and safety hazard reporting services.

We will develop Key Performance Indicators under the 7 themes of our People Strategy that can be scrutinised at the above Boards which can be found in appendix A.

SCOPE

The People Strategy supports the development of our people to enable the Organisation to deliver our IRMP (2020-2025) and the Corporate Annual Plans for the same period. This strategy will be reviewed annually against the corporate plan to ensure it remains cognisant and agile to the needs of the Organisation. Like all of our strategies, this strategy will be underpinned by annual action plans over a 5 year period.

Within the scope of this strategy, a number of internal and external challenges may influence the delivery:

- The need to make the most effective and efficient use of resources;
- Advances in technology changing how and where we can work;
- Changing workforce demographics with an ageing population;
- Changing expectations of colleagues regarding flexible approaches to work, health and wellbeing;
- Increasing competition for talent in a digital economy;
- Drive to maximize colleague engagement and empowerment;
- Political and financial uncertainty and legislative changes.

The strategy itself has been developed through an iterative process based on engagement with our Trade Union colleagues and staff networks through a series of workshops. We have also taken the opinions of over 300 staff who completed the staff survey in 2018 and the subsequent events which we held in response to the survey – information gathered through Appreciative Inquiry demonstrating a commitment to improving the engagement culture and value of the workforce's opinion.

OUR VALUES

Our values are important to us as in their simplest form they provide a psychological contract we make with everyone working here as to how they can be expected to be treated and likewise our expectations as to how they are expected to treat others.

Our values are integral to the People Strategy as they define the principles that guide ESFRS's internal culture as well as its relationships with external communities, stakeholders and partners.

Our values are further broken down into expected behaviours by all those working for or on behalf of ESFRS (ESFRS Leadership & Behavioural Framework) and the Service works alongside the NFCC to support the development of a national Code of Ethics and a set of standards for leaders moving forward.



OUR PEOPLE DELIVERABLES

Describing an ambition is one thing; delivering it is another. This strategy describes 7 strategic themes which we will focus on during the next 5 years to support and develop our staff and strengthen our capabilities as an organisation to continue to improve our offering to the communities of East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Further to that, the IRMP clearly outlines how we will use our resources and through this People Strategy ensure that we can balance our resources across the Service to reinvest in more: prevention work (e.g. home safety) protection work (e.g. business safety) and training (e.g. firefighter safety).

We have considered the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and reviewed our internal HR complaints and cases and have concluded that there is a need to have a clearer focus on behaviours internally to ensure our staff treat each other and others in a way that you would expect to see in any professional workplace.

Critical to this is a need for us to make sure our standards, policies and training support are fit for purpose to support that change. With that in mind, we are launching a Leadership and Behavioural Framework based on the National Fire Chiefs Council's national guidance. This sets out what is expected of staff and we will give our staff the resources, skills and knowledge to enable them to meet these expectations through training, engagement and one-to-one support.

We are anticipating a significant number of operational staff to retire due to changes in pension regulations and due to the fact that the operational workforce average age is 46.

This inevitably puts pressure on recruitment and training as we bring in the next generation of firefighters and upskill our current workforce to take on more senior roles.

Our interim Strategic Workforce Plan will take us through the immediate challenges we face but will be reviewed in order to take into account the impact of the agreed changes from the IRMP.

We are developing directorate, station and departmental workforce plans (for identification of required workforce specialist skills to meet community and therefore Service need) and departmental / directorate role profiles and competencies. This will strengthen our approach to workforce planning.

We will ensure that:

We all model our values and demonstrate the behaviours that actively promote a culture of empowerment, accountability, engagement and delivery.

We cultivate an inspiring leadership and management approach that focuses on providing clarity of priority and purpose, fostering an inclusive environment where all colleagues are valued and can thrive.

We are skilled, capable and innovative, delivering services of the highest standard to the communities of both East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

We are a flexible organisation capable of responding to our community needs at pace and inspiring the development of new, creative ideas and solutions that provide value to our communities.

We are recognised as a learning organisation that continually improves, confident in our knowledge and skill to respond to external drivers.

Colleagues have a clear understanding of our people priorities and will be confident that they can deliver for our communities.

The People Services Directorate works closely with leaders, managers and colleagues across the Service to deliver the People Strategy, providing consultancy, expertise and practical tools that meet the business needs through a Business Partnering model.

A set of principles (Appendix B) underpins all our people related activities and will shape how we work to support the delivery of our IRMP and the rolling Corporate annual plan.

There is a lot to do, therefore, we have devised a 5 year rolling plan outlining the work that will be completed over the next 5 years as outlined in the Priorities for Years 1-5 section of this strategy. It is important to remind ourselves that we already have some real strengths to build on, such as the commitment of our staff to deliver an excellent service to our communities as well as having some well regarded training and development programmes.

As well as changing and developing some of our processes we know that we will need to challenge and change our own mindsets and how we behave with each other. We all have a contribution to make and our everyday habits will be at least as important as our organisational processes in bringing about the change as outlined in the Measuring Success section.

OUR PEOPLE THEMES FOR 2021 – 2025

The People Strategy 2021–2025 sets out the future direction for the development of our people across the Organisation.

To ensure the Strategy achieves the People Outcomes as outlined above, the Strategy is broken down into 7 strategic themes. Each theme is supported by a number of specific initiatives and measures. The 7 strategic themes are:

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	This theme runs across all of the other themes ensuring that ED&I is fully integrated into the work that the People Services Directorate delivers
Leadership	We will develop all leaders to influence and motivate effectively, giving them the behavioural, process and business skills to effectively serve our communities. We will maximise impact through identifying and developing all our talent at every level in the organisation to perform to the best of their ability
Talent	We will ensure we attract, select, recruit, develop, performance manage and retain the right people, in the right place at the right time, doing the right things, with the optimum level of motivation
Training & Education	We will provide high quality learning outcomes for our workforce
Engagement	We will motivate our people to do the best that they can by living our values and creating a culture of trust and real engagement
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	We will ensure that we create an environment where our People are physically and emotionally sustained to enable them to give their best and to be able to be at work more of the time in order to better serve our communities
Quality	We will provide robust infrastructure and quality process, policy, procedures with a clear assurance framework to support and monitor our ability to lead our People.

THEME 1 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Working towards inclusive practice is everyone's responsibility. Evidence from [the CIPD \(2019\)](#)¹ indicates that Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) initiatives delivered in isolation do not work, they will not make workplaces more diverse or inclusive.

Inclusive behaviour allows individuals to work together effectively and creates a healthy environment for employees - it enables people, regardless of their differences, to work together effectively and avoid stereotyping. Therefore having a separate EDI strategy would not be beneficial as the other strategic themes are intrinsically linked and mutually supportive.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) is intrinsic in all that we do and should be ingrained as part of our 'DNA' as an organisation. It dovetails into and complements each theme within this People Strategy as well as mirrors the recommended approach as laid out in the NFCC Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and the NFCC Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Position Statement.

The People Strategy recognises the need for transformational change and as such supports changes needed in our fire and rescue service (FRS) to better serve our communities. One of the fundamental areas of improvement within the strategy is to:

Strengthen our ability to provide an excellent service by diversifying our staff, promoting inclusion, and creating a fair and equal place to work.



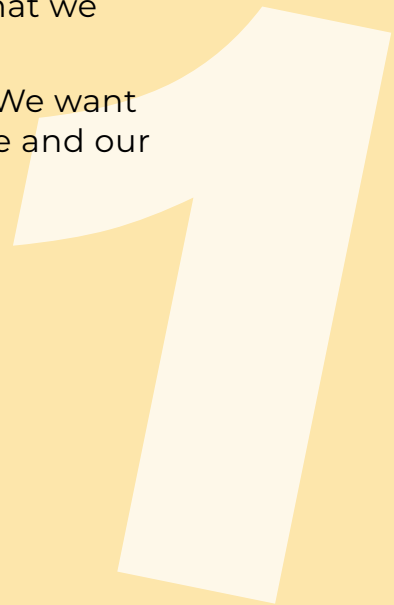
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are three principles that help to create a [fair](#) society where everyone has access to [equal](#) opportunities. Equality is about equal opportunities and protecting people from being discriminated against while diversity is about recognising respecting and valuing differences in people. Meanwhile, inclusion refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and in a wider society, and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

We value diversity and recognise that different people bring different experiences, ideas, knowledge, and culture, and that this difference brings great strength. We want people to bring themselves to work completely. We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) or unique difference (e.g. caring responsibilities) represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for a great career in the fire and rescue service.

Ultimately, it is unlawful to discriminate - In order to improve the way we deliver services to our communities, we need to ensure we have a service that is reflective of the community it serves.

We want our workforce to be more reflective of society at all levels in the organisation. Having a range of perspectives, cultures and experiences brings a greater understanding to our organisation, which contributes to decision making. We know our workforce does not reflect the communities that we serve in terms of diversity and gender.

We will take positive action to help encourage recruitment from underrepresented groups. We want to create an inclusive, welcoming environment for our employees, the communities we serve and our partners as we understand these are mutually beneficial relationships.



Why is Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) a specific theme?

- The needs, expectations and composition of our workforce and communities are changing. To address this fast pace of change we need to tackle recruitment, progression, and retention issues, and increasingly looking to innovate in order to develop more flexible, sustainable service delivery models and innovative methods of engagement.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), have identified some cultural aspects of the sector that could be improved by a more inclusive approach at individual, team, organisational and sector levels.
- The private sector has demonstrated that a more inclusive approach can bring wide-ranging benefits, and this offers fire and rescue services an opportunity to build on this learning - inclusive workplaces, increase productivity and employee engagement which in the public sector has been evidenced to correlate with outcomes thus benefitting the workforce, the organisation and the community we serve.

The vision is to ensure we continue to work towards having inclusive workplaces and services by assuring diversity and inclusion is designed into everything we do, whether that is service delivery, people development or future innovation. We know we can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our response, protection, and prevention services by:

- Using the benefits of diversity to better understand the communities we serve
- Promoting cultures of dignity and respect with the public and within our workforces so that engagement may flourish, making us more flexible, innovative and create environments where people feels valued.

THEME 2 – LEADERSHIP

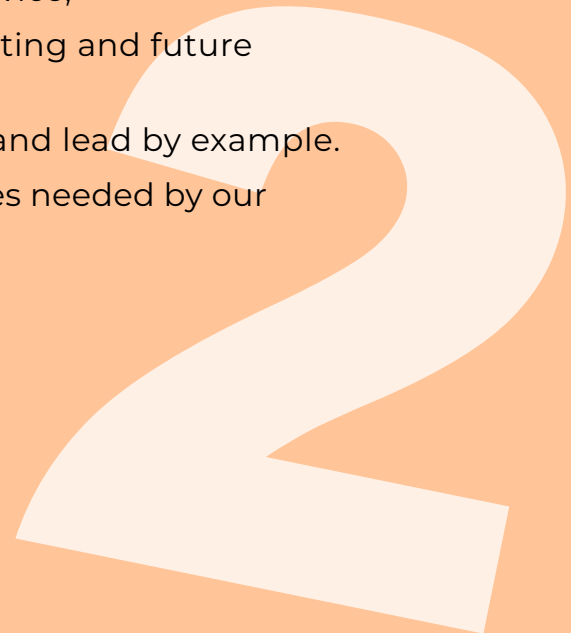
Our leaders have a critical role in achieving outcomes and supporting the effective transformation of our services. The continued development and empowerment of our leaders and managers is a key priority to ensure they promote a positive and inclusive culture; creating an environment that encourages effective engagement, open communication, empowerment and high performance

More than ever before, we need leaders who are both operationally and professionally competent as well as being capable of creating and delivering a compelling vision for the future to inspire and motivate others. We need resilient leaders who will take responsibility for continuous improvement in our performance as a public service and bring other people with them.

We need leaders who are able to collaborate across our different functions internally as well as being able to cross traditional boundaries with other agencies and businesses to deliver community leadership and achieve more efficient, effective and joined up services for the public.

Further to that we need to continue to ensure our Service design remains fit for purpose and continue to integrate services with chosen partners to ensure we can continue to provide both the best possible service and value for money to our communities that we serve.

- We will develop leadership and management skills and capacity across the Service;
- We will ensure coaching and mentoring capabilities are developed in both existing and future leaders;
- We will ensure our leaders and all our staff are visible, accessible, accountable and lead by example.
- We will develop our competency framework to identify the skills or competencies needed by our leaders to achieve the organisational objectives.



THEME 3 – TALENT

People development, talent management and succession planning are essential in addressing workforce challenges, in particular, shaping the current and future workforce to meet service needs. This People Strategy will enable improved performance management and people development through our new simplified appraisal documentation and process. Also monitoring appraisal returns to ensure that training needs are identified and incorporated in to reporting, product design, programme procurement, and actions required

- We will be flexible, creative and offer learning opportunities and solutions. We will design, develop and deliver a talent management framework for the Service. Our talent management processes and development will aim to:
- Create a tangible means of identifying, selecting and deploying outstanding talent.
- Be proactive around talent spotting, and succession planning and consider how we can develop our own internal talent pipelines.
- Become and remain responsive to changing business needs through increased capability.
- Strengthen personal accountability by making development goals clear and measurable and visible across the organisation through appraisal review.
- Strengthen the use of the apprenticeship levy to map to new role development and leadership programmes.



THEME 4 – TRAINING & EDUCATION

We are committed to providing all of our staff with high quality training and education to ensure we are prepared to tackle the challenges we are facing moving forward. The Service's IRMP articulates the reasonably foreseeable risks that we may face. This will mean training our prevention, protection and response staff to meet these risks. Where possible this will be to national best practice and aligned to a qualification framework to ensure quality assurance and audit of our training. For our support staff, this will be providing training in the skills we need now and in the future and aligned, where possible, to the apprenticeship framework and relevant professional training schemes. We will support our professional staff to demonstrate continuous professional development

We know that to facilitate training effectively there cannot be a single method of delivery. We will provide training and education for our staff in multiple formats that allow the best experience and outcome for the individual, team and Organisation. By evaluating, investing and aligning our training facilities to this strategy, we are able to focus on individual skills sets and provide the best possible training to achieve learning outcomes. This will at times require extracting individuals to be supported by enhanced facilities, qualifications and experience of instructors/trainers in order to deliver the most effective training. We will be able to define, develop and deliver training accessible and supported in the workplace ensuring our operational availability modelling through the IRMP is achievable.

Training will be prioritised using a corporate training needs analysis approach to ensure the training most needed is delivered swiftly and effective whilst ensuring it is within the cost envelope identified. We will work closely with our Procurement team to ensure best value is achieved and delivers value for money.



Our operational training will be defined through a clear competence framework providing clarity over acquisition, application and maintenance of competence. The framework defines skillsets required for competence and provides support and facilities to deliver training against clear operational performance criteria. This performance and resulting improvement of firefighter safety is assured through an appropriately supported assessment programme. The competence of our response, prevention and protection staff at all levels is a key focus of our 5 year strategy.

Internal assurance processes and National influence will inform the training content in order to continually define and achieve competence. National and Joint Operational Guidance, Learning is evaluated internally and training support refined to ensure operational training is targeted to improve competence and safety



THEME 5 – ENGAGEMENT

In order for us to meet the challenges that we face, we must ensure that staff are committed and loyal to our organisation, and that they give their very best to their roles and to the communities we serve. We want our people to be engaged in our operational strategy and also, in our culture and in living the values of our organisation. The People Strategy will support improved engagement and motivation of our staff by:

- The development and cascade of the Leadership & Behavioural Framework and training and development tool kit for leading people and leading change
- A review and refresh of our current reward, recognition and benefit schemes
- The creation of an instant pulse check system (a fast and frequent survey system) and focus on pulse check questions and results development and leadership programmes.



THEME 6 – HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

We want the experience of working for ESFRS to be a positive one, and to have a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees. Responsibility for health and wellbeing at work belongs to both employers and employees. The organisation's Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy is a supporting strategy and underpins this People Strategy, it specifically outlines how we will continue to ensure the health, safety & wellbeing of all our staff and in particular Firefighter Safety when undertaking operational (and operational training) activity.

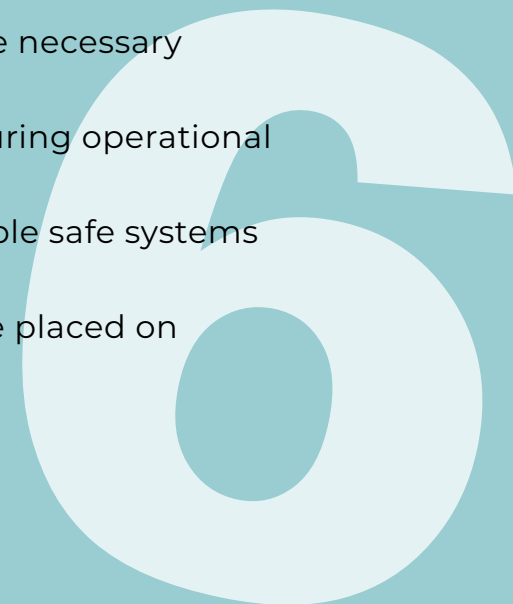
It is recognised in health and safety management that the workplace can be inherently dangerous. This is a reality for us, a number of our staff sometimes have to work in very dangerous and dynamic environments. This can sometimes include exposure to dangerous and unpredictable situations when attempting to save life and mitigate other emergencies.

We adopt the 'safe person concept' to minimise the risk. As an organisation we have a number of organisational responsibilities including:

- recruiting suitable candidates, training them appropriately and maintaining their competence
- ensuring that detailed guidance is available on how to establish a safe system of work for operational incidents
- ensuring that suitable equipment is available including fire appliances and that the necessary personal protective equipment is provided
- providing welfare arrangements for rest, recovery and replacement of personnel during operational incidents
- learning from post event debriefs in order to do things differently next time to enable safe systems of work.

The safe person principles detail the organisational responsibilities together with those placed on individuals themselves. Individuals should:

- work as effective members of a team within safe systems of work
- they should be competent and knowledgeable about hazard and risk



- they should have the personal skills and attributes necessary to remain safe, even in an environment where there may be limited controls over hazards and risks.

There are two specific Well-being strands that we will focus on over the next 5 years.

1. Contributing to the Future Health and Mental Wellbeing of all Employees

Investing in employees' physical health and mental wellbeing in order to support them in delivering frontline services. We will use the Bluelight Wellbeing Framework to identify what wellbeing initiatives we should consider and how we can continue to improve our offering to our staff.

2. Organisational Wellbeing

To develop health and safety management systems in consultation and collaboration with our staff, promoting organisational learning, openness and transparency. To develop Occupational Health systems and processes in collaboration with stakeholders, to promote organisational learning, openness and a culture of health

The key factors that we believe can determine whether workers will have a positive or negative relationship with work are:

- The relationships and communication between line managers and their people
- Whether employees are involved in organisational issues and decisions and feel empowered and involved in our organisation
- Job design and practicality, flexibility and versatility of role
- Appropriateness and volume of workload



- Availability and acceptability of flexible working
- Awareness of occupational health issues and encouragement to invest in themselves and their wellbeing.

We therefore aim to:

- Create a resilient, physically healthy and emotionally balanced Workforce.
- Educate and support our workforce to be proactive in their health and wellbeing encouraging the up-take of Wellbeing Checks to inform healthy lifestyle choices e.g. alcohol, weight reduction and smoking.
- Reduce levels of sickness absence across the Service
- Assess the effects of health on work and work on health
- support our Occupational Health service to become SEQOHS accredited
- Reduce stress and improve mental wellbeing of staff by offering education and training sessions providing knowledge and skills to equip managers and staff to have better awareness to manage and improve their mental health coping strategies e.g. resilience training, sleep management, mindfulness.



THEME 7 – Quality

It is important that managers have access to information and guidance to help them line manage their employees effectively. A number of toolkits will be developed and made easily accessible to line managers on key HR issues including sickness management, capability, flexible working, how to deal with grievances and how to manage organisational change projects successfully. The toolkits will be supported by a “quick reference guide” that will act as an easy reference tool for things like special leave, annual leave and sickness as well as frequently asked questions for each subject matter. An HR Business Partner intranet page will be developed – ensuring that the page can be easily navigated and that the toolkits and guidance documents are easy to find.

Digitisation of People processes across the People Services directorate will be an enabler to quality and ensure the Service has enabling processes for managers to navigate around.

We will use succession planning and workforce planning as a proactive process that works to address talent needs before they exist and which then cultivates internal talent to meet those needs. This incorporates linking workforce planning to business planning to inform future leadership requirements and determining the key roles that will have the greatest impact on the stability, productivity and effectiveness of the organisation.

We will:

Produce accurate, timely, meaningful data and insight to the highest quality to not only meet our statutory reporting obligations but to enable data driven conversations and decisions to take place.

Continuously review and improve our people management policies, processes and experiences and respond to constructive feedback.

Put systems and processes in place to support the succession planning process in order to have a positive organisational impact and to fully enable our managers to make decisions about the numbers, roles, skills and development requirements of the resources required to effectively run their departments.

- Use effective leadership planning to equip the organisation with the essential leadership qualities, knowledge, skills and behaviours required to build effective leadership.
- Provide accurate information around gaps and ensure that future planning decisions are made around robust data.
- Support the recruitment of the right people into the right places with the right skills through provision of gap data, and ensure that succession planning is credible and accurate
- Support departments to be able to develop effective workforce plans to realise their business plans.



PRIORITIES FOR EACH THEME YEARS 1 – 5

Year 1 Activity (2021/22)	Strategic Theme
Develop and implement a continuous approach to positive action for the Service, starting with Firefighter recruitment.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Create a training suite to accommodate all roles and all stages of the work life cycle to maintain up to date EDI knowledge as well as improve awareness of specific areas identified this training will be rolled out over 2 years	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Use charters to support us in measuring progression. Start with Disability confident in year 1	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Continue work on identifying, understanding and reducing the pay gaps by scrutinising the Gender Pay Gap report and making recommendations.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Fully embed the revised Leadership & Behavioural Framework and the values.	Leadership
Empower and support managers to deliver transformational services which are sustainable and deliver positive outcomes by providing management & leadership development and toolkits	Leadership
To implement a meaningful staff induction programme that helps colleagues to be role-ready	Talent
To refresh our development offering specifically in relation to upskilling our leaders and managers in corporate processes such as business planning, programme and project management, day to day HR skills and procurement and to fine tune the training and development we give to our staff in relation to developing their skills to be outstanding leaders and managers	Talent
Focus on 'growing our own talent' through the development of the apprenticeship scheme, the development of the career pathways scheme and a Direct Entry Scheme, which will offer a non-traditional route into leadership roles within the Fire & Rescue Service. We will continue to support professional qualifications to support 'growing our own talent'	Talent

Create clear succession plans with departments to demonstrate our commitment to increasing clarity in career development.	Talent
Fully embed and implement a revised appraisal process	Talent
Deliver an operational training and competence programme for Firefighter to Watch Manager. This will define, support and assess the competence of our station based and specialist staff.	Training & Education
To develop a clear approach to mandatory training (corporate, management & leadership and operational) for both new and existing staff	Training & Education
Evaluate and invest in our training facilities in order to support the training delivery and competence framework. This will include enhancing facilities at our service training centre specifically improving our provision of realistic structural firefighting training and management of contaminants	Training & Education
To develop an annual corporate training needs analysis process that will have oversight and scrutiny at the HR Strategic Group	Training & Education
Review our benefits and reward approach, offering greater flexibility and choice to suit diverse and changing needs and enable the Service to be agile and competitive in a competing external environment	Engagement
To prepare and undertake a staff survey	Engagement
Occupational Health service to become SEQOHS accredited.	Wellbeing
Review the Wellbeing and stress risk assessment approach for the Organisation	Wellbeing
Explore the implementation of Health and Wellbeing checks available to our staff	Wellbeing
Fine tune our Well-being provision and offering against the Bluelight Wellbeing standards and develop a rolling plan of development and improvement	Wellbeing

Develop a joint Wellbeing approach with Surrey Fire & Rescue and Surrey & Sussex Police forces which specifically links to our organisational needs ie ageing workforce, mental wellbeing, musculo skeletal issues etc	Wellbeing
Undertake an annual review of the Occupational Health provision and the value added from a collaborative approach	Wellbeing
Review and refresh the fitness policy for operational staff to ensure it remains aligned to national guidance.	Wellbeing
To implement an E-Recruitment system that provides a positive experience both for managers and the candidate	Quality
Produce HR dashboards and People data that is accurate, timely and meaningful to meet both our statutory obligations and to enable data driven conversations and decisions.	Quality
To review and improve our people management policies, processes and experiences and digitise people processes where possible	Quality
Firewatch project completion and full implementation	Quality
Fully support and drive the 'people strand' of both the corporate P21 project and the IRMP implementation project	Quality

Year 2 Activity (2022/23 – 2023/24)	Strategic Theme
Improve the integrity of the EDI data held and increase the quantity data shared by obtaining trust from our employees in regards to the use of the data. Data will be used to inform decisions i.e. identifying specific areas for training.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Establish an external resource group via community groups to aid EDI Group in decision making and provide more diverse representation for protected characteristics in which we have small quantities.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Continue work on identifying, understanding and reducing the pay gaps by scrutinising the Gender Pay Gap report and making recommendations.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers through strategic engagement activities	Leadership
To refresh our development offering specifically in relation to upskilling our leaders and managers in corporate processes such as business planning, programme and project management, day to day HR skills and procurement and to fine tune the training and development we give to our staff in relation to developing their skills to be outstanding leaders and managers	Talent
Develop Coaching, Mentoring and Buddying Schemes that utilise the expertise within the Service;	Talent
Focus on 'growing our own talent' through the development of the apprenticeship scheme, the development of the career pathways scheme and a Direct Entry Scheme, which will offer a non-traditional route into leadership roles within the Fire & Rescue Service. We will continue to support professional qualifications to support 'growing our own talent'	Talent
Develop and support managers to develop and implement departmental workforce plans (including critical roles) that will subsequently feed into the Strategic Workforce Plan	Talent
Develop a Direct Entry scheme that is aligned and supportive of the NFCC approach.	Talent

Deliver an operational training and competence programme for our Officers. This will define, support and assess the competence of our commanding officers at Level 2, 3 and 4	Training & Education
Evaluate and invest in our training facilities in order to support the training delivery and competence framework. This will include enhancing facilities at our service training centre specifically improving our provision of realistic structural firefighting training and management of contaminants	Training & Education
To prepare pulse surveys concentrating on specific People themes to inform areas on improvement;	Engagement
Undertake pulse Wellbeing surveys in conjunction with the other pulse surveys to inform areas of improvement	Wellbeing
Develop a joint Wellbeing approach with Surrey Fire & Rescue and Surrey & Sussex Police forces which specifically links to our organisational needs ie ageing workforce, mental wellbeing, musculo skeletal issues etc	Wellbeing
Undertake an annual review of the Occupational Health provision and the value added from a collaborative approach;	Wellbeing
Consider alternative HR delivery models to ensure the Service continues to receive the best possible HR solution to meet its needs	Quality
To review and improve our people management policies, processes and experiences and digitise people processes where possible	Quality
Produce HR dashboards and People data that is accurate, timely and meaningful to meet both our statutory obligations and to enable data driven conversations and decisions.	Quality
Fully support and drive the 'people strand' of the corporate IRMP implementation project.	Quality

Year 3 Activity (2023/24)	Strategic Theme
Use charters to support us in measuring progression	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Continue work on identifying, understanding and reducing the pay gaps by scrutinising the Gender Pay Gap report and making recommendations.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Review and refresh EDI Training	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Increase capability to manage and respond to change effectively including new approaches to engagement practices;	Leadership
Focus on 'growing our own talent' through the development of the apprenticeship scheme, the development of the career pathways scheme and a Direct Entry Scheme, which will offer a non-traditional route into leadership roles within the Fire & Rescue Service. We will continue to support professional qualifications to support 'growing our own talent'.	Talent
To refresh our development offering specifically in relation to upskilling our leaders and managers in corporate processes such as business planning, programme and project management, day to day HR skills and procurement and to fine tune the training and development we give to our staff in relation to developing their skills to be outstanding leaders and managers	Talent
Deliver an operational training and competence programme for our Officers. This will define, support and assess the competence of our commanding officers at Level 2, 3 and 4.	Training & Education
Evaluate and invest in our training facilities in order to support the training delivery and competence framework. This will include enhancing facilities at our service training centre specifically improving our provision of realistic structural firefighting training and management of contaminants	Training & Education

Reward and recognise individual and team contributions which support the Services values and ambition through a review of the existing rewards	Engagement
To prepare pulse surveys concentrating on specific People themes to inform areas on improvement;	Engagement
Undertake pulse Wellbeing surveys in conjunction with the other pulse surveys to inform areas of improvement	Wellbeing
Undertake an annual review of the Occupational Health provision and the value added from a collaborative approach	Wellbeing
To review and improve our people management policies, processes and experiences and digitise people processes where possible	Quality
Fully support and drive the 'people strand' of both the corporate P21 project and the IRMP implementation project	Quality

Year 4 Activity (2024/25)	Strategic Theme
Use charters to support us in measuring progression.	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Continue work on identifying, understanding and reducing the pay gaps by scrutinising the Gender Pay Gap report and making recommendations	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Focus on 'growing our own talent' through the development of the apprenticeship scheme, the development of the career pathways scheme and a Direct Entry Scheme, which will offer a non-traditional route into leadership roles within the Fire & Rescue Service. We will continue to support professional qualifications to support 'growing our own talent'.	Talent
Undertake a full strategic review of the training provided and how by the Service	Training & Education
To prepare to undertake a staff survey in 2025/6	Engagement
Undertake pulse Wellbeing surveys in conjunction with the other pulse surveys to inform areas of improvement	Wellbeing
Undertake an annual review of the Occupational Health provision and the value added from a collaborative approach	Wellbeing
To review and improve our people management policies, processes and experiences and digitise people processes where possible	Quality
Fully support and drive the 'people strand' of both the corporate P21 project and the IRMP implementation project	Quality
Develop People Strategy for 2025/6 – 2030/31	Quality



Health Safety & Wellbeing Strategy

2020-2023





Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 9
Strategic Considerations	Page 10
Priorities for Year 1: 2020/21	Page 16
Priorities for Year 2: 2021/22	Page 21
Priorities for Year 3: 2022/23	Page 28
Sustainability Checklist for Strategies	Page 32

Strategy Foreword

Lead Member for Health, Safety & Wellbeing, Carolyn Lambert

The Fire Authority is proud to continue its work to make our communities safer by:

Delivering high performing services

Educating our communities

Developing a multi-skilled, safe & valued workforce

Making effective use of our resources.

This commitment is underpinned by the delivery of the 2020-2023 Health Safety & Wellbeing Strategy.

The Health Safety & Wellbeing Strategy marks a new chapter in how we manage the Authority's responsibilities for the health safety & wellbeing of our staff and the community that we serve. Our operational and support staff are at the heart of everything that we do and delivery of the Strategy will transform how we support them in the provision of fire and rescue services. It underpins everything that East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service delivers and so will need to link with and have input into all other service strategies, from the Estates Strategy through to the Safer Communities Strategy. Health, safety and wellbeing impacts on every aspect of service delivery from where we work, where we engage with our community and increasingly where we collaborate with our partners.



Chief Fire Officer, Dawn Whittaker

Fire & Rescue Services employ relatively small numbers of staff, but the nature of their operational activities means that these workers frequently face higher work-related risks.

These work-related risks include the potentially serious consequences of exposure to fire, harmful substances or explosions, unstable structures, working in hazardous environments (e.g. on cliffs, in water, on the highway) and the manual handling of equipment and casualties.

Traditionally Fire & Rescue Services recognise the need to manage these significant health and safety risks as a key part of operational activities. In the past, high profile failures to balance the risks of operational duties against the requirement of the Health & Safety at Work Act have been cited as a contributing factor in the serious injury or death of workers and the public. The Health & Safety Executive have worked with Fire & Rescue Services to produce key documents such as 'Striking the Balance' which set out principles to help duty holders make informed judgements about risk. These principles are reflected throughout the five key themes that run through this Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy.



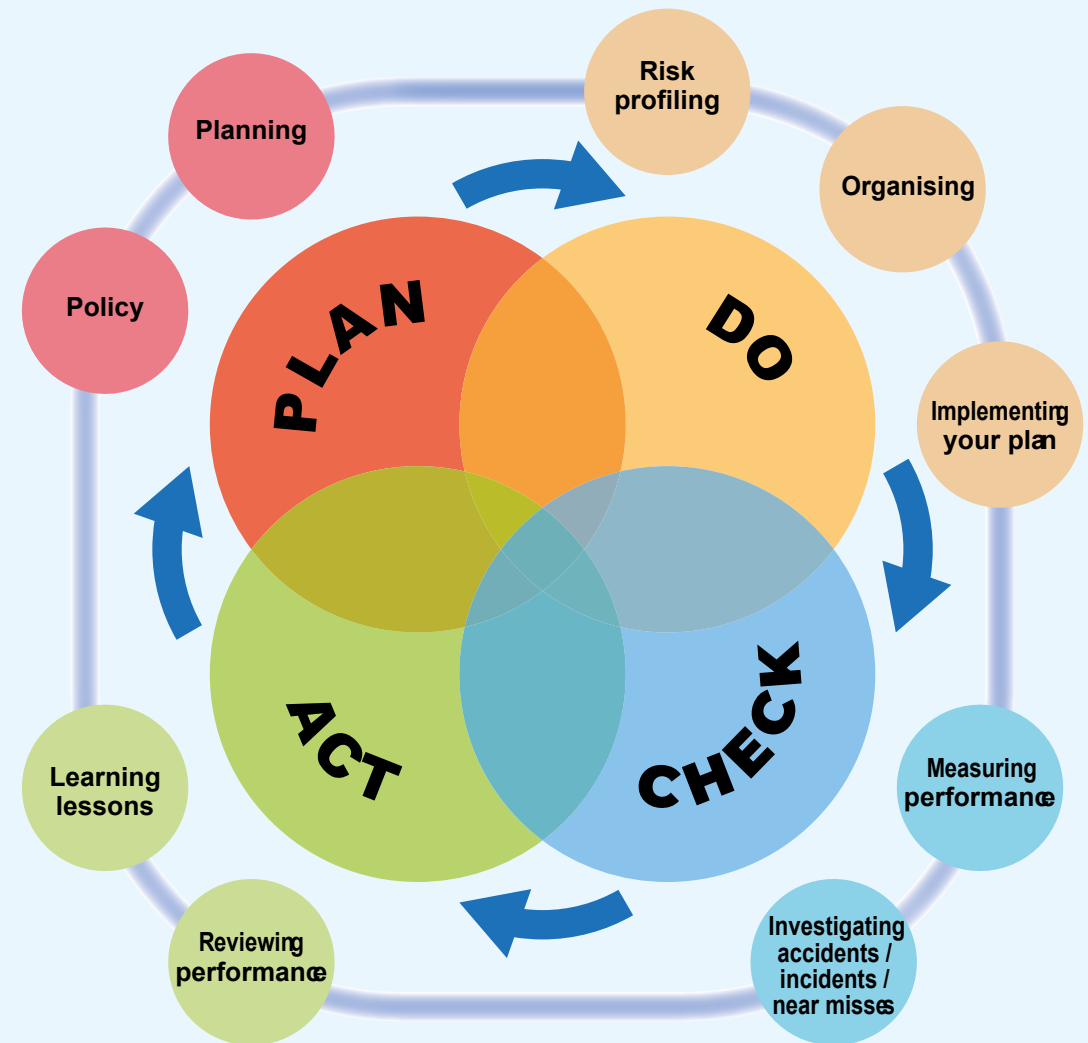
Strategic Context

The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 clearly sets out the four key responsibilities for East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, of:

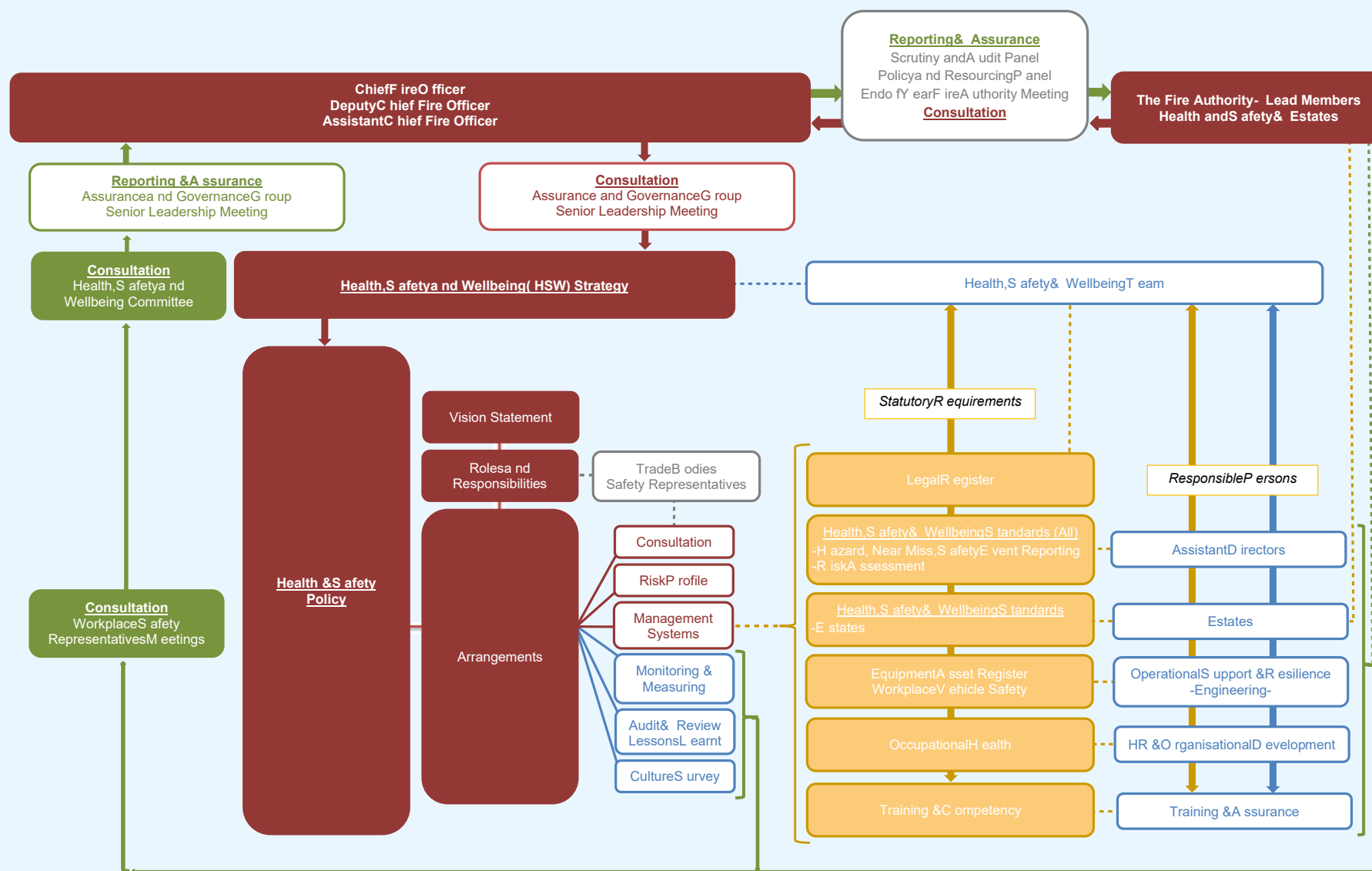
- Extinguishing fires;
- Protecting life and property in the event of fires;
- Rescuing and protecting people in the event of a road traffic collision; and
- Rescuing and protecting people in the event of other emergencies.

When fulfilling these responsibilities it is acknowledged that these are higher risk activities and that the Fire Authority will have to work hard to meet its statutory duties under the Health & Safety at Work etc Act (1974). This piece of legislation requires East Sussex Fire Authority to protect the 'health, safety and welfare' at work of all their employees. These duties also extend to others on their premises or those who may be affected by ESFRS activities, including contractors, casual workers, the self-employed, clients, visitors and the general public.

HSG65 sets out the overarching structure of an effective health and safety management system and East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has adopted the principles of 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' to achieve a balance between the systems and the behavioural aspects of safety management.



In 2020 ESFRS adopted the fully revised Health and Safety Management System 'Protecting our People - Providing Assurance' POPPA as detailed in the framework below.



This diagram of our internal framework POPPA, is colour coded against each element of 'Plan; Do; Check; Act'. This shows how ESFRSs health and safety arrangements meet the requirements of HSG65.

Principle	Summary of Areas Covered in Each Element
Plan	Strategic direction; Health & Safety Policy; organisational chart; roles and responsibilities; display of policy; consultation arrangements; reporting, resourcing; emergency arrangements; compliance.
Do	Risk assessment; risk profiling; risk ownership; training; training needs analysis; refresher training; control measures; risk register; employee consultation; competence; national guidance; risk critical information; SSRIs; ARAs; qualifications; PPE; equipment; procurement; planned maintenance; welfare arrangements; debriefing; management of contractors; monitoring contractors performance; communications; succession planning; induction; external advice; committees.
Check	Leadership; upward reporting; performance review; monitoring arrangements; management actions when performance declines; training records; schedules for planned, preventative maintenance; KPIs; workplace checks and records; performance reports; review of failed performance targets; inspection programmes; safety reps invited to inspections; medicals and health surveillance; debriefs; safety events and investigations; monitoring sickness absence; trend analysis; RIDDOR; accident investigation procedures and resources; record retention, security of information; audit plans.
Act	Review of safety management systems; matching KPIs to risk profile; evidence of corrective actions; review of compliance; review of statutory checks; evidence of analysis of H&S stats; comparing KPIs with others; evidence of a feedback system;

ESFRS are also exploring options to automate our Health & Safety Management Systems so that managers and staff can have access to information that clearly details their responsibilities, supporting documents to help them achieve compliance and up to date management and performance information at their fingertips.

Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the strategic objectives for the next three years that seek to build on the work begun in the 2017-2020 strategy and to continuously improve health, safety and wellbeing.

The Corporate Purpose Statement is to 'make our communities safer'.

Our priority is to protect our staff when they are delivering frontline services to the East Sussex community, to support them in delivering those services safely and to minimise the risk of injury or ill health as far as we reasonably can.



Strategic Considerations

1. Approach to Efficiency

Initially, it may be difficult to see how effective health safety & wellbeing management systems might achieve efficiencies for a Fire & Rescue Service. However, detailed analysis of the financial costs of when staff, vehicles, equipment or premises are taken off the run after an accident shows the impact on efficiencies. By employing appropriate levels of investigation, in order to prevent accidents from happening again, and by learning the lessons from our near hits, we can minimise injury and damage as far as reasonably practicable and avoid those associated hidden costs.

The Service will also fully engage with the Fire & Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) which it joined in 2019. FRIC specifically meets the needs of Fire & Rescue Services and works on a philosophy of sharing risk information and organisational learning from incidents where claims have been successful. By learning from other Fire & Rescue Services this will improve efficiency and help us to avoid risks that have affected other Fire & Rescue Services.

This strategy can deliver financial efficiencies through reduced levels of sickness absence provision of wellbeing and by taking a more holistic approach to mental and physical health to provide resilience in the work force.

Improvements in the Occupational Health provision will ensure better case management of absences due to injury or ill health service helping to support our staff to return to work and also mitigating any potential mental health impacts that can be associated with long term absences. Improving and contributing to employee and organisational health and wellbeing is a multi-faceted approach to support employees to remain at work, or return more quickly, whilst building individual resilience, embedding positive messaging and developing healthy lifestyle habits.

2. Equality and Diversity

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service are committed to proactively approaching everything we do with fairness and impartiality, engaging and supporting all aspects of diversity in our workforce and our communities. The Strategy considers equality and diversity and ensures that each element of delivery will be subject to an Equality Impact Analysis.

3. Collaboration

This strategy will continue the work that was started in the 2017-20 Strategy building on the collaborative services that we have already started to deliver with a range of partners:

- The collaborative Occupational Health Service began in 2018 with our partners in Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and Surrey and Sussex Police.
- Tri-fire projects with our partners in Surrey and West Sussex Fire & Rescue Services, such as adopting a joint Health and Safety Management Framework, the joint pledge signed by all 3 Chief Fire Officers and shared operational noise assessments.
- The NFCC South East Regional Health & Safety Forum where all 8 Fire and Rescue Services in the region meet quarterly to share information and best practice. 2019 saw the start of the peer audit programme with health & safety professionals from Kent, Surrey and West Sussex auditing ESFRS's health and safety management systems and arrangements.

4. Measuring Success

With the implementation of the 2017-20 Strategy, we have already started to receive positive feedback on and seen improvements in transparency of the reporting of the Service's health, safety & wellbeing performance.

This next strategy intends to build on these foundations and refine our reporting mechanisms, with an ambition to provide this information electronically through the provision of health & safety management system software.

The success of the Strategy will be measured against the aims and objectives of the Strategy and associated KPIs, as set out in the action plans at the end of this strategy document.

5. Performance Measurement and Review

Performance measurement and review will continue to be undertaken formally through the statutory consultative groups of the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee, the Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee, the Occupational Health Governance Board and the HR Strategic Committee.

The Health Safety & Wellbeing Team will also continue to attend and supply performance information to other relevant Committees and managers across the Service such as Senior Leadership Team, Operational Assurance Group and Operations Committee, to name only a few.



6. Strategic Objectives

This strategy continues on from the first Health Safety & Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020 and further develops the work under the 5 key objective themes:

1. Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture

To integrate health and safety management into everyday processes so that it becomes an integral part of the workplace culture.

2. Reducing Work-related Injury and Ill-health

To minimise, as far as reasonably practicable, work-related injuries and ill-health both mental and physical.

3. Fire Fighter Safety

To adopt the Firefighter Safety Maxim, acknowledging that firefighters operate in hazardous environments whilst recognising the legal duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of everyone our operations may affect and the professional dilemma of maintaining safety and taking action to effect a rescue or mitigate an emergency.

4. Contributing to the Future Health and Mental Wellbeing of all Employees

Investing in employees' physical health and mental wellbeing in order to support them in delivering frontline services.

5. Organisational Wellbeing

To develop health and safety management systems in consultation and collaboration with our staff, promoting organisational learning, openness and transparency. To develop Occupational Health systems and processes in collaboration with stakeholders, to promote organisational learning, openness and a culture of health.

These strategic objectives will ensure that the Service integrates its statutory duties and industry best practice into service delivery for health, safety & wellbeing.

The delivery of the strategy will primarily be overseen and driven by the People Services Directorate, in particular the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team, alongside HR, Occupational Health and the Health Fitness and Wellbeing Team within the OH collaboration. It must also be recognised that all staff at all levels in the organisation have specific health and safety responsibilities and so the Health Safety & Wellbeing Team will be reporting on their levels of compliance with policies and procedures across the organisation.

The Health Safety & Wellbeing Team will support colleagues in delivering their own health, safety & wellbeing responsibilities by:

- Providing advice, support and guidance on how to comply with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- Supporting the development of safe systems of work which will help reduce harm and avoidable sickness absence.
- Being a source of competent health and safety advice and support to the service.
- Auditing the safety management arrangements to ensure they are suitable and sufficient and to provide assurance to the Fire Authority of statutory compliance.
- To learn from incidences causing injury or damage, to prevent recurrence and to investigate near hits to ensure injury and damage can be avoided.
- To work in partnership with colleagues in other departments e.g. HR and Occupational Health, to support staff returning to work after illness or injury and to reduce short and long term sickness absences.

The tables below detail the key deliverables under each strategic theme for the next 3 years, from 2020-2023.

Priorities for Year 1: 2020/21

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 1: Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture		
1. To build on and strengthen the Health & Safety Business Partners model to increase engagement with staff across the service. To improve visibility and engagement.	Recruit new Business Partner 2020	Recruitment by February 2020. Evaluation of impact of BP Model (part of culture survey in Year 2)
2. In collaboration with colleagues in Operations Planning & Policy, Safer Communities and HR, further revise and develop the station assurance /audit process to stimulate greater engagement and organisational/operational learning and start to scrutinise and measure the impact of human behaviours.	Station Assurance Programme 2020/21	Delivery of Station Assurance Programme 2020/21 as reported to Operational Committees and relevant Health and Safety Committees
3. Continued enhancement of engagement with the Service Workplace Safety Representatives and develop tailored resources to support them in their role. This will effect greater engagement between the WSR and those they represent.	Quarterly meetings of the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 2: Reducing Work Related Injury and Ill-Health		
1. Embedding the manual handling training delivery plan and upskilling with refresher training on plus size casualty handling to reduce this key risk of injury.	Training delivery programme 2020/21	Measure of training delivery as part of the Station Assurance Programme 2020/21
2. Continuation of the revision and development of leading and lagging performance indicators within the Service and across other services through 3 Fire and the Regional CFOA Health & Safety Working Group.	Quarterly statistics paper as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
3. Gap analysis between HR sickness absence data and safety event data and develop relevant KPI's particularly looking at Musculo-skeletal disorders (MSDs) and stress related ill health.	Development of KPIs in collaboration with HR/Occupational Health Strategy	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 3: Fire Fighter Safety		
1. Decontamination and firefighter safety. Linking with a broad spectrum of other ESFRS strategies and working groups e.g. Station Design Guide, Lighter Appliances Group, Contaminants Working Group etc.	Contaminants Working Group	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees. SE Regional Workshop on contaminants (sharing research and best practice) co-ordinated and run by ESFRS. Participation in national research project with UCLan.
2. Physical wellbeing initiatives. Development of standardisation of PT network, enhance trend analysis through monitoring safety event data as age data is captured.	Bi-annual PTI standardisation meetings to commence 2020	FireWatch records of PTI attendance at standardisation meetings.
3. Independent investigation of all Level 2 Safety Events and Hazard Reports with all recommendations tracked until implemented.	Quarterly statistics paper and trackers as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 4: Contributing to the Future Health and Mental Wellbeing of all Employees		
1. Increase Wellbeing Champions Network to 30 (train an additional 10) and train the first 20 Wellbeing Champions in Mental Health First Aid.	1 x MIND Wellbeing Champion Course to run in 2020/21 2 x Mental Health First Aid Courses to run in 2020/21	FireWatch records of training courses as described.
2. Delivery of the collaborative Occupational Health Service. Integrating and embedding a proactive approach to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all employees through the new OH service delivery.	Service delivery KPIs as developed by the Occupational Health Management Group	Reporting of KPIs to Workplace Safety Representatives and Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee. In conjunction with HR/OH Strategy undertake and complete a review of ESFRS counselling, physiotherapy and EAP contracts.
3. Support in the delivery of the actions plans for the Healthy Body and Healthy Mind working groups.	As detailed in the relevant Action Plans	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 5: Organisational Wellbeing		
1. Implementation of Year 1 of the Health & Safety Management System: Protecting Our People – Providing Assurance ((POPPA).	As detailed in the HSMS Delivery Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Implementation of Year 1 of Audit Programme (as per the 5 year Audit Plan utilising the national H&S Audit Tools).	As detailed in Year 1 of the Audit Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
3. Implementation of staff access to private medical services and facilities.	Business case to be signed off and subsequent tender process completed.	Provider selected and implemented 2020/21
4. Review contracts for outsourced provision of OH Doctor, psychological and physiotherapy support.	Review of contracts to commence at the start of 2020.	New contracts or providers in place by August 2020

Priorities for Year 2: 2021/22

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 1: Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture		
1. Implementation of the electronic Health and Safety Management System	As detailed in the HSMS software Business Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. In collaboration with colleagues in Operations Planning & Policy, Safer Communities and HR, further revise and develop the station assurance /audit process to stimulate greater engagement and organisational/operational learning and start to scrutinise and measure the impact of human behaviours.	Station Assurance Programme 2021/22	Delivery of Station Assurance Programme 2021/22 as reported to Operational Assurance Group, Operations Committee, Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee
3. Undertake Health and Safety Culture Survey	As detailed in the Health & Safety Management System Delivery Plan	Survey results to be reported to Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 5: Organisational Wellbeing		
1. Implementation of Year 1 of the Health & Safety Management System: Protecting Our People – Providing Assurance ((POPPA).	As detailed in the HSMS Delivery Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Implementation of Year 1 of Audit Programme (as per the 5 year Audit Plan utilising the national H&S Audit Tools).	As detailed in Year 1 of the Audit Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
3. Implementation of staff access to private medical services and facilities.	Business case to be signed off and subsequent tender process completed.	Provider selected and implemented 2020/21
4. Review contracts for outsourced provision of OH Doctor, psychological and physiotherapy support.	Review of contracts to commence at the start of 2020.	New contracts or providers in place by August 2020

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 1: Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture		
1. Implementation of the electronic Health and Safety Management System	As detailed in the HSMS software Business Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. In collaboration with colleagues in Operations Planning & Policy, Safer Communities and HR, further revise and develop the station assurance /audit process to stimulate greater engagement and organisational/operational learning and start to scrutinise and measure the impact of human behaviours.	Station Assurance Programme 2021/22	Delivery of Station Assurance Programme 2021/22 as reported to Operational Assurance Group, Operations Committee, Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee
3. Undertake Health and Safety Culture Survey	As detailed in the Health & Safety Management System Delivery Plan	Survey results to be reported to Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 2: Reducing Work Related Injury and Ill-Health		
1. New KPI on RIDDOR and personnel on light duties.	Quarterly statistics paper as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Continuation of the revision and development of leading and lagging performance indicators within the Service and across other services through 3 Fire and the Regional CFOA Health & Safety Working Group.	Quarterly statistics paper as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 3: Fire Fighter Safety		
1. Decontamination and firefighter safety. Linking with a broad spectrum of other ESFRS strategies and working groups e.g. Station Design Guide, Lighter Appliances Group, Contaminants Working Group etc.	Contaminants Working Group	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Independent investigation of all Level 2 Safety Events and Hazard Reports with all recommendations tracked until completion.	Quarterly statistics paper and trackers as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
3. Implementation of local management KPIs for 3 yearly medical, asbestos medical and annual fitness test.	Quarterly statistics paper and trackers as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 4: Contributing to the future health and mental wellbeing of all employees		
1. Increase Wellbeing Champions Network to 40 (train an additional 10) and train the next 10 Wellbeing Champions in Mental Health First Aid.	1 x MIND Wellbeing Champion Course to run in 2021/22 1 x Mental Health First Aid Courses to run in 2021/22	FireWatch records of training courses as described
2. Ongoing delivery of the collaborative Occupational Health Service. Integrating and embedding a proactive approach to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all employees through the new OH service delivery.	Service delivery KPIs as developed by the Occupational Health Management Group	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
3. Support in the delivery of the actions plans for the Healthy Body and Healthy Mind working groups.	As detailed in the relevant Action Plans	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 5: Organisational Wellbeing		
1. Implementation of Year 2 of the Health & Safety Management System: Protecting Our People – Providing Assurance ((POPPA).	As detailed in the HSMS Delivery Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Implementation of Year 2 of Audit Programme (as per the 5 year Audit Plan utilising the national H&S Audit Tools).	As detailed in Year 2 of the Audit Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

Priorities for Year 3: 2022/2023

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 1: Continuing to Build a Positive Health and Safety Culture		
1. Embedding the use of the electronic Health and Safety Management System	As detailed in the HSMS software Business Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. In collaboration with colleagues in Operations Planning & Policy, Safer Communities and HR, further revise and develop the station assurance /audit process to stimulate greater engagement and organisational/operational learning and start to scrutinise and measure the impact of human behaviours.	Station Assurance Programme 2022/23	Delivery of Station Assurance Programme 2022/23 as reported to Operational Assurance Group, Operations Committee, Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 2: Reducing Work Related Injury and Ill-Health		
1. Link line managers with PTI, Service Fitness Adviser, HR Business Partner & OH for seamless case management process.	Development of structure in collaboration with HR and SFA colleagues	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Continuation of the revision and development of leading and lagging performance indicators within the Service and across other services through 3 Fire and the Regional CFOA Health & Safety Working Group.	Quarterly statistics paper as presented to the Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and Health Safety & Wellbeing Committee	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 4: Contributing to the future health and mental wellbeing of all employees		
1. 1.Ongoing CPD for Wellbeing Champions Network of 40 and train the last 10 Wellbeing Champions in Mental Health First Aid.	1 x Mental Health First Aid Courses to run in 2022/23 CPD Programme for all Wellbeing Champions	FireWatch records of training courses as described
2. 2. In conjunction with the HR/OH Strategy, explore the options for integrating Mental Health First Aid with the Occupational Health provision.	Development of an options package.	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

What We Will Do	Key Milestones Including Final Completion	Performance Targets/Success Measures
Theme 5: Organisational Wellbeing		
1. Implementation of Year 3 of the Health & Safety Management System: Protecting Our People – Providing Assurance ((POPPA).	As detailed in the HSMS Delivery Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees
2. Implementation of Year 3 of Audit Programme (as per the 5 year Audit Plan utilising the national H&S Audit Tools)	As detailed in Year 3 of the Audit Plan	Monitored through governance structure of relevant Health & Safety Committees

Sustainability Checklist for Strategies

All strategies require you to consider the environmental and sustainability section included in the strategy template.

There is a standard evaluation method for completing this. Please complete the questions below, considering carefully how the recommendations contained in your strategy may affect each of the criteria covered. This will help you develop these areas of your strategy document.

Aspect	Positive	Negative	N/A
1. Community Participation			
a) encourage local action and decision making			x
b) improve the sense of community			
c) take account of and/or empower underrepresented groups			
2. Economy and Work			x
a) assist low income/disadvantaged groups			
b) increase employment/vocational training opportunities			
c) provide opportunities for local businesses			
3. Health			
a) reduce factors that contribute to ill health (diet, poverty, lifestyle, etc.)	x		
b) improve health facilities	x		
c) provide healthy and safe working environments for staff	x		
4. Equality and Opportunity			
a) increase facilities for the young, elderly, or special needs groups			x
b) increase life-long learning opportunities			x
c) promote citizenship – e.g. racial or religious understanding			x
5. Transport			
a) promote or improve access to public transport			x
b) encourage walking or cycling			x

c) discourage unnecessary use of motor vehicles, thus reducing emission levels			x
d) improve the transport network			
6. Pollution			
a) reduce pollution of air, water and/or land			x
7. Energy			
a) reduce energy use and/or improve energy efficiency			x
b) generate energy from renewable sources			x
8. Environment			
a) create quality greenspace for community use			x
b) benefit biodiversity			x
c) conserve and enhance the built heritage			x
d) protect character of landscape and/or townscape			x
e) encourages sustainable production (e.g.- in case of procurement)			x
f) use sustainable design and construction techniques			x
9. Waste and Resources			
a) reduce amount of waste produced or reuse existing products			x
b) encourage recycling or the use of recycled products			x
10. Asset Management			
a) ensures best value in the use of the Fire Authority's built assets			x
b) takes account of and seeks to minimise whole life cycle cost of the Fire Authority's built assets.			x
11. Human Resources			
a) ensures efficiency in the use of human resources	x		

Information Technology (IT) Strategy

2020-2025



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 8
IT Transformation Programme (2016 – 2020)	Page 9
Sustainability & Carbon Footprint	Page 11
Approach to Efficiency	Page 12
Scope	Page 14
Deliverables	Page 16
Performance Management & Review	Page 23
Inclusion, Equality and Diversity	Page 24
Finances	Page 25
Conclusion	Page 30

Strategy Foreword

Lead Member for IT, Cllr Tutt

Information Technology is at the heart of everything that we do, and delivery of the IT Strategy over the next five years will ensure further improvement to the Service's technology and associated capabilities.

The IT Strategy sets challenging targets for improving the condition and functional suitability of the Service's back office and front-line systems and for having a positive impact on the environment. With this Strategy, appropriate investment can be properly targeted and I look forward to seeing continued improvement and development of technology which, for the Authority, is key to transforming the way we operate and collaborate to improve efficiency and deliver the best service we can to the community we serve.



Chief Fire Officer, Dawn Whittaker

Since 2016 the Service has delivered on its commitment to replace core Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and we have seen an increase in reliability and flexibility. ESFRS is continuing to invest in a major IT refresh and new capabilities to support the business needs of our service. We will continue to work closely with our outsourced IT service provider, telnet to ensure we deliver efficiently, effectively and maximise digital and technological opportunities.

The IT Strategy will deliver further improvements to our systems over the next five years, ensuring our staff have the right IT systems and information to carry out their roles and tackle incidents effectively. Along with advancements in security, IT infrastructure and firefighter safety, health and well-being, the IT Strategy will ensure that we have the best possible environment for our colleagues and partners for the future in order to support the delivery of services to the public.



Strategic Context

The direction of the IT Strategy 2020-2025 is driven by the organisational purpose of 'making our communities safer' and our four key commitments:

- Delivering high performing services
- Educating our communities
- Developing a multi-skilled, safe & valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resources

Since the last IT Strategy was published in 2017, East Sussex Fire Authority has overseen an ambitious change programme in how its fire and rescue services are provided across East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove.

A series of new service strategies are now in place, which set out what the organisation aims to achieve in terms of our People, Inclusion and Diversity, Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Information Management, Procurement, Estates and Communication and Engagement. Service delivery priorities have been reset in the new Safer Communities Strategy in order to explicitly demonstrate how we are responding to the risks with targeted response, prevention and protection work.

A Service Delivery structure review has been completed with the involvement of colleagues, focusing on wellbeing, effectiveness and efficiency. This provided a more agile and enabling structure that compliments the development of supporting processes and systems (Support and Delivery Framework). During 2019 the Service completed an overarching Operational Response Review, which will ultimately feed into the new Integrated Risk Management Plan.

In 2019 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) completed an independent inspection of ESFRS, as part of its overall programme of inspections of all English Fire and Rescue Services to assess progress against the Government fire reform agenda of accountability and transparency, efficiency, collaboration and workforce reform.

The inspection produced a series of recommendations, including the importance of ensuring IT investments support efficient or effective working for front line colleagues.

The nature of the Fire & Rescue Service continues to change, with an emphasis on prevention and protection activities. These activities highlight the risks to our community and addresses them through proactive education and training campaigns. This increasing engagement drives the need for better integrated information and more complex analysis. It also requires us to put in place more effective social media and other technologies to help the community engage with the Service.

The focus remains on keeping our firefighters and community safe. This means a programme of continual improvement to the systems we use to make sure our firefighters have the right information to tackle incidents effectively, and ensuring our firefighters are properly trained and competent in all systems, processes and protocols.

The functions that support the operation of the Service and front lines colleagues range from Human Resources to Engineering, Communications to Finance, Procurement and more. The IT Strategy deliverables, driven by the Corporate Plan and department strategies, has been formulated to ensure that colleagues have the systems and tools required to be effective in their roles.

The Fire Authority still faces financial challenges in the face of continued uncertainty on funding with the forecasted need to save between £0.6m and £3.7m over the medium term, which is in addition to savings of £8.7m delivered since 2010. This continues to drive the need to deliver more efficient business practices, which requires the Service to implement digital technologies and automated workflow in order to remove paper driven processes.

Purpose of the Strategy

The IT Strategy 2020-2025 builds on the significant progress made since the decision to outsource IT Services to telent in November 2016 and embark on a transformation programme of the core IT infrastructure and applications.

The IT services are a key enabler to deliver the organisation's goals and the IT Strategy is the mechanism through which this will be delivered.

The IT Strategy deliverables have been developed to support and align with the Corporate Plan and have been formulated with and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and senior managers, to establish the key strategic goals of the organisation to ensure alignment with the associated technology.

The IT Strategy quantifies the investment required over the next five years arising from the Service's 'demand' for IT improvements and the prioritisation of such investments.

The strategy also recognises the increased drive to work in partnership and collaboration with other fire and rescue services and public bodies, as demonstrated by the Surrey Joint Fire Control project (Project 21) and to share information with adjacent county councils, health services and police forces.



IT Transformation Programme (2016-2020)

In 2015 the Service recognised that its systems were fragmented, ageing and in many cases the IT infrastructure and applications were end of life. Combined with an internal IT team with limited capacity, it was not possible to support the Service change programme.

The Service commissioned an IT Transformation Programme with support from external consults with objectives to:

- Implementing a modern ICT infrastructure to enable smarter and more efficient ways of working
- An infrastructure that provides secure and resilient ICT services
- A transition of the management of ICT services to an appointed third party technology provider telent Technology Services (November 2016)
- Supported by a new IT Strategy and a commitment to invest £8.8m during a five year programme approved in June 2017.

telent Technology Services were appointed as outsourced service delivery partner in November 2016 and at the same time the new internal Information Technology Governance (ITG) function was established to work closely with colleagues and telent to deliver new infrastructure and systems.

Technology already delivered in the period between 2016 and 2020 includes:

- Resilient dual data centres, together with new networking infrastructure and IT security.
- New telent Flexicloud replaced physical end of life hardware with a modern virtualised environment, including a new Microsoft Exchange email system
- Significantly improved resilience and IT Disaster Recovery capability
- Mobile and home working capability, with 299 laptops and 52 tablets deployed to colleagues

- TomTom Officer Navigation devices deployed in officers' cars, improving effectiveness by delivering system generated voice updates from the control room en route to incidents.
- Business cases approved and project mobilisation completed for replacement of key line of business applications (CRM, Firewatch and Performance Management)
- 3rd party Information Security consultancy (Aristi) contracted to assist the service with improving its information and cyber security, aligned to Cyber Essentials Plus and ISO27001 certifications
- Office 365 license agreement signed to provide productivity tools for digital transformation (Sharepoint, Workflow).

More recently Cisco Webex virtual meeting and instant messaging has been deployed across the Service and used to a significant degree during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

The programme undertaken in partnership with telent between 2016 and 2020 has laid the foundations for the next steps in transforming the organisations IT systems, allowing the Service to leverage value from further investment through the IT Strategy 2020-2025.

Sustainability & Carbon Footprint

The IT Strategy is designed to ensure that technologies are implemented to further enhance flexible working in order to reduce the need for travel, and when combined with the move to cloud computing services in place of on premise systems, assist in reducing the Service's overall carbon footprint, therefore helping to minimise the impact on the environment. Other options to improve sustainability and reduce carbon footprint will be explored with the Service's provider, telent, as the projects within the Strategy are developed.



Approach to Efficiency

There are a number of principles (Foundation and IT Architecture) which we propose to use to guide decisions, technical design, projects and approach to service delivery, in order to maximise the return on IT investments and reduce the total cost of ownership to the Service.

Foundation Principles

- Facilitate the delivery of department strategies: we must align with the Corporate Plan and Department Strategies on an annual basis, to agree and plan the associated technologies required.
- Value for Money: we must ensure all IT services offer value for money, either in themselves or by enabling wider service and process efficiencies.
- Ensure we can enable growth: IT services should continue to support improved flexibility and responsiveness to meet future business requirements in an agile and structured manner.
- Resilience: services will continue to be reliable, resilient and secure, with appropriate IT disaster recovery plans in place.
- Total cost of ownership: we will simplify the technology portfolio to reduce complexity and make service management more efficient.
- Collaboration: we will actively participate in and contribute to the The Link Consortium, the British Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (BAPCO), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) IT Managers Forum and NFCC Digital & Data Programme.
- Governance: business strategies are clearly defined, business case led IT investments decisions. Prioritisation provided by the ESFRS Change Board and SLT.
- Planning: mature programme approach to planned demand / supply management, closely aligned with the ESFRS business planning process.

IT Architecture Guiding Principles

Developed and agreed by ITG and telent Technical Design Authority to ensure that new technology will be sourced and delivered as part of an overall technology architecture.

Principle	Rationale
Commercial Cloud Considered	Develop the utilisation of commercial cloud services to lower cost of ownership and implement a more cost-effective support model.
Commercial Off The Shelf	Foster the utilisation of suppliers' off the shelf supported software where suppliers have provided non-bespoke or in house developed applications or services. Ensuring scalable support and cost-effective support model. Consideration should also be given for COTS packages already deployed in the Fire Sector.
Business Requirements Based Change	Develop a culture where the information environment changes in response to the needs of the business, where cost effective, rather than having the business change in response to IT changes.
Responsive Change Management	Ensure changes to the information environment are implemented in a timely manner so that if colleagues are expected to work within the information environment, that information must be responsive to their needs.
Control Technical Diversity & Compatibility	This principle will limit the number of supported components, which will simplify maintainability and reduce ongoing cost of ownership. Technology will not be introduced without ensuring appropriate support available. Nor will technology be implemented that relies on legacy IT infrastructure.
Interoperability	Implement established IT standards to help ensure consistency, improving the ability to manage systems and improve user satisfaction and protect IT investments, therefore, maximising return on investment and reducing costs. This will include the standardisation of interfaces and the ability to share information with other systems and support collaboration with other agencies.
Information Security First	This principle will foster the utilisation of security architecture and standards such as ISO27001 alignment, Cyber Essential Plus accredited services as well as alignment with Emergency Services Network architecture patterns. This includes a new statutory or regulatory mandate, threat realised or experienced.
Resilience by Design	Resilience should be commensurate with the criticality of the services supported.

Scope

The strategy recognises the need to develop an integrated, cohesive and flexible platform to better support the Service, front line colleagues and ultimately the community moving forward.

IT services across ESFRS still lack the integration required and in some areas application functionality and automation remains limited, resulting in a continued reliance on paper forms and legacy manual processes. In some cases, such as the lack of integration between the resource management system (Firewatch) and the mobilising system, it means significant levels of manual status changes, additional checks and numerous interactions between the control room and frontline colleagues. This issue will be addressed within the first 18 months of this IT Strategy via the Firewatch and P21 projects, which are already underway.

The IT Strategy recognises the challenge associated with the pace of technological change affecting fire services and society generally, which will only be accelerated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Linked with the importance of delivering new technologies that positively improve the experience of frontline colleagues in delivery of their roles on a day to day basis.

Remaining challenges that this strategy seeks to address can be summarised as follows:

Technology	Challenge
Technology Foundations	To complete the replacement of end of life infrastructure such as end user desktops, including the rollout of Windows 10, Office 365, WiFi and Station End Equipment replacement programme. Continue to develop virtual meeting and mobile working technologies as part of the Service's Covid-19 Recovery Plan
Line of Business Applications	To complete the change projects underway to further reduce risk whilst delivering operational efficiencies. Projects include CRM, Firewatch, Fire Ground Radio and Project 21.
Application Integration	<p>Application integration is still limited, leading to significant levels of manual entry/duplicated effort and a reliance on paper driven processes. In turn this limits the ability to deliver efficiencies.</p> <p>No integration between Firewatch and the mobilising system (addressed by Project 21). No integration between the CRM and the mobilising system (being addressed by the CRM Project & Project 21).</p> <p>Weaknesses in the interface of incident data from the mobilising system to the IRS reporting system (addressed by Project 21).</p>
Performance Management / Business Intelligence and Analytics	Availability of application analytics and aggregation of information sources remains a limitation. Currently being addressed by the Performance Management project and implementation of application specific analytics e.g. CRM and Firewatch analytics
Collaboration Technologies	The introduction of Webex, Office 365 and Sharepoint now provides the platform to facilitate digital collaboration and optimised digital workflows, digital signatures. Allowing the removal of significant volumes of legacy paper forms and related manual processes.
End User Computing / Flexible Working	Complete replacement of end of life PCs/workstations across the Service and the rollout of Windows 10, Office 365, along with tablet devices for Home Safety Visits and Business Safety.

Deliverables

Commitment 1 – Delivering high performing services

Objective	Business Outcomes
Project 21 – Joint Fire Control	Complete the onboarding to Surrey Joint Fire Control. Resulting in a modern supported mobilising solution, enabling Operational efficiencies & better utilisation of resources through the tri-service partnership
Improve the maturity of the Service's information security by aligning with ISO27001	Improvements in Information Security achieved, reducing the risk to service data & systems. By achieving Cyber Essentials Plus Certification, along with annual IT Health checks & ISO27001 assessments
Complete the replacement of Station End IT infrastructure	Resilient IT station equipment and reduced risk to mobilising. Lifting policies are in place for the scheduled replacement of such equipment
Rollout of Windows 10, Office 365, Sharepoint and replacement of end of life desktops & laptops	Colleagues have secure and fit for purpose workstations & laptops facilitating an efficient working environment. Ensuring supported technologies are in place by modernising technologies deployed
Maximise efficiencies (cashable/ non-cashable) from IT Strategy investments	Related business cases detail cashable / non-cashable benefits, which are then reported on a quarterly basis
Establish IT enterprise architecture	Effective system integration & efficient business processes. Cost effective IT systems & fit for purpose architecture.
Emergency Services Network (ESN)	ESN Business Case including business & technology impacts and associated implementation estimates

Commitment 2 – Educating our communities

Objective	Business Outcomes
Utilise virtual meeting platforms to organise 'virtual' education hubs with the community	Recognise and utilise societal changes as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically the move virtual meetings and video calls across all age groups

Commitment 3 – Developing a multi-skilled, safe & valued workforce

Objective	Business Outcomes
Expansion of E-Learning	Crews have better access to information and improved methods of learning available through the expansion of E-Learning, supporting the maintenance of competences
Fire Ground Radio	Digital fit for purpose fire ground radios, improving firefighter safety and effectiveness on the fire ground
Implementation of a new Hydrant Management system	Improved accuracy and management of hydrant data reducing risk
Corporate Wi-Fi	Greater mobility & flexibility for colleagues, also facilitating the efficient use of appliance MDTs.
One to Many video conferencing	Improved collaboration and meeting effectiveness
Improve the service's efficiency and effectiveness through investment in core line of business systems - Customer Relationship Management	<p>Improved Community Safety, Business Safety and SSRI business processes and workflows that enable a more efficient use of resources. Reduction in the time taken to collate and communicate Site Specific Risk Information.</p> <p>Effective targeting and use of Business Safety and Community Safety resources to deliver Safer Community services to the community. Capacity released and focused on risk reduction.</p> <p>Paper-based processes eliminated improving efficiency, by removing data double entry and in reduction of data entry errors. Business processes underpinned with mobile working, digital workflows, providing timely communication of individual, community and premises risks.</p>

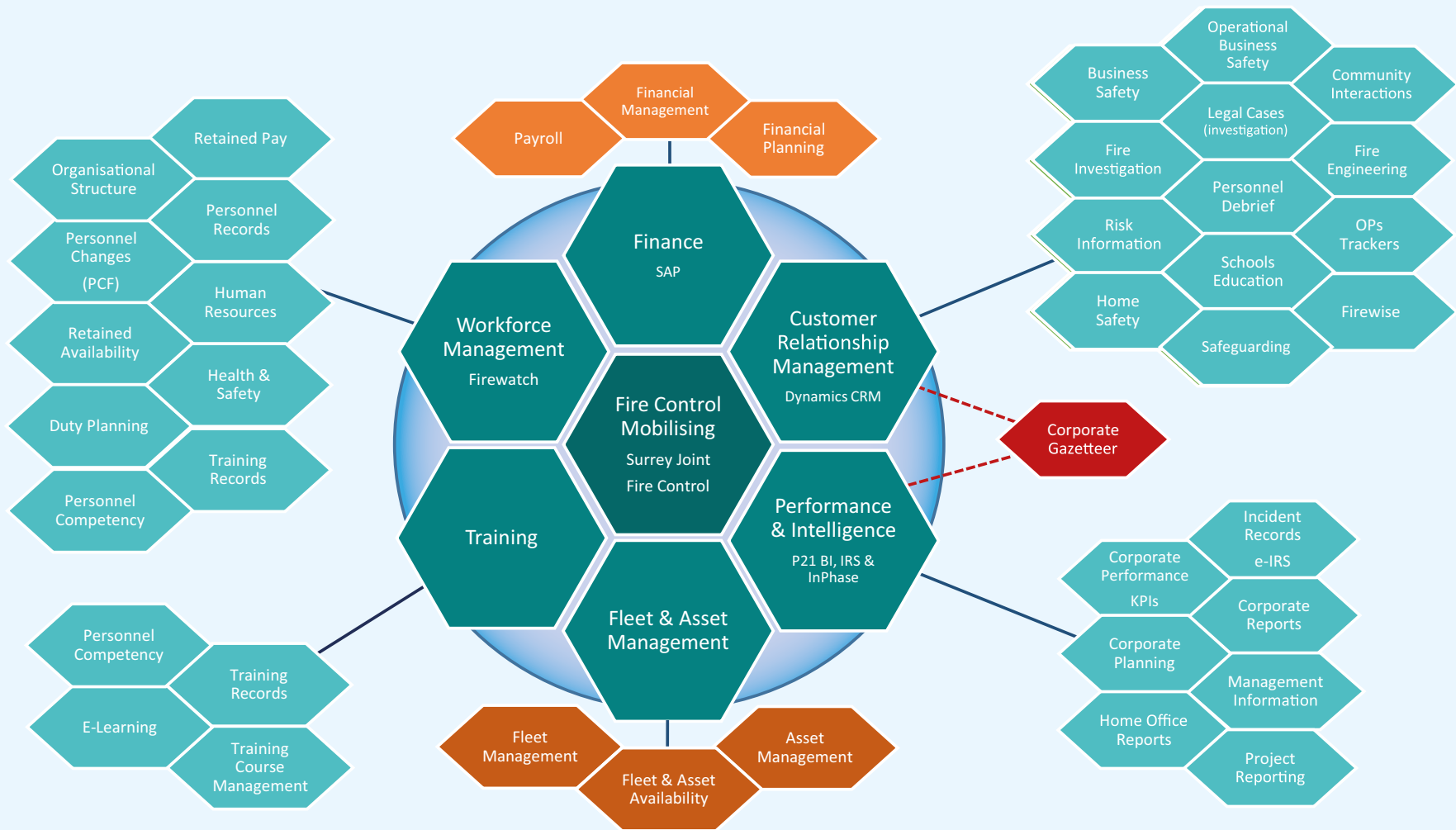
Commitment 4 – Make effective use of our resources

Objective	Business Outcomes
Improve the service's efficiency and effectiveness through investment in core line of business systems - Firewatch	<p>Integration with the mobilising system allowing FireWatch to automatically update the mobilising system with crewing and availability and then for the mobilising systems to automatically update FireWatch incident data.</p> <p>RDS Pay implemented, delivering increased data accuracy at reduced cost through reduction in manual processes and data entry. Timeliness of On Call claims ensuring On Call Firefighters receive correct and appropriate remuneration.</p> <p>Crewing of specialist officer and vehicles on FireWatch, ensuring competency training requirements are monitored. Consistent approach to recording of training on FireWatch. Improved accuracy of crewing availability through use of qualification exclusion functionality will be in line with EFSRS policies and training competencies.</p> <p>Self Service improving integrity of employee data held on FireWatch, enabling On Call personnel to view shifts remotely and to remotely book holiday</p>
Improve the service's efficiency and effectiveness by digitising processes – Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)	<p>Reduction in paper forms and reduced multiple handling of data and improved data accuracy</p> <p>A workplace environment that is increasingly anchored in the digital workplace, supporting the transition to enhanced ways of working delivering increased effectiveness and efficiency</p> <p>Introduction of a document management and workflow systems based on Sharepoint ensuring accurate records management and optimised digital workflows, whilst facilitating enhanced information sharing with other public service partners</p>
Improve the service's efficiency and effectiveness through investment in Finance & Procurement systems and processes	<p>Migration to new finance system as part of the ESCC led MBOSS project to replace SAP.</p> <p>Streamlined Finance and Procurement processes in place along with enhanced financial integrity and efficiency. Improve integration between finance & other systems</p>

Objective	Business Outcomes
<p>Improve the service's efficiency and effectiveness through investment in core line of business systems - Performance Management System</p>	<p>Improved Strategic Business Planning and providing greater access to strategic reporting and management information. Facilitating development of business objectives and focus for corporate KPI's</p> <p>More effective risk management through providing greater access to risk registers and in supporting definition of actions for mitigation to corporate risks in a timely manner. Providing appropriate levels of management information to managers that enable informed decision making</p> <p>Wider distribution of performance information improving Service Delivery by service personnel through visibility of station specific activities and performance. Audience specific dashboards to highlight areas of performance of direct interest and a fully integrated Business Intelligence system to ensure more targeted publication of reports</p>

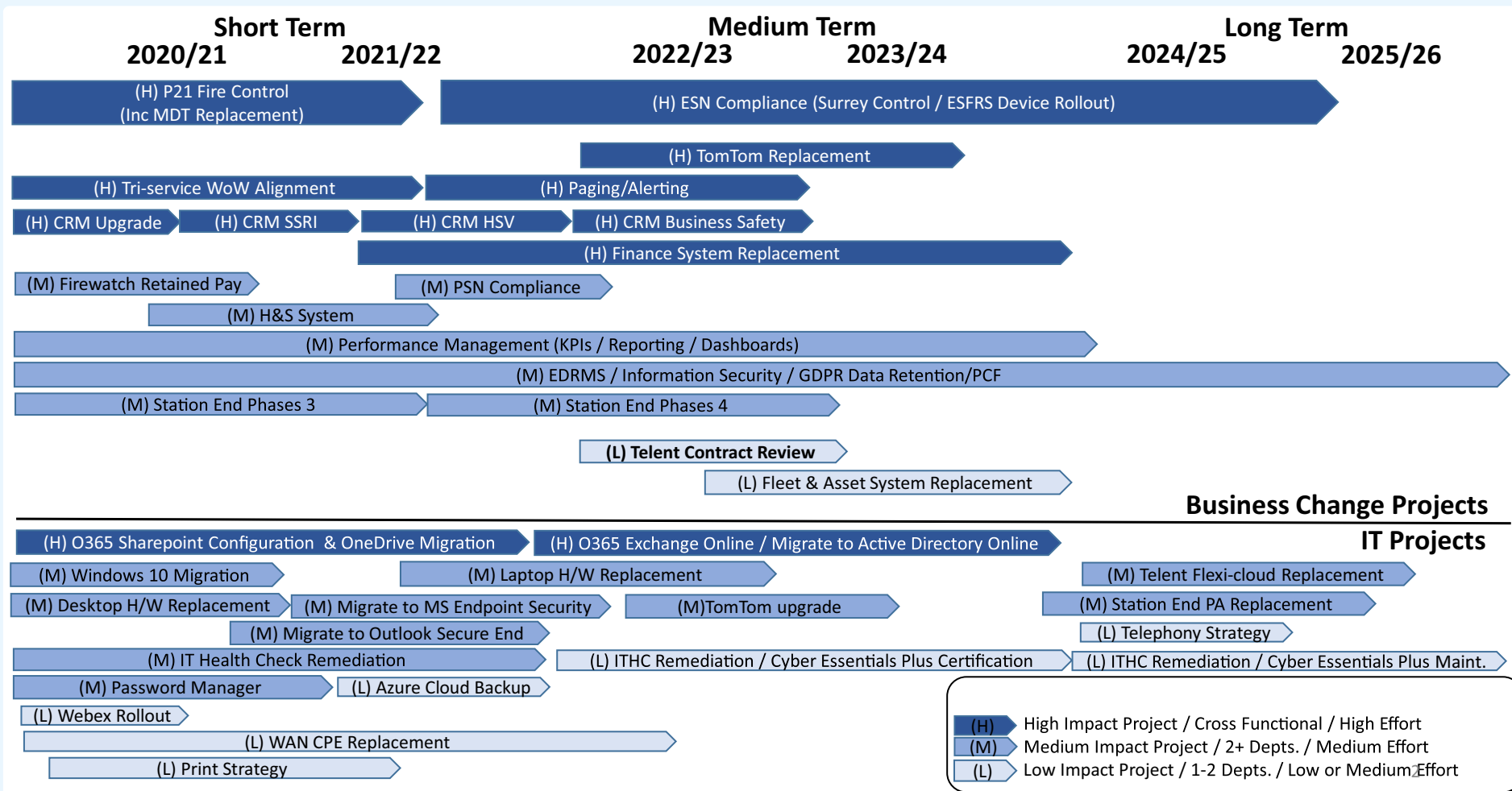
ESFRS Line of Business Systems

The diagram below illustrates the core Line of Business Systems, which are priorities for the IT Strategy 2020-2025 and associated investments.



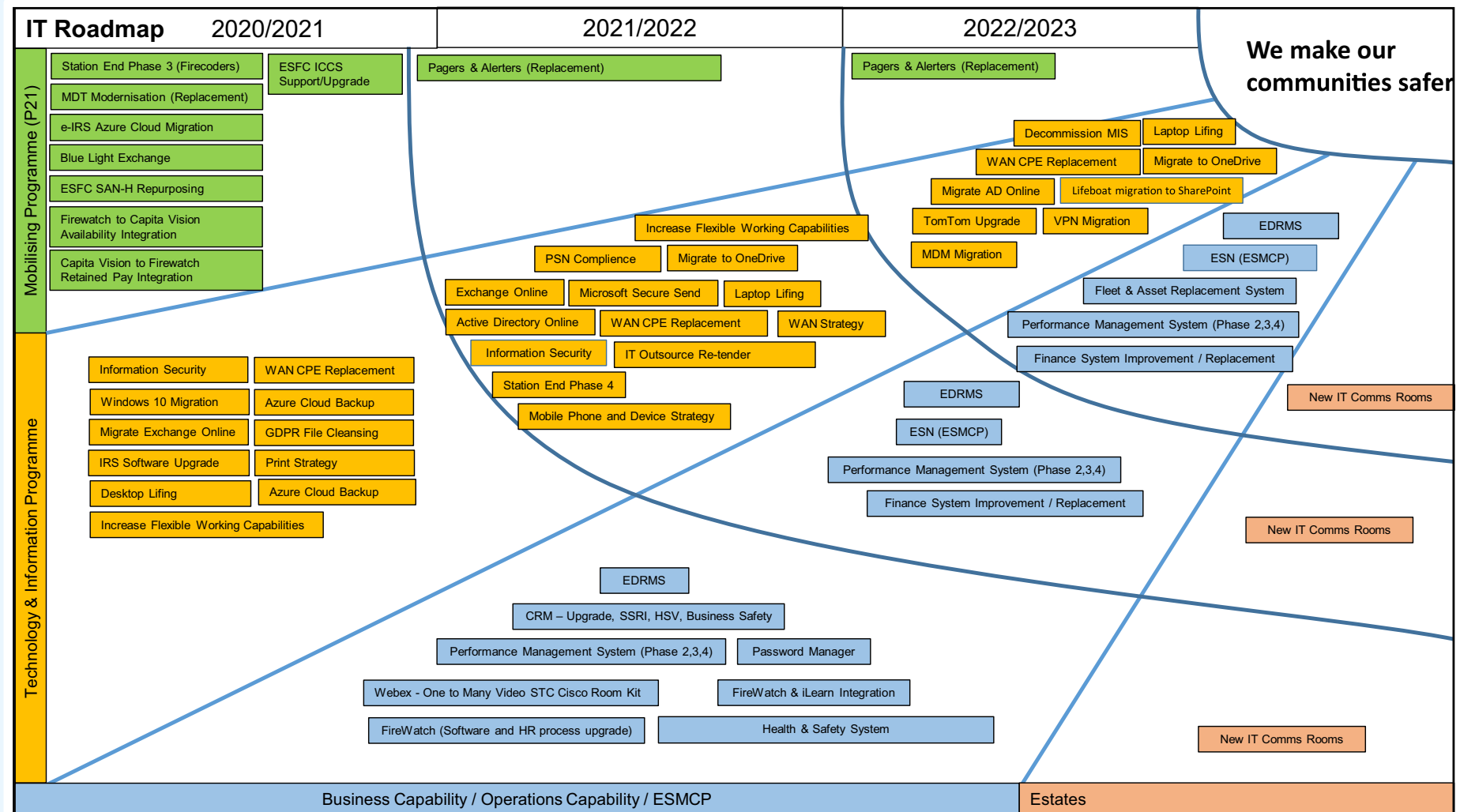
Plan on a Page

The diagram below illustrates how the organisation's priorities will be achieved through a set of project deliverables with an indicative timeline. The schedule will be delivered through a structured and prioritised set of programmes according to PMO processes and approvals.



Programme View

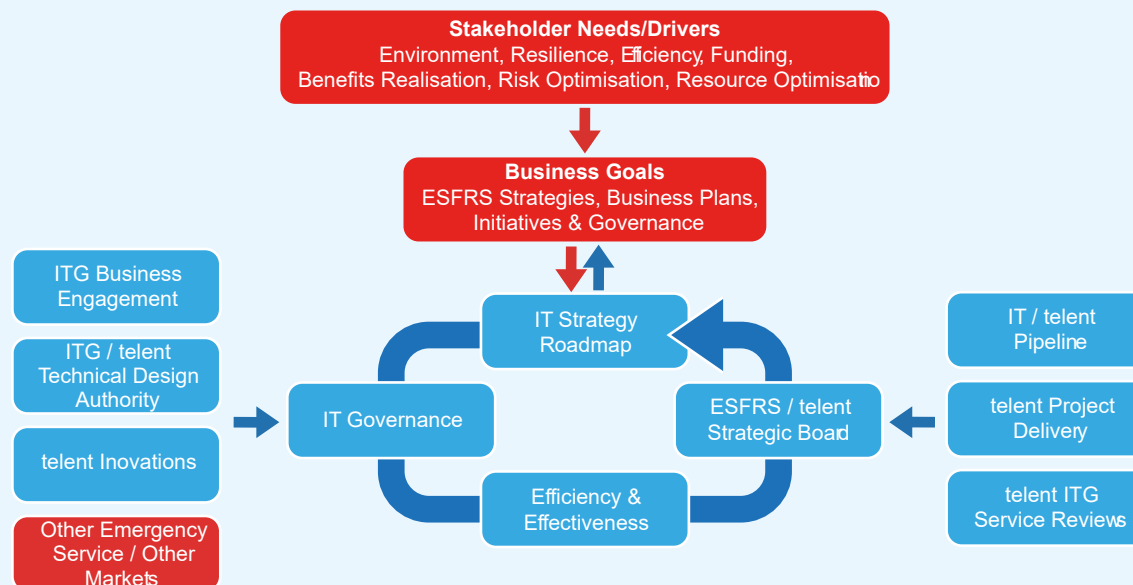
The diagram below illustrates the IT Strategy deliverables organised into the existing PMO Clusters.



Performance Management & Review

The ESFRS / telent IT Strategic Board exists to provide senior level guidance, leadership and strategy for the overall delivery of the Services from telent and to act as the point of escalation; it provides an environment for review, discussion and consideration with final decision making subject to the decision routes within the respective organisations.

- Receiving and reviewing service reports from the telent Service Manager and reviewing recommendations on technology, service and other developments that offer potential for improving the benefit that ESFRS is receiving, in particular value for money.
- Identifying strategic business opportunities which IT can support, highlighting duplication or misalignment of objectives and priorities which have an IT dependency, and providing guidance on matters which may impact on the implementation of the IT services, to inform SLT.
- Ensuring a single approved programme and project pipeline in close coordination with ESFRS ITG, PMO and SLT.



Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

We know that understanding inclusion, equality and diversity are an integral part of keeping our communities safer, stronger and healthier.

We will work to achieve the aims of the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Strategy 2017-2021.

- Knowing your communities
- Leadership, partnership and service commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services
- A skilled and committed workforce

This IT Strategy is designed to facilitate and support the Service's IE and D strategy.



Finances

Realising the ambition that the Service has for its business systems and IT infrastructure between 2020 and 2025 is not without its financial challenges.

The technology deliverables required to facilitate the ESFRS Corporate and Directorate strategies/ plans have been translated into a series of prioritised business change projects with an IT workstream and a series of specific IT projects. The business projects, associated technology deliverables and desired timescales have then been prioritised during interviews with Assistant Directors and senior managers.

The summary financial schedules below include inflight business projects such as CRM, Firewatch, Performance Management and Project 21. The schedules also include candidate projects with a technical workstream considered as dependencies required to deliver the Service's business plans, such as a new Paging & Alerting solution.

IT projects contained within the financial schedules include existing technology deliverables such as Information Security and the Windows 10 rollout. The schedules also include the technical projects considered by ITG and telent as essential to address the remaining weaknesses in the Service's IT infrastructure, such as the need to replace end of life legacy PCs/laptops and complete the rollout of Office 365 and Sharepoint.

Project Funding Requirement

In June 2020 SLT agreed the IT related priorities for available funding as:

- Mobilising Strategy Project 21
- CRM
- Firewatch
- Performance Management
- Electronic Document Management System
- IT Infrastructure Projects / Office 365
- Information Security

Following prioritisation by the Assistant Directors and scaling back of the Service's technology ambitions in line with the agreed priorities, it leaves an estimated project funding shortfall of £0.20m over the five years of the IT Strategy to 2025 (see Table 1)

The Service also wishes to complete the development of the new CRM Home Safety Visit (HSV) and Business Safety systems, which will see the removal of inefficient paper processes and the implementation of automated workflow and electronic data capture. It is estimated that the development, purchase of devices and other associated deployment costs could increase the project funding shortfall by a further £0.82m from £0.20m to £1.02m.

Costed proposals for the development of CRM HSV and Business Safety are due to be presented to SLT in October 2020, including the prioritisation of 'Must Have' functionality in order to reduce the estimated cost and a review of benefits identification and realisation.

Table 1 Project Summary One-off Costs £000's	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Existing Business Projects	1,243	1,125	360	130	0	2,858
Existing IT Project	307	387	0	0	0	694
ESN Readiness	0	713	712	0	0	1,425
P21- ESFRS IT Integration	2,260	0	0	0	0	2,260
New Business Project	265	45	220	0	0	530
New IT Project	176	459	461	380	1,005	2,481
Total Requirement	4,251	2,729	1,753	510	1,005	10,248
Source of Funding						
IT Strategy Reserve	(1,871)	(2,016)	(1,041)	(510)	(802)	(6,240)
ESN Readiness Reserve	0	(713)	(712)	0	0	(1,425)
Mobilising Strategy (P21)	(2,260)	0	0	0	0	(2,260)
Protection Surge Grant	(120)	0	0	0	0	(120)
Total Funding	(4,251)	(2,729)	(1,753)	(510)	(592)	(10,045)
Total Funding Shortfall	0	0	0	0	203	203
Project Funding Shortfall over 5 years	203					

IT Revenue Funding Requirement

IT operating costs are due to increase in line with the deployment of the new technologies, mainly due to increases in license, support costs and the move to cloud computing.

IT operating costs are estimated to exceed the current IT revenue budget funding by a total of £2.51m over the next five years – including CRM HSV and Business Safety. Or alternatively £2.05m excluding CRM HSV and Business Safety (see Table 2).

This will result in a £0.11m pressure on the IT revenue budget starting in 2020/21 rising to £0.56m in 2021/22 and £0.72m by 2024/25.

The pressure in the 2020/21 IT revenue is caused by greater than expected Station End Phase 3 and MDT running costs and the impact of a number of P21 related projects that will go live before 2021/22.

The migration to cloud based technologies will see a move from capital investment to increased revenue spend over the next five years. This is part of a technology trend seen throughout the Commercial and Public sectors.

The one-off project funding gap and the ongoing IT revenue pressures will need to be addressed through the budget setting process and reflected in the Revenue Budget 2021/22 and the Medium Term Finance Plan 2021/22 – 2025/26. Consideration will also be given to whether any of the proposed one off costs in the Strategy should be capitalised.

Table 2 IT Revenue Ongoing Costs £000's	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Existing Business Projects	343	404	404	404	412	1,967
Existing IT Project	200	223	223	223	223	1,092
ESN Readiness	0	0	0	0	0	0
Telent Outsource	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	6,000
P21- ESFRS IT Integration	55	145	145	145	145	920
New Business Project	0	74	74	74	74	298
New IT Project	56	445	455	445	602	1,993
Total Requirement	1,854	2,491	2,491	2,491	2,656	11,985
Source of Funding						
Existing IT Revenue	(1,744)	(1,744)	(1,744)	(1,744)	(1,744)	(8,720)
ESN Revenue (Tbc)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobilising Strategy (P21)	0	(190)	(190)	(190)	(190)	(760)
Total Funding	(1,744)	(1,934)	(1,934)	(1,934)	(1,934)	(9,480)
Funding Shortfall	110	557	557	557	722	2,505
IT Revenue Funding Shortfall over 5 years	2,505					

Conclusion

The IT Strategy 2020-2025 builds on the significant progress made since the decision to outsource IT Services to telent in November 2016 and embark on a transformation programme of the core IT infrastructure and applications.

IT services are a key enabler to deliver the organisation's strategic objectives and the IT Strategy is the mechanism through which this will be delivered.

The IT Strategy deliverables have been developed in support of and aligned to the Corporate Plan and have been formulated and reviewed in conjunction with the Assistant Directors and Senior Officers, taking into consideration the Operational Response Review and the findings detailed in the 2019 HMICFRS inspection report.

Project 21 and the tri-service Joint Fire Control collaboration with Surrey FRS and West Sussex FRS have also been a major influence on the direction of the strategy in relation to fire control systems and related IT infrastructure.

Technology trends such as the migration to cloud computing, advances in data analytics, the growth of flexible working and the rapid move to virtual working as a result of Covid-19 have been considered.

The working lives of colleagues will be affected, for the better, with the introduction of new technologies outlined in this strategy.

Funding in support of the Service's ambition will always pose a challenge.

A detailed prioritisation process conducted by the Assistant Directors and scaling back of the Service's technology ambitions in line with the agreed priorities, has reduced the funding shortfall (project and IT revenue costs) to £2.25m for the five years of the IT Strategy.

The shortfall (project and IT revenue costs) will be increased to £3.53m for the five years of the IT Strategy, should the Service wish to complete the development of the CRM HSV and Business Safety systems.

Further funding will be identified through the budget review process in order to resolve the funding shortfall.

The IT Strategy does not take account the business resources and capacity that will be required to implement the Service's ambitions in this area.

Finally, SLT have committed to develop detailed business cases to justify investments, defining the associated business benefits and efficiency savings.



Appendix 1 – Detailed Business Projects (One-off Costs)

Item	Appendix 1 – Detailed Project Budget Business Projects One-Off Costs	P21	Existing Project	Budget Confidence (%)	20/21 £000's	21/22 £000's	22/23 £000's	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
2	Pagers and Alerters	Y	Y	50	0	223	230	0	0
1	Station End IT Refresh (Phase 3 & 4)	Y	Y	100	207	222	0	0	0
3	MDT Modernisation (Hardware & Software)	Y	Y	80	430	0	0	0	0
5	CRM	N	Y	60	870	0	0	0	0
6	EDRMS	N	Y	100	300	300	0	0	0
8	Finance System Improvement / Replacement	N	Y	60	0	130	130	130	0
10	ESN (ESMCP)	N	Y	100	0	713	712	0	0
11	FireWatch (Software and HR process upgrade)	N	Y	100	27	0	0	0	0
12	PSN Compliance	N	Y	80	0	250	0	0	0
16	Integrated Health & Safety System	N	N	20	130	0	0	0	0
17	Fleet & Asset Replacement System	N	N	10	0	0	200	0	0
53	One to many video STC Cisco Room Kit	N	N	70	20	0	0	0	0
58	FireWatch Appliance Availability Integration	Y	Y	60	31	0	0	0	0
59	FireWatch Retained Pay Integration	Y	Y	60	55	0	0	0	0
61	GDPR File Cleanse	N	Y	100	46	0	0	0	0
78	Performance Management System (Phase 2,3,4)	N	N	10	30	20	20	0	0
80	iLearn & FireWatch Integration	N	N	50	60	0	0	0	0
84	Project 21 - ESFRS IT Integration Costs	Y	Y	100	1537	0	0	0	0
85	Increase Flexible working capabilities	N	N	10	25	25	0	0	0
14	Information Security	N	Y	100	50	50	0	0	0
Total:					3,818	1,933	1,292	130	0
Less source of funding from IT Strategy Reserve					(1,438)	(1,221)	(580)	(130)	0
Less source of ESN Grant					0	(713)	(712)	0	0
Protection Surge Grant					(120)	0	0	0	0
Less source of FA agreed funding for P21 (ESFRS IC)					(2,260)	0	0	0	0
Total net one off costs / (saving):					0	0	0	0	0

Appendix 1 – Detailed IT Projects (One-off Costs)

Item	Appendix 1 – Detailed Project Budget (Continued) IT Projects One-Off Costs	P21	Existing Project	Budget Confidence (%)	20/21 £000's	21/22 £000's	22/23 £000's	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
25	Migrate to Windows 10	N	Y	60	132	0	0	0	0
26	Migrate to OneDrive	N	N	60	0	50	50	0	0
27	Migrate to Outlook Secure Send	N	N	75	0	10	0	0	0
30	Implement Sharepoint Online	N	N	50	0	0	0	0	25
32	Migrate to Exchange Online	N	N	75	10	40	0	0	0
35	Decommission MIS	N	N	10	0	0	40	0	0
36	eIRS software Upgrade	N	N	70	57	0	0	0	0
37	Upgrade TomTom Bridge	N	N	20	0	0	100	0	0
40	Laptop Lifting	N	N	90	0	160	90	0	0
41	Desktop Lifting	N	Y	90	125	0	0	0	0
42	Migrate Lifeboat to Sharepoint Online (Document Management Solution)	N	N	25	0	0	65	0	0
44	Migrate to AD Online	N	N	40	0	30	25	0	0
45	Station IT Replacement (Station UPS Replacement)	N	N	90	0	0	0	0	125
47	Station PA System Replacement	N	N	75	0	0	0	0	80
48	WAN CPE Replacement	N	N	60	56	59	31	0	0
49	IT Outsource re-tender	N	N	60	0	50	0	0	250
55	Implement Password Manager	N	N	90	38	0	0	0	0
60	Azure Cloud Backup	N	N	90	5	0	0	0	0
63	Mobile Phone and Device Strategy / replacement	N	N	75	0	60	0	0	0
64	Lewes HQ Network Lifting	N	N	90	0	0	0	30	0
66	IP Telephony Strategy	N	N	20	0	0	0	350	0
67	Primary Data Centre Infrastructure lifting	N	N	50	0	0	0	0	250
68	Printing Strategy	N	N	20	10	0	0	0	0
69	Secondary Data Centre Infrastructure lifting	N	N	50	0	0	0	0	100
70	WAN strategy	N	Y	90	0	337	0	0	0
71	VPN Migration	N	N	75	0	0	20	0	0
72	MDM Migration	N	N	50	0	0	40	0	0
74	Station End IT Refresh (Switch Replacement)	N	N	90	0	0	0	0	175
Total:					433	796	461	380	1,005
Less source of funding from 2017-2022 IT Strategy Reserve					(433)	(796)	461	(380)	(802)
Total net one off costs / (saving):					0	0	0	0	203
Grand Total					0	0	0	0	203
Grand Total over 5 Years					203				

Appendix 1 – Detailed IT Projects (One-off Costs)

Appendix 2 – Directorate Strategies / Plans & Dependencies with IT Strategy Projects							
Item	Description	Operational Support & Resilience	HR & Organisational Development	Planning & Improvement	Resources / Treasurer	Safer Communities	Training & Assurance
1	Station End IT Refresh (Phase 3&4)				x		
2	Pagers and Alerters					x	
3	MDT Modernisation (Hardware & Software)	x					
5	CRM					x	
6	EDRMS				x		
8	Finance System Improvement / Replacement				x		
10	ESN (ESMCP)	x					
11	FireWatch (S/W and HR process upgrade)		x				
12	PSN Compliance				x		
14	Information Security				x		
16	Integrated Health & Safety System						x
17	Fleet & Asset Replacement System	x					
25	Migrate to Windows 10				x		
26	Migrate to OneDrive				x		
27	Migrate to Outlook Secure Send				x		
30	Implement Sharepoint Online				x		
32	Migrate to Exchange Online				x		
35	Decommission MIS				x		
36	eIRS software Upgrade					x	
37	Upgrade TomTom Bridge	x					
40	Laptop Lifting				x		
41	Desktop Lifting				x		
42	Migrate Lifeboat to Sharepoint Online				x		
44	Migrate to AD Online				x		
45	Station IT Replacement				x		
47	Station PA System Replacement				x		
48	WAN CPE Replacement				x		
49	IT Outsource re-tender				x		
53	One to many video STC Cisco Room Kit				x		
54	BlueLight Exchange	x					
55	Implement Password Manager				x		
58	FireWatch Appliance Availability Integration	x					
59	FireWatch Retained Pay Integration		x				
60	Azure Cloud Backup				x		
61	GDPR File Cleanse		x				
63	Mobile Phone and Device Strategy				x		

64	Lewes HQ Network Lifing				x		
66	IP Telephony Strategy				x		
67	Primary Data Centre Infrastructure lifing				x		
68	Printing Strategy				x		
69	Secondary Data Centre Infrastructure lifing				x		
70	WAN strategy				x		
71	VPN Migration				x		
72	MDM Migration				x		
74	Station End IT Refresh (Switch Replacement)				x		
78	Performance Management System 2,3,4)			x			
80	iLearn & FireWatch Integration						x
84	Project 21 - ESFRS IT Integration Costs				x		
85	Increase Flexible working capabilities				x		

Compliance, Coordination and Commercialism

East Sussex Fire Authority Procurement Strategy 2022 to 2025



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

Alternative formats and translation

Albanian	Me kërkesë, një përmbledhje e këtij dokumenti gjendet edhe në gjuhën shqipe.
Arabic	ملخص لهذه الوثيقة متاحاً أيضاً باللغة العربية عند الطلب.
Bengali	এই ডকুমেন্টের সারাংশও অনুরোধে বাংলায় পাওয়া যায়।
Cantonese	本文件的摘要也可應要求製作成中文(繁體字)版本。
Farsi	خلاصه شده این مدرک هم در صورت درخواست به فارسی موجود است.
Russian	Краткое содержание настоящего документа по отдельному запросу предоставляется также на русском языке.
Gujarati	આ દસ્તાવેજનો ટૂંકસાર વિનંતી કરવાથી ગુજરાતીમાં પણ મળી રહેશે.
Kurdish	کورتیهکی ئەم بەلگەیه ههروهها به پێی داواکاری به زمانی کوردی دەس دهکهریت
Portuguese	Encontra-se também disponível um sumário deste documento em Português, a pedido.
Polish	Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany w języku polskim.

 **0303 999 1000**

The following formats are available on request:

Large print (reformatted and increased to 18 point sans serif font)

CD ROM in plain text format to enable computer 'reader' systems to access and translate the information. Audio tape, audio CD and braille. Pictorial format suitable for people with learning difficulties ('easy read').

For translations of this document, please contact the Publicity and Media Officer.

Tel: 0303 999 1000

Fax: 01323 725574

Minicom: 01323 462003

Contents

4. Foreword from the Chair and Cheif
5. Welcome
6. Strategic Context
7. Our Purpose, Commitments & Values
8. Our Vision for Procurement
10. Our Key Themes
15. Measuring success
16. Priorities for years 1, 2 and 3
17. Contact Us



Foreward

Roy Galley | Chairman of East Sussex Fire Authority

I am pleased to present East Sussex Fire Authority's new Procurement Strategy which builds on the firm foundations established in previous strategies. Over the next three years we will see the benefits of our investment in professionalising the function and moving to a category management approach.

With ever increasing pressure on budgets and uncertainty around our future funding, the role of procurement will be essential in supporting the Authority in delivering high performing services to our community at a price we can afford.

Procurement also has a wider role and will be key in enabling us to achieve the national target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050., and through our Responsible Procurement Policy, ensuring that we use our purchasing power locally and nationally, to drive change and consider the economic, social and environmental impacts and benefits to our community when procuring goods and services.

Dawn Whittaker | Chief Fire Officer

Today's changing world requires us to continually consider our priorities; balancing a strategic approach with the ability to respond swiftly to opportunities and challenges. In this climate of reform, increased data transparency and legislative changes, coupled with the need to modernise Procurement and satisfy greater demand with limited resources, it's clear that how we develop our strategic Procurement capability has never been more vital.

Efficiency remains a significant part of the wider Reform programme and HMICFRS inspections will likely have a keen focus on procurement, as part of a wider assessment of efficiency and effectiveness.

This strategy explains how we will continue to develop and benefit from the professional expertise of our Procurement Department, enabling us to focus our resources, on the vital value adding activities, which drive savings and efficiencies and support the delivery of the Service's purpose and commitments.

By aligning our categories with the national procurement portfolio, we reaffirm our commitment to support the national procurement and reform agenda. We will continue to proactively engage with the National Fire Chiefs Council Procurement Hub to deliver national, collaborative contracts.

In this climate of reform, increased data transparency and legislative changes, coupled with the need to modernise Procurement and satisfy greater demand with limited resources, it's clear that how we develop our strategic Procurement capability has never been more vital.

Welcome

East Sussex Fire Authority's (the Authority) aim is to make our communities safer by providing prevention, protection, and response services to circa 813,000 people within the area of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove.

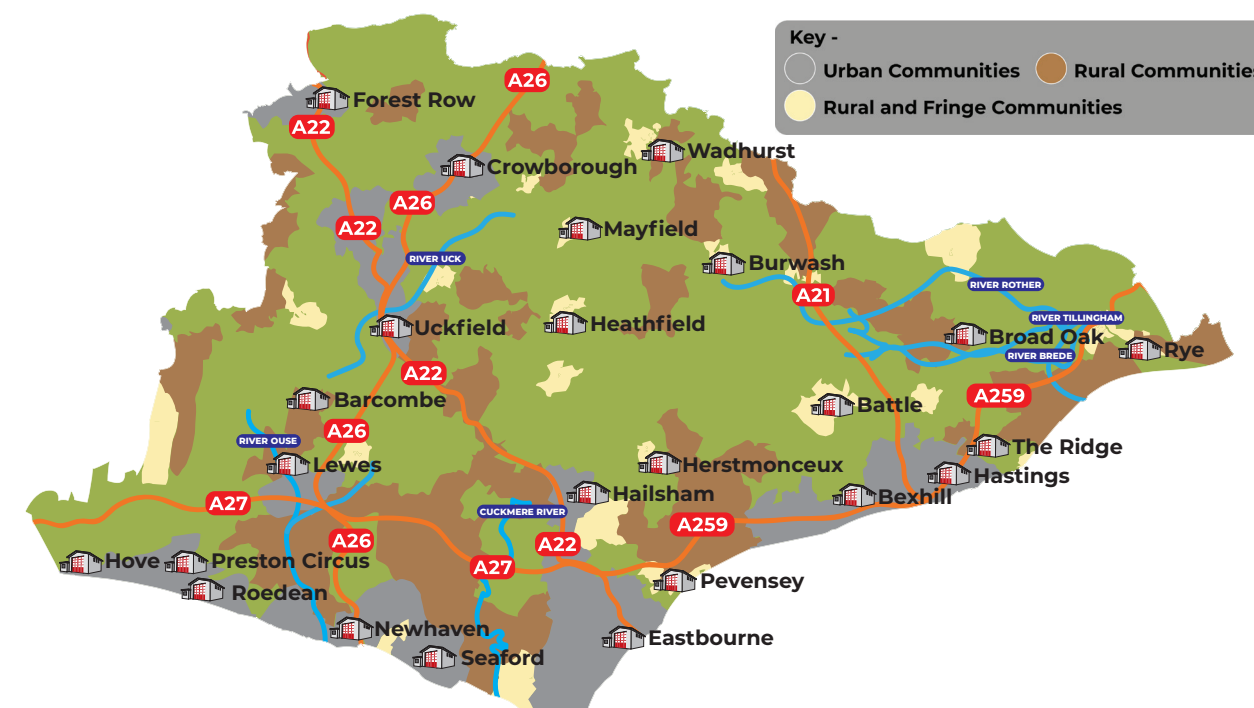
With ever increasing pressure on budgets and reduced funding, it is more important than ever that the Authority's Procurement Strategy aligns with and supports our Purpose and Commitments and delivers efficient and effective services, which meet the needs of our community.

With a net annual spend of circa £11m on goods, services and works, procurement and contract management are key to achieving efficiencies within the organisation. Delivering value for money & optimum management of limited resources, without compromising resilience, are paramount.

This strategy details how the central Procurement Team will support the Authority to respond to the financial challenges we face, whilst maintaining our commitment to keep our community safer and drive out value for the public purse. This refreshed version reflects a change in emphasis, as we continue to embed a category approach, in highlighting less the need to change our ways of working and more the need to continue to deliver against the established themes, respond to changing legislation and embed a responsible approach to procuring.

Centralisation of all complex procurement activity and delivering category strategies which are aligned both internally and with our external partners, will create value, ensure compliance and maximise the impact of Procurement.

The 8 Key Themes of this strategy are central to its delivery and are designed specifically to enable efficient and effective, commercially sound commissioning within ESFA.



Strategic Context

In response to the Home Office's fire reform programme, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has created a strategic committee tasked with harnessing our national buying power, under a category management approach. This has enabled an unprecedented level of data sharing, collaboration and transparency, which will drive significant aggregation of demand and the Procurement Strategy remains designed to directly align with this undertaking.

In December 2020, the Cabinet Office set out proposals for shaping the future of public procurement legislation for a post-Brexit Britain, with the publication of a Green Paper. "The overarching goals of these proposals are to speed up and simplify procurement processes, place value for money at their heart, generate social value and unleash opportunities for small businesses, charities and social enterprises to innovate in public service delivery". Source- "Transforming Public Procurement"/Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office/December 2021.

All contracting authorities must have regard to this Statement, which is likely to include creating new businesses, jobs and skills in the UK; improving supplier diversity and innovation, tackling climate change and reducing waste.

This strategy, supported by the Authority's Responsible Procurement policy, is intended to align with the change in legislation and build on the transition of Procurement from a tactical function to strategic leadership.

As the Medium-Term Finance Plan outlines, there remains uncertainty about the future of local government funding and this has only been increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The MTFP under the worst-case option shows a need to deliver further savings of £3.8m by 2026/27. In the best-case scenario this reduces to £0.2m. The mid case scenario forecasts the need for £1m additional savings by 2023/24 rising to £1.5m over the next 5 years. Efficiency remains a significant part of the wider Reform programme and HMICFRS inspections will likely have a keen focus on procurement, as part of a wider assessment of efficiency and effectiveness. It is also part of the sector's offer to Government in return for a fair and sustainable financial settlement.

As we consider how we can meet the demands and drive the change to manage these challenges, it's important to recognise that challenges create opportunities.

The drive for reform creates a sense of urgency which anchors the need for change and modernisation and financial pressures open the door for Procurement to play a key strategic role, in driving value and competitive advantage.

As the Government has a stated intention to streamline the procurement legislation, which could provide an opportunity for simplified and improved procedural rules. The reshoring of British supply chains in advance of Brexit could also provide an excellent opportunity for small and local businesses to win new contracts.

In this climate of reform, increased data transparency and legislative changes, coupled with the need to modernise Procurement and satisfy greater demand with limited resources, it's clear that how we develop our strategic Procurement capability has never been more vital. We are committed to delivering high performing, responsible services, that make effective use of our resources, to meet the needs of our community.

Our Purpose, Commitments and Values

Our Purpose

"We make our communities safer"

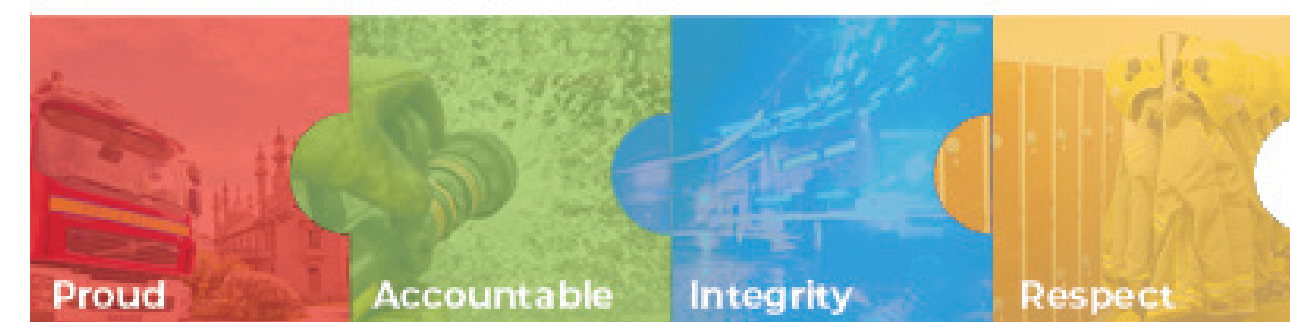
Our commitments

- Delivering high performing services
- Engage with our communities
- Have a safe and valued workforce
- Making effective use of our resource

Our values

- We are **PROUD** of the service we provide
- We are **ACCOUNTABLE** for our actions
- We show **INTEGRITY** in our work
- We **RESPECT** our colleagues and members of the community

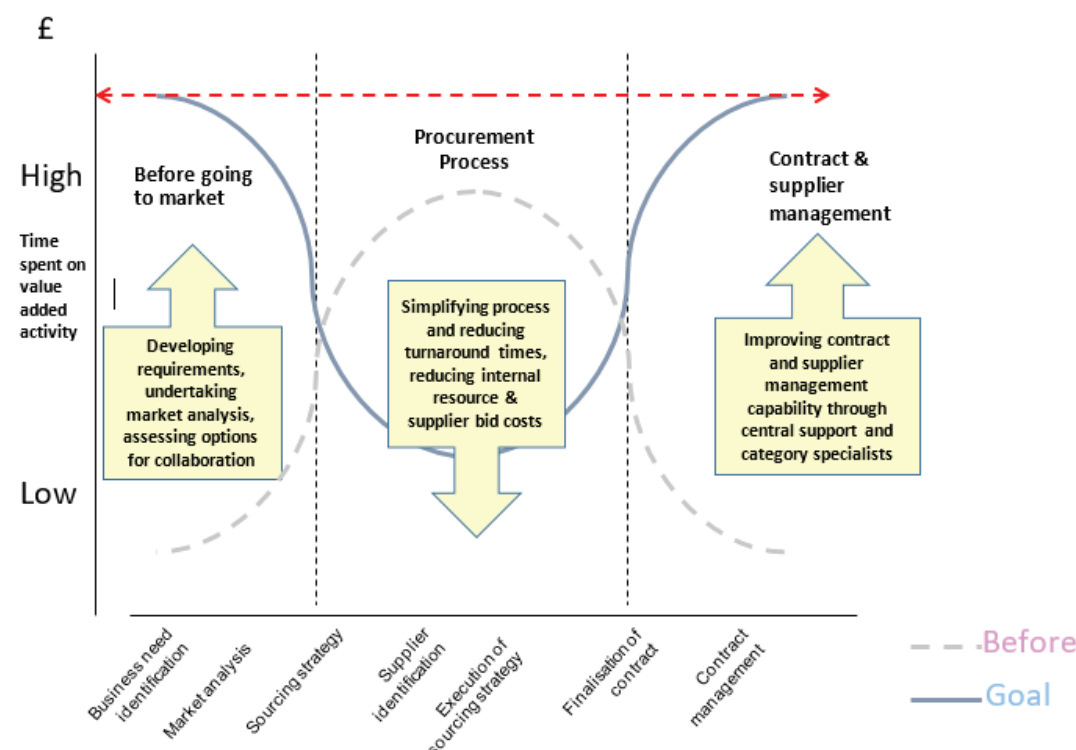
LIVING OUR VALUES



Our Vision for Procurement

A CORPORATE, COMMERCIAL SERVICE, DELIVERED CENTRALLY AND COLLABORATIVELY, ON BEHALF OF THE AUTHORITY

The best value from any contract is at the beginning when it's being shaped and at the end when it's being managed. This diagram illustrates how we aim to reverse the focus of the central Procurement team, to maximise value and harness commercial advantage. (Fig 1 below)

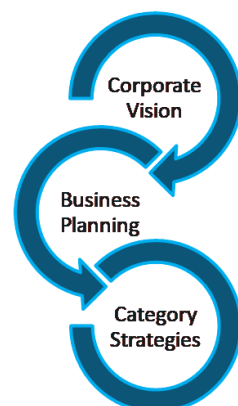


Source: Adapted from "CCS Commercial DNA 2014"

To gain best access to these opportunities, we must focus our efforts and resources into the pre-tender activities (identifying needs, market research and supplier engagement) and into the post-tender activities (contract management, continuous improvement, negotiation).

Centralising all complex pre-procurement & post award activity significantly enhances our capability to identify scope for improvement, whether in the specification or contract management stages.

For the procurement activities undertaken within the Authority to align with our corporate business plans and the National Agenda for reform and standardisation, we will maintain a centralised, coordinated, category approach.



Centralised procurement activity, under the professional expertise of the Procurement Department, gives an opportunity to better organise & coordinate external spend and improve leverage in contracting and negotiation, by forming a better orchestrated approach to the supply base.

The central team will work with the subject matter experts in the key commissioning departments, to craft category strategies which Procurement will manage & deliver.

Centralised Procurement enables:

- ☐ alignment with corporate objectives
- ☐ better pre-procurement market engagement
- ☐ early identification of the optimum route to market
- ☐ a targeted approach to identifying opportunities for collaboration
- ☐ outcome based specifications which drive value and are fit for purpose
- ☐ increased compliance and control
- ☐ a consistent process
- ☐ robust contracts, which balance risk and commercial advantage
- ☐ increased purchasing power & better leverage
- ☐ technical and Service standardisation
- ☐ demand management
- ☐ improved contract management and problem resolution
- ☐ lower training costs
- ☐ improved transparency, spend management/data capture, reporting & audit
- ☐ reductions in process costs

Tactical, low value purchasing will remain within the remit of the individual business areas, accessing corporate contracts via a One Stop Shop, utilising Procurement Cards (P/Cards) & electronic requisitions.

Requests for Quotes and tenders will made via the central Procurement Team - this hybrid structure supplements local buyers and teams with a corporate team that leverages spend into coordinated categories.

The primary aim of a hybrid approach is to enable limited professional Procurement resources to devolve transactional activity, to focus on value adding activity. Procurement will act strategically to lead and guide the process of procurement within ESFRS, not to actively procure low value, high volume commodities.

The Key Themes to Deliver Our Vision

8 KEY THEMES SUPPORTING COMPLIANCE, COORDINATION AND COMMERCIALISM

These core principles will focus our activities on delivering efficient and effective, commercially sound commissioning. The themes reflect the importance of our pre and post procurement activities and focus effort and resources where they add most value.



Theme 1

Technology, clear and efficient processes, coordinated and supported by the central team, modernising and simplifying the process of procurement to make better use of technology and e-procurement tools, such as P/cards and electronic requisitions.

The Service have embarked on the implementation of a new back-office Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution to replace the existing SAP system.

The objectives of the MBOS programme are as follows:

Efficiency - Eliminate repetitive processes and greatly reduce the need to manually enter information

User experience - Save time on transactional activity and spend more time on developing insights into user, customer, supplier & partner needs, and performance

Workforce competencies - Change the competency requirements of the organisation as it moves from a transaction base to data intelligence led organisation

Integrated access to information - Data accessed through a single Reporting and Business Intelligence solution, integrated across all platforms, keeping data consistent, accurate, and unique

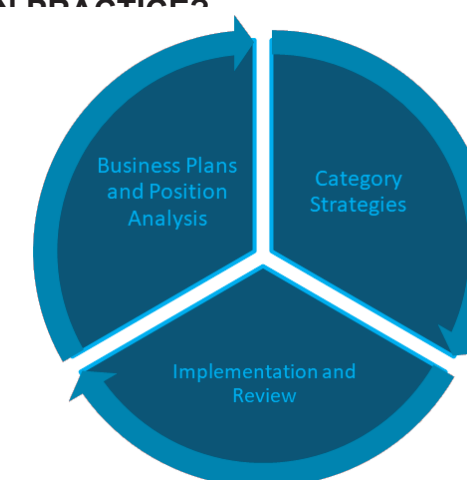
Procurement will develop and deploy E-learning packages to strengthen the governance induction process and maintain competency.

We will make better use of social media to alert and target local enterprises and SMEs in both the private and 3rd sector, to new procurement opportunities.

Theme 2

Category management is a structured, coordinated, strategic approach which links directly to business planning for the procurement of goods and services, and manages the process from identification of need to delivery and ongoing supplier performance. It focuses on the majority of organisational spend and seeks to reduce demand, simplify the way we buy and aggregate spend across the entire organisation or multiple organisations.

HOW WILL THIS WORK IN PRACTICE?



1. Categories directly align with the NPOC and include: clothing, meet, operational equipment, ICT, facilities management and construction and professional services.
2. Analysing key areas of spend to enables identification of savings and or/collaborative opportunities and maximises the value of spend.
3. In partnership with our key commissioning departments, strategies are developed which make sourcing decisions based on objective information and which follow a Position, Choice, Action approach, using market analysis and spend data, to provide a broad understanding of the supply market, the opportunities and the threats. (Fig. 2)

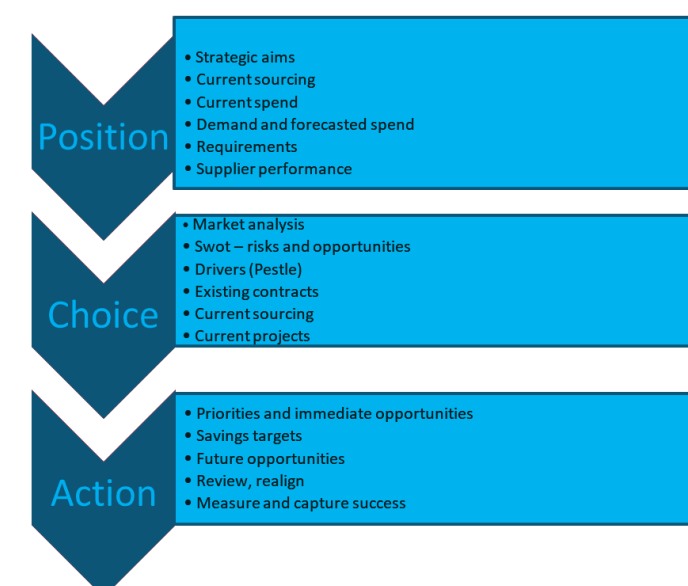


Fig. 2

4. Key commissioning departments will be supported by a Business Partner approach, with the central team working with colleagues to create and implement category strategies, measure performance and review outcomes.

Theme 3

We will support Partnering and Collaboration by aligning our categories with the national agenda, aggregating spend through effective collaboration or by sharing services on common goods and services, without compromising the outcome.

Pre-procurement activity and sourcing strategies underpinning the category approach, will enable us to identify & target any opportunities for collaboration either nationally, locally or both ahead of going to market.

The Procurement Department will proactively engage with and support the national Procurement Hub to deliver national, collaborative contracts.

Theme 4

Successful Contract Management is most effective where pre-award activities are properly carried out and there is robust performance monitoring and transparency. A category led approach to contract management, will oversee contract delivery, optimisation and performance.

Securing best value through proactive supplier relationship management and central monitoring of KPIs and SLAs, with our key internal customers, this central oversight will ensure agreed benefits do not leak away. This enables continuous improvement and in essence, ensures we not only get the negotiated result but continue to realise benefits.

Theme 5

People and continued Development of their skills is fundamental to the success of our strategy.

The recentralisation of complex procurement activity will see a reduction in planned training costs across the service.

To support the central team however, a joint Finance & Procurement training needs analysis exercise will be conducted across the Service for all staff engaged in commissioning activity and Procurement Development Plans will be developed. This will enable us to enhance our skills across the organisation in relation to contract management, specification writing and commercial behaviour.

We will support the organisation with regular updates, standard templates, training guides and e-learning packages to embed best practice across the Authority.

Theme 6

Clear governance, the right structure, processes and people in place will allow us to coordinate and control spend.

Procurement activity will be strongly linked to Corporate objectives and Business Plans via the Category Strategies.

A centre led approach will foster consistent, compliant processes and central monitoring will track spend against contract value.

Procurement will support colleagues to procure transparently, ethically and with integrity.

Theme 7

Risk Management. Identifying and mitigating risk is integral to the formulation of the category strategies and associated contracts.

Category Strategies will use the Kraljic Matrix approach to segment supplies according to value & risk of supply. (Fig 4)

This will enable a risk-based assessment for each category, which will be used to decide on a relevant approach for supplies.

Devolving purchasing of the tactical, low value, low risk supplies to the wider Service via P/Card purchasing, allows Procurement to focus on the strategic, bottleneck and leverage items where we can add real value.

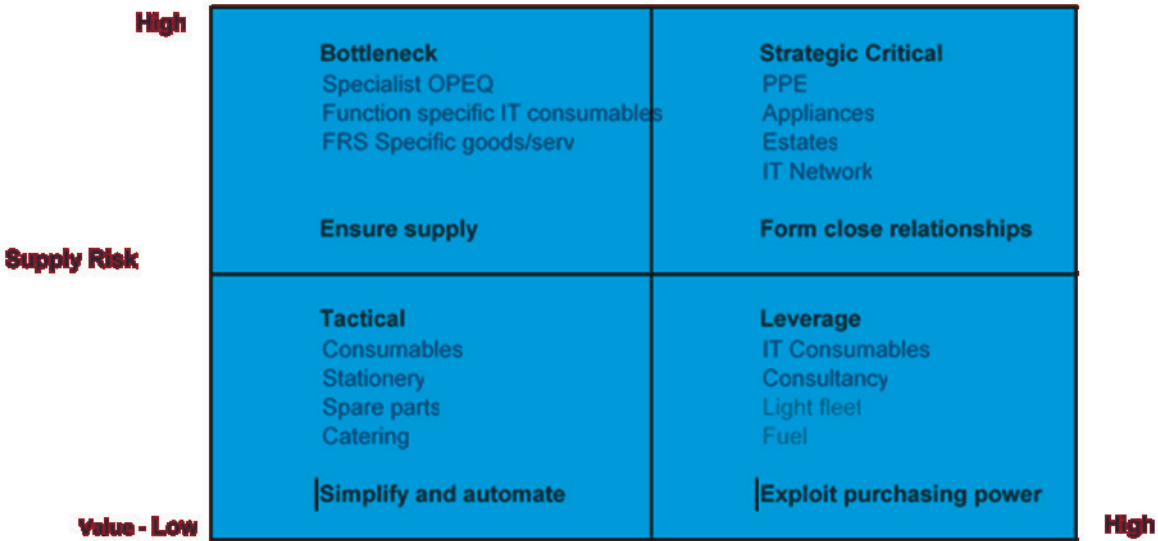


Fig. 4
In relation to contracts, Procurement will ensure that contracts contain sufficient and appropriate recourse and remedies, including financial recompense and non-punitive damages, where appropriate to the impact.

Commodity Risk Assessments will enable early identification of any potential exposures and opportunities, in relation to our supply chain, contractual arrangements and future procurements.

Theme 8

Responsible Procurement represents the additional social, economic and environmental value created by our developments throughout their lifetime for the communities and regions where we operate.

The Social Value Act 2012 has acted as a catalyst for change in the Public Sector, by requiring Public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being of communities and allowing them to deliver additional growth, skills, jobs and other community benefits, directly via their tendering activity and resulting contracts.

These benefits can be encouraged, captured and measured by how we approach the market. If our potential suppliers see significant rewards and weightings within tender opportunities for Responsible Procurement outcomes, it will clearly signal that we value their innovation in these areas.

Responsible Procurement considerations will form part of the award weighting for all relevant opportunities, so that we consider the economic, social and environmental benefits to our community.

To supplement this strategy, the Responsible Procurement policy aims to support our collective responsibility to limit any negative impact and promote the Authority's commitment to deliver responsible and sustainable outcomes, across three primary areas.

1. Social Value
2. Ethical Sourcing
3. Environmental Sustainability

Our primary focus will be to ensure that we assess how a provision:

- 1.supports the local economy – exploring opportunities to encourage local or Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary and diverse businesses, number of local and diverse suppliers used within the supply chain and number of apprenticeship placements.
- 2.minimises carbon emissions and the carbon footprint of goods, services, and suppliers contract delivery methodology
- 3.allows the supplier to innovate via the use of non- prescriptive specifications, which allow the market and suppliers to speak on innovative solutions and/or new technology, where it has sustainable benefits.

For Equality and Diversity to be embedded within our supply chain, we will:

- ensure equality factors are considered in procurement activities from the outset, as with all responsible procurement considerations
- consider equality-related contract conditions where they relate to the performance of the contract
- include proportionate equality-related award criteria in the tendering process
- include equalities issues and reviews in performance monitoring during the life of the

contract/framework

Measuring Success

HOW WILL WE MEASURE OURSELVES?

Our 3-year priorities are summarised in Section 8 and covered in more detail within the Procurement Business Plan. These measures are indicative of how Procurement will

Principle	Measure	Target
Control of Spend	% applicable spend managed by robust contracts	95%
	% influence-able spend managed by central procurement team	80%
	% procurements with evidence of appropriate process	95%
Systems	% low value transactions processed via P/card	80%
	% opportunities advertised via e-tendering portal	90%
People	No. of staff trained in Procurement relative to role	90%
Policy	No. of exceptions/waivers per no. of procurements	< 10%
	No. of retrospective POs and FV60 invoices	< 10%
	Evidence of carbon emissions reduction	Qualitative assessment
	No. of SMEs registered on e-tendering portal	10% of supply base
	No. of contracted apprenticeship placements	TBA
Contract Management	% of key contracts performance managed by Procurement	50% growing to 90%
	Staff responsible for SCM trained	90% by 2024
	No. of significant contractual disputes	2 or less
	% of key contracts evidencing regular, effective supplier management	60%
Customer Satisfaction	360' Annual Feedback Survey of internal colleagues	Qualitative Assessment
Savings	Actual savings (individual categories) NFCC Savings Register	Targets set annually
	% annual saving on influence-able spend	Not < 5%
Benchmarking	NFCC National Spend Data	Bi-annual reporting

Priorities

PLAN DO CHECK ACT

Our priorities, which are detailed within the Procurement Business Plan, are summarised below:

Year 1 - 22/23
Deliver local implementation of SAP replacement as part of the ESCC MBOS project
Continue to implement full category approach, to deliver savings targets in MTFP
Recruit Assistant Category Specialist
Set savings targets/identify opportunities - achieve minimum £25K annual savings
Engage in National & Local Collaboration
Commence joint Training Needs Analysis with Finance
Embed Responsible Procurement (RP) – with a focus on local economy, carbon footprint and supplier innovation.
Year 2 - 23/24
Utilise MBOS to develop a Procurement dashboard
Set savings targets/identify opportunities - achieve minimum £25K annual savings
Review and rationalise corporate tail end spend and enable automated catalogue purchasing via embedded P/cards.
Conduct P/Card Review
Continue TNA & implement Procurement Development Plans
Engage in National & Local Collaboration
Ahead of Year 3
Review performance against targets
Set savings targets/identify opportunities - achieve minimum £25K annual savings
Refresh Category Plans
Refresh Procurement Strategy
Review progress against RP targets

Contact us

We listen to our communities and want you to help us improve the services we provide. If you want to get involved, or would like more information about our services, please get in touch and have your say.

Phone: 0303 999 1000

E-mail: enquiries@esfrs.org

Write to: Liz Ridley

Assistant Director Planning and Improvement

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Service Headquarters

Church Lane

Lewes

BN7 2DZ

East Sussex Fire Authority is responsible for the preparation of this performance plan and for the information and assessments set out within it, and the assumptions and estimates on which they are based. The Authority is also responsible for setting in place appropriate performance management and data quality control systems for which the information and assessments in the performance plan have been derived.



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Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy

2021-2025

Page 379



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 8
ESFRS Strategic Synergies	Page 10
Approach to efficiency	Page 12
Environmental Considerations	Page 13
Sustainability	Page 14
Collaboration	Page 15
Measuring success	Page 16
Overarching Theme – Vehicle & Equipment Management	Page 17
Strategy Themes	Page 20
1. Staff and Public Safety	Page 20
2. Efficiency and Effectiveness	Page 22
3. Collaboration and Innovation	Page 26
4. Reducing environmental impact	Page 30
Three year Strategy Action Plan	Page 33

Strategy Foreword

Roy Galley Chairman

It gives us great pleasure to introduce our Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy 2021-2025. Our fleet is often the most visible part of the service, with fire appliances responding to emergencies, delivering community engagement and supporting wider partner resilience. Each vehicle needs the right equipment for the local and national risks and will constantly evolve with developments in technology.

This is an important and exciting time for our service as the publication of this first formal Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy, which will fundamentally support the service delivery function across the diverse communities of East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

Within ESFRS, we have a wide range of fleet and transport requirements including front line fire engines, specialist vehicles, cars, vans and operational equipment. We are facing a demanding financial climate, and in response we will remain vigilant to fiscal pressure and provide an agile response to any changing circumstances.

As part of this strategy we will seek to be at the forefront of technological advances so that we can continue to match resources to risk in the most economical, effective and efficient way possible.



Dawn Whittaker Chief Fire Officer

This strategy outlines how we will ensure that our fleet and equipment design, procurement and replacement cycles satisfy our organisational priorities and objectives, focussed on firefighter and public safety, ensuring we work in consultation with all staff and stakeholders to satisfy our legislative requirements and fully consider the demographic risk profile.

It has never been more important that we consider our impact on society and seek every opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint continuously improving our environmental considerations. This strategy will ensure we take a holistic approach to providing a sustainable, cost effective and fit for purpose fleet, which links directly to our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and Operational Response Review (ORR).

This strategy seeks to assure our commitment to making our communities safer, more sustainable with improved societal consideration. ESFRS Senior Leadership Team(SLT) are extremely proud of all our staff who deliver as part of this strategy and I would like to thank them for their support and dedication to achieve a robust, efficient and effective service support function as part of our overarching delivery to the communities in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.



Strategic Context

Reform and continuous improvement

Fire and rescue services are operating under direction of the Home Office specifically under the direction of the national framework. There is a challenging reform agenda for the public sector environment and the future role of the service must be flexible, adaptive and responsive. With that in mind, fleet legislative changes, continued pressure to secure efficiency savings, along with dynamically improving practice in maintenance and quality standards mean that we need to remain open to change and ensure the practice of regular review is carried out.

As a service we are seeking continuous improvement, learning from historical actions and seeking opportunities to create efficiencies in our operation and working practices.

Firefighter and public safety

Providing the right equipment and fleet remains vital for the safety of our firefighters and the public. Reducing the occupational risks relating to contaminants is one example of where we can contribute to making our service a safer place to work. Seeking new and innovative firefighting technologies, whilst adopting national operational guidance.

HMICFRS

Regular inspections of fire and rescue services and the recently published 'State of Fire and Rescue – The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2020' confirm a continued emphasis on the operational service provided to the public, the efficiency of the service and its organisational effectiveness.

www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/fire-and-rescue-services/how-we-inspect-fire-and-rescue-services/

Legislation

As with the Response and Resilience Strategy, legislation such as the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 give us a clear statutory mandate to respond to fires and other emergencies once alerted and to provide the necessary resources to deliver that response effectively. In complying with this legislation we will ensure that, regardless of the circumstances (e.g. time of day, weather conditions etc.) every member of our communities will receive access to an emergency response service.

The operation of a fleet of vehicles is a heavily regulated area and is affected by the following legislation or best practice guidance:

- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Recommended Best Practice for the Maintenance of Fire Service Vehicles
- The Management of Occupational Road Risk
- British and European Technical Standards
- The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Road Traffic Act 1991
- The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989
- The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971
- NFCC Transport Officers Group Security Guidance on Decommissioning and Disposal.

The list of Acts/Guidance is not exhaustive, and by the very nature of the fleet environment, various legislative requirements cut across other services of the Authority.

Purpose of the Strategy

This East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy underpins our service key priorities by ensuring that we provide a reliable and fit for purpose fleet of vehicles and equipment in order to meet the needs of our community and deliver an effective, efficient and modern fire and rescue service.

Our fleet and equipment provision is one of the most important physical assets alongside our professional staff, which form the essential element of the workplace in supporting and enabling the frontline of service delivery.

The size, style and make-up of our fleet services and equipment is influenced by the risk profile that we have reflected through our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and offers the most efficient way we manage that risk across our service area.

We have a wide range of fleet and transport requirements including front line fire appliances, specialist vehicles, pool cars, vans and operational equipment. Our fleet and engineering department is critical to having the right assets and equipment to deal with the risks of our community and ensuring our colleagues have the right equipment for all tasks to be undertaken. At the heart of our fleet considerations is our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and minimising exposure to contaminants.

Our strategy is developed to complement the Prevention, Protection, Response and Resilience activities of the service, and identifies a number of key areas of focus for fleet and equipment management.

Physical assets will play a key role in bringing this strategy to life; from applying new technology to reduce our impact on the environment, the delivery of new style technical and specialist vehicles, technical rescue units or versatile powered water craft, researching assets such as domestic evacuation escape hoods, Ultra High-Pressure Lances, smoke curtains and water safety equipment, along with seeking assets that support the evolution of the firefighter's role in keeping communities safe.

This strategy seeks to inform the workforce and stakeholders of the improvements that we will seek to employ as part of our ever evolving landscape and role. In identifying those areas of compliance which must be responded to we will invest in new equipment, training and operating systems to ensure Best Value is achieved.

Procurement is and will remain at the forefront as we develop. Our Engineering Category Specialist is a key partner with our Engineering team providing robust scrutiny and support as we identify and plan our equipment profile and vehicle replacement programme.

We will work collaboratively with internal staff, representative bodies and departments such as Health and Safety, Training and Assurance, along with our IRMP team and Fire Authority members to ensure our provision meets the needs of the modern fire and rescue service.

This strategy will drive the efficiencies we can deliver through a shared strategic fleet, shared contracts and management systems with our FRS neighbours, seeking opportunities with our blue light colleagues to enhance our effectiveness in delivery across our geographical domain.

This strategy also seeks to mobilise internally how we will start to address the central government and local authority drive to reduce our carbon footprint and environmental impact on society.





ESFRS Strategic Synergies

There are a number of reasons why our key strategies are so important and drive our business and our approach. They are a vital part in our planning framework and each supports our Integrated Risk Management Plan - Planning for a Safer Future 2020- 25 and the resulting action plans form the Corporate Plan. In addition to setting out how we will deliver our aims, they also feed into our planning cycle to inform our future priorities.

The Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy provides a comprehensive and integrated approach to the management of the Authority's fleet and associated operational equipment assets. The Operational Support Plan and more detailed Engineering Thematic Plan which sit under this strategy will continue to evolve through time and reflect changes based on current and predicted working practices, legislation, environmental developments, technology and budgets.

The Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy will interact with, and inform, other strategic decisions and plans to reinforce the effective management of ESFRS as set out on the next page.

Plan	Outline direction
Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)	The IRMP sets out the Authority's assessment of local risk to life and, in line with this assessment, how resources will be deployed to address these risks. The IRMP will be supplemented by annual objectives and associated programmes and projects that deliver the required improvements
Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), including Revenue and Capital Budgets	The MTFP sets out the Authority's financial position over the medium-term and ensures resources are managed effectively and revenue and capital budgets are aligned with corporate objectives
Service Delivery Strategies	Response and Resilience, Prevention and Protection and Fleet and Equipment strategies
Directorate Plan	Service Delivery Support Directorate overview of priorities and objectives
Fleet & Equipment Management (Engineering) Thematic Plan	We will maintain an iterative thematic plan to document key 'in-year' work activities that contributes to the realisation of the Fleet and Equipment Strategy and responds to the development and delivery of the engineering function
Equipment Lifecycle and Profile	The Engineering Equipment Profile sets out the Authority's equipment management arrangements and considers the living policy and replacement schedule for each vehicle or specialist response group
Fleet/Vehicle replacement programme	An internal plan designed to co-ordinate the fleet needs of the service on an annual basis with a longer term view of the needs and use of assets with a service life ranging from 3 to 15 years.

Approach to efficiency

As a publicly-funded Fire and Rescue Service, people expect us to use our resources responsibly and efficiently. We have been rising to this challenge in seeking to share services with neighbouring services, collaborating to improve our practices and eliminating spend where it is no longer required.

We have defined through our IRMP the many and varied risks across our service area - past, present and future. This enables us to consider how best to deploy our resources in terms of appliances and equipment to provide the most effective response to emergencies across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. The results of the analysis have enabled us to focus our attention over the next four years to improve our service delivery and reduce the risk our communities are facing.

As a result of this research there are changes we want to make to our Engineering Department including structure and working practices, considering the wider use and progressive changes to our estate, along with a fundamental review of our contractual arrangements in order to support our journey of improvement. Theme 2 supports this approach and further defines the work streams we will adopt.





Environmental considerations

In considering our societal impact, we will work to secure the best possible outcomes for our environment, collaborating in research with industry specialists and vehicle providers with the purpose of reducing our carbon footprint whilst ensuring a sustainable fleet profile.

Societal expectations will place increasing pressure on public sector services to lead the way in meeting and exceeding environmental standards at an accelerated rate. This is reflected in the Climate Emergency Declarations and 'Net Zero Carbon by 2030' targets.

Analysis of the current environmental impact of the fleet will need to align with the risk determined within East Sussex and align with the Operational Response and Resilience and Prevention and Protection Directorate plans. Electronic data management systems that plot and analyse average journey times and vehicle usage profiles will enable fleet department to determine alternative fuel suitability. Engagement with industry developers will ensure we attain the required knowledge and better understand the implications of any proposed infrastructure changes before any alternative fuel systems can be fully adopted. As part of these environmental impacts, this strategy will work to identify our current carbon footprint and plan an effective transition to a low/zero carbon fleet. Further exploration can be found under Theme 4 of reducing our environmental impact.

Sustainability

The service will ensure its fleet balances the need for operational effectiveness and fleet sustainability. In particular, the following areas will be the subjects for consideration over the next five years:

- The fuel management system
- Revised vehicle specification to take into account environmental concerns including the introduction of the Euro 6 emissions standards
- The use of 'Ad Blue' on new heavy vehicles to meet more stringent emissions standards
- Investigate alternative fuels feasibility, including electric vehicles
- Manufacturer's environmental policies
- The use of sustainable/renewable materials in the production of vehicles
- The use of lighter weight materials to reduce overall vehicle weights and therefore increase fuel efficiency
- The use of plastic bodies to improve service life and offer the potential for reusing bodies on new chassis.



Collaboration

With a legal duty to collaborate, the primary focus of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is to work in partnership with our communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on Prevention, Protection and Response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver interoperability (between fire and rescue authorities) and interoperability (with other responders such as other emergency services). Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with the National Resilience Lead Authority to ensure interoperability is maintained for National Resilience assets.

Collaborating with others to ensure resources are providing best value and minimising risk to the communities that ESFRS serves must be a key priority. Working with others in collaboration does present challenges and should always be in the public's interest. There are numerous drivers for collaboration, both internal and external to ESFRS. These can directly or indirectly benefit the way we deliver our services. Importantly, the decision to collaborate must be more than the drive to realise financial benefits. The focus of any collaboration should be the ability to add value to the communities we serve. The benefits of collaboration are:

- **Increased Effectiveness:** Working with others will enable us to deliver the services our communities need in a timeframe they want. Collaboration has the potential to increase our capacity by gaining access to a broader range of skills, resources and information, increasing our ability to deliver improved services and becoming more resilient as a Service
- **Improved Public Safety:** Collaboration may result in the further sharing of buildings, information and staff. The net result of these changes can contribute to our corporate Purpose and Commitments
- **More Resilient Organisation:** Working together with other services and organisations may result in ESFRS becoming more resilient in the event of spate conditions and other events which affect business continuity.

Examples of where we are collaborating are contained throughout Theme 3 of this strategy.

Measuring Success

The success of the strategy will be measured against what we have said we will achieve and we will utilise appropriate and timely reviews of the Operational Support and Resilience Business Plan through the use of CAMMS strategy as a Corporate reporting tool.

We will also utilise the recommendations from the NFCC Transport Operations Group to ensure that we are following nationally identified and agreed best practice process. We were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in 2019. The findings from the first inspection in June 2019 concluded that ESFRS was good at responding to fires and other emergencies and good at responding to national risks. We will continue to use the inspection process to assess our improvement within the Engineering department. We will focus on improving our people focus within the department to ensure that our staff are valued, well trained and supported to deliver the organisational requirements placed upon them. We will focus on efficient practices that streamline process and reduce expenditure by focussing on in house delivery with well trained and highly professional teams. We will regularly ask for feedback from our operational staff to inform us of our progress with the strategy and the identified outcomes.

We will also measure our success against the recent IRMP plan that drives the changes required to our fleet and equipment provision.

Overarching Theme: Vehicle and Equipment Management

Our fleet and equipment are essentially the most important physical assets alongside our professional staff, which form the essential element of the workplace in supporting and enabling the frontline of service delivery.

Our vehicles and the equipment that complement them, play a vital part in delivering our service and ultimately making our communities safer. The size, style and make-up of our fleet services and equipment is absolutely influenced by the risk profile that we have reflected through our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and offers the most efficient way we manage that risk across our service area.

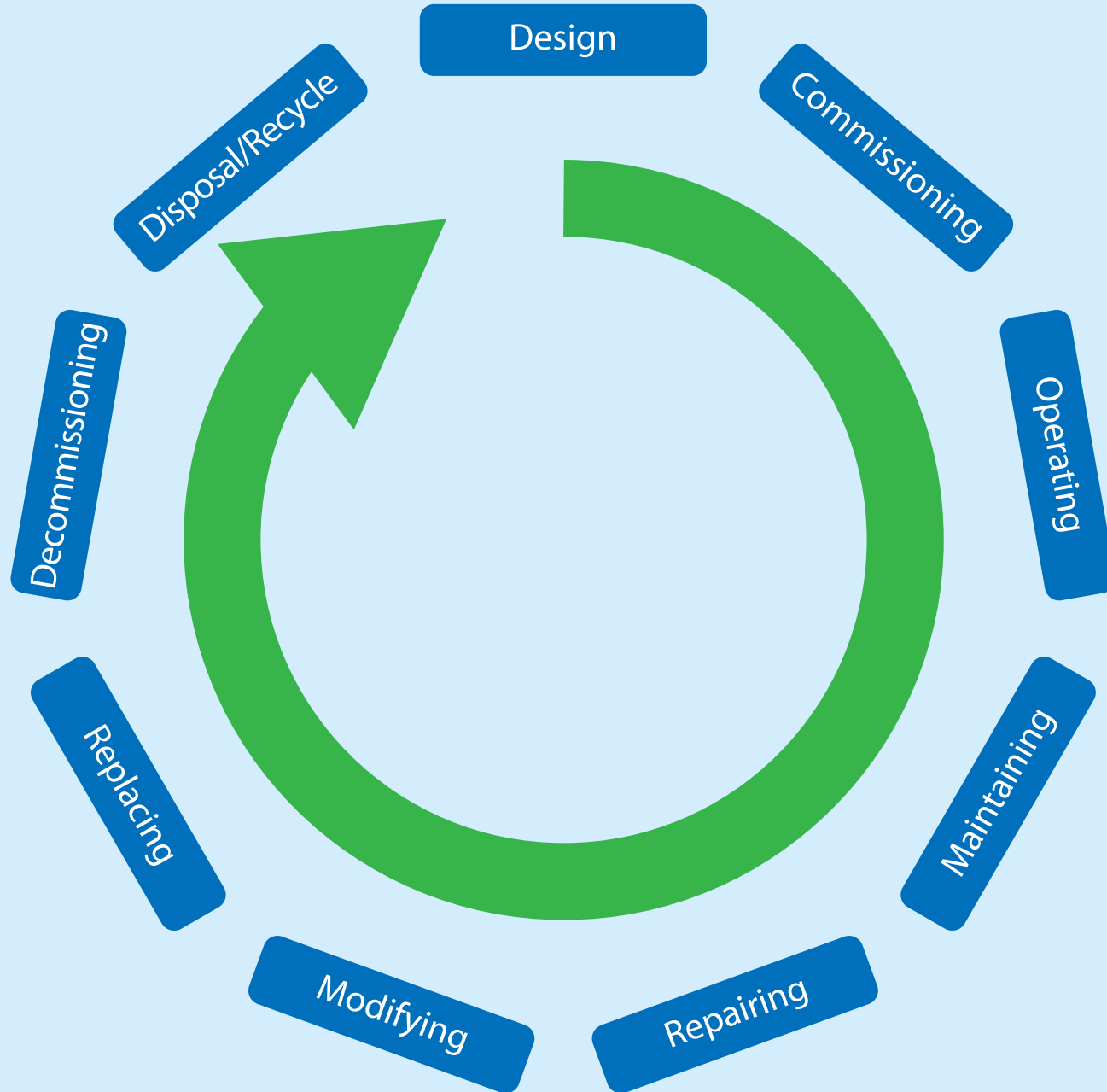
Effective asset management requires appropriate interventions at each stage in the asset lifecycle. The diagram below illustrates the key stages.

Our strategy is developed to complement the Prevention, Protection, Response and Resilience activities of the service, and identifies a number of key areas of focus for fleet and equipment management.

We have a wide range of fleet and transport requirements including front line fire appliances, specialist vehicles, pool cars, vans and operational equipment.

Our fleet and Engineering department is critical to having the right assets and equipment to deal with the risks of our community and ensuring our colleagues have the right equipment for all tasks to be undertaken. At the heart of our fleet management is our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and minimising exposure to contaminants.

The planning for both capital and revenue expenditure is key to our management processes enabling us to plan effectively and efficiently, securing Best Value for each and every piece of equipment or vehicle that carries it. Our allegiance with our Procurement Category Specialist will ensure that we follow procurement and contractual rules.



Design: - initial scope concept and specification of fit for purpose, stakeholder approved, ergonomic and economic assets.

Commissioning: - the authorising, ordering and production process of a purposeful concept or specification into working condition or viable product.

Operating: - assurance by provision of guidance or policy or procedure, training assessment of the correct and most efficient way an ESFRS asset, vehicle or device functions, is operated and tested with due consideration for monitoring and controlling its use.

Maintaining: - providing systems to assure manufacturer and legal compliance with the use of key performance indicators and exception reports that ensure the security, safety and efficiency of equipment, asset or vehicle.

Repairing: - adequate provision and facilities to ensure the asset is able to reach its full life, and can be fixed and rebuilt to retain in service, ensure efficiency rather than cost prohibitive replacement.

Modifying: - the ability through the use of in-house or external technicians to make basic or fundamental changes giving an asset or vehicle a new dimension or to serve an alternative or improved function.

Replacing: - utilising a capital and equipment replacement strategy which ensures the most efficient use of the asset or vehicle following an end of life or irreparable end point to refresh or redesign with new technology.

Decommissioning: - the service has decommissioning processes and responsibilities to ensure the asset is removed from operational service or use and available for disposal or resale.

Disposal/Recycle: - following due diligence in accordance with service policy to ensure the realisation of best value to the public through the process of resale or where the asset has no value ensure consideration for recycling, or gifting as part of the disposal strategy.

THEME 1 - Staff and public safety

1.1 ESFRS will have a well trained and equipped workforce from engineering technicians through to strategic managers ensuring that we are fully compliant with health and safety and road user legislation whilst striving to achieve the safest, most modern and environmentally friendly fleet of vehicles to address the risks identified through our IRMP.

We will embed health, safety and wellbeing in our asset procurement and deployment. Like all employers, ESFRS has responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to protect our people in carrying out their duties.

The service, through its Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee, commits to providing equipment which is suitable for use, fit for purpose and suitably maintained.

We will seek to ensure these commitments are met through early engagement with health and safety professionals from the design phase through the asset lifecycle.

We recognise the impact that the working environment can have on our wellbeing and will work to ensure that all employees have workplaces that are not only safe and secure but that promote dignity and wellbeing.

Securing continuous learning through operational debriefs and the associated recommendations for asset improvement and adaptation.

1.2 The Fleet Management Team as part of our response strategy will ensure that our fleet of vehicles are flexible to meet the risk profile and service delivery requirements across the diverse communities of East Sussex.

Our Operational Response Review was the most significant piece of operational risk analysis work we have undertaken in recent years. We began by identifying the many and varied risks across our service area - past, present and future. This enabled us to consider how best to deploy our resources in terms of firefighters, appliances and equipment to provide the most effective response to emergencies across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

1.3 We will ensure a robust and effective whole life profile across our fleet and equipment.

Our Appliances Equipment and Policy Implementation Group (AEPiG) meeting schedule and processes bring together key stakeholders with a shared interest and desire for the provision of the highest quality vehicles, equipment, uniform and PPE ensuring we seek quality products from ethical suppliers whilst seeking value for money.

This process exists to ensure that decisions to review, monitor and approve procurement of assets are consulted and challenged before adoption and then further improve our supply.

We will seek to be at the forefront of firefighting technology, adopting procedures and equipment that reach the highest specifications, whilst investing in our people through the procurement of the most up-to-date, effective and efficient assets available.

We will ensure that all asset investments are supported by a robust business case, detailing volume, scale and quality requirements clearly, whilst quantifying whole life costs.

1.4 With Specialist support and funding we will explore technologies that support data telematics with CCTV systems to support staff safety, efficient driving practices and ultimately safer working environments for all.

We will secure the installation of Advanced Telematics and CCTV technology appropriate to our varying fleet vehicles. Advanced Telematics will assist in determining our carbon footprint and air pollution impacts. Analytical data gained from this monitoring will inform fleet maintenance and replacement strategies, potential small fleet reduction and consolidation and a future plan to identify where to locate the fleet to support the ongoing delivery of the Operational Response Plan concluded through the IRMP as efficiently as possible.

CCTV vehicle mounted cameras, will provide a welfare provision and assurance for the safety of our fleet users along with efficiencies in insurance premiums and provide a valuable tool for accident and incident investigation.

THEME 2 - Efficiency and Effectiveness

2.1 We will develop management solutions aligning key performance measures which track and audit equipment and asset tracking systems that ensure we improve efficiency in ordering, storing and monitoring of supplies.

There are a number of potential benefits that may be derived from fleet monitoring alongside our current telematics system and our latest improved telematics system provided as part of the ongoing vehicle replacement programme:

- The Driving at Work guidelines published by the Health and Safety Executive/Department for Fleet places more responsibility on employers to manage work related road safety
- Live vehicle utilisation information
- Provide information on driving techniques to cut fuel consumption/exhaust emissions with the added benefit of reducing costs
- Use the information obtained to structure the driver training programme
- Help to reduce accidents by understanding cause and using failure as an opportunity strategy
- Support testimony in the current climate of claims culture.

Utilising a telemetry tracking system along with a potential driver ID/allocation is seen as a vast improvement and would alleviate the need for the current time intensive manual system of driver's records of journeys.

As a service seeking to educate on areas such as road safety, we encourage good driving behaviour by anyone that drives a service vehicle.

With the evolving role of the fire service and the continued pressure to deliver value for money, ESFRS must keep abreast of technological advances in order to improve performance and ensure value for money.

We will assess and design appropriate technological advancements across all aspects of the fleet operation and undertake effective evaluation of any advancements or industry trends to ensure

that we realise opportunities and enhance performance across the service. We will increase engagement with suppliers and manufacturers to better understand their design and delivery processes, conducting research and evaluating other FRS concept projects where appropriate, enabling us to accurately assess the value and relevance of any new project or design.

2.2 The service will fully engage with the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) which it joined in 2019.

FRIC meets the needs of Fire and Rescue Services and works on a philosophy of sharing risk information and organisational learning from incidents involving successful claims. This will improve efficiency and help us to avoid risks that have affected other fire and rescue services. This will further support future vehicle or equipment developments and ensure that we are mitigating against further insurance claims. In doing so this action will further be supported by 360 camera and telematics provision as detailed in 1.4.

2.3 Fleet managers and Finance business partners will constantly review and develop a revised fleet replacement programme that reflects the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Operational and Response and Resilience Strategy providing a Capital Replacement Programme that gives clarity on capital and revenue budgetary requirements.

Capital

Capital expenditure is the term used to describe the acquisition of assets that have a long-term value to ESFRS. The Fleet Service capital expenditure will form part of the Authority's capital strategy and will be drawn from the replacement cycle of vehicles and equipment. There are some complexities around capital purchase so activity in this area is orchestrated in collaboration and under the scrutiny and support of the Finance department. This assures the Fire Authority can realise the best solutions for all capital investments and revenue impacts throughout the lifecycle for vehicle replacement.

THEME 2 - Efficiency and Effectiveness

Revenue

The Fleet Service Revenue Budget will be heavily influenced by the Capital Asset Replacement Programme mentioned above. It is unlikely despite best endeavours that year-on-year capital spending will remain constant and there will be related fluctuations in the costs incurred in the revenue budget.

To even out revenue expenditure it will be necessary to concentrate on the level scheduling of vehicle purchases over an anticipated lifespan, or to accept that fluctuations will occur between different years. The positive adoption of Star chambers will afford any such pressures and bids to be fully considered and assessed prior to setting the budget forecast. Pressures and efficiency bids will be raised and included with due consideration afforded to fully appreciate potential revenue consequences from capital purchases. Wherever possible the consideration for whole life vehicles with associated large unit, whole life equipment cost should be joined and considered as capital expenditure.

The contingency to counter this would be to accurately forecast and monitor the predicted budget allocation for procurement in the years that they are likely to occur. A similar concept applies to vehicle maintenance expenditure - as vehicles age, more costs will be incurred.

Unless the same numbers of vehicles of the same type are purchased each year there will be fluctuations in vehicle maintenance expenditure. The department will wherever possible seek to smooth these fluctuations and enable more even and accurate budget forecasting.

2.4 We will continue to review and improve our performance.

Our results will be benchmarked by our assurance framework to ensure our delivery remains efficient and effective, building in periodic peer review, inspection and independent audits as appropriate.



THEME 3 - Collaboration

3.1 ESFRS will ensure that we engage and support the work of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Transport Operations Group.

Our Fleet management team will continue to engage and consult in the NFCC Technical Officers Group (TOG). This will ensure that the sector experts lead the direction of our Fleet team whilst securing Best Practise and Best Value. We will ensure the aligning of our working practices with this group to maximise the time any appliance is available for use.

3.2 ESFRS will seek collaboration opportunities with our neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services through the 4F and 3ES collaboration forums to maximise procurement efficiencies and to ensure synergy across activities and vehicles to support cross-boundary and multiagency working.

Strategic managers across both East and West Fire and Rescue Services have identified the potential for a combined Fleet management team. Both ESFRS and WSFRS Senior management teams are supportive of exploring this proposal. This shared strategic fleet engineering manager position acts as an enabler to review and implement further proposals for change that may afford East and West Sussex Fleet and Engineering teams to potentially fully merge functions, contracts and resources.

Through 4F collaboration with West Sussex, Kent and Surrey Fire and Rescue Services we will use leverage to secure relationships with suppliers through the effective management of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Key Performance Measures (KPMs). We will conduct regular reviews and identify areas for continuous service improvement and areas for collaboration for mutual benefit and improved efficiency.

Actively engaging, supporting and evaluating the benefits of collaboration opportunities, with emergency services and key partners, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.



3.3 In collaboration we will carry out research on new equipment and industry developments to improve effective ways of working along with health and safety in the use of appliances and equipment.

This work will be complemented by broadening our horizons by linking external providers to the NFCC and the Fire sector to identify innovations that could benefit the emergency services. We will work with our frontline emergency service and council fleet colleagues to find opportunities, gain greater awareness of fleet management systems and equipment management development.

3.4 ESFRS will engage with Stakeholders effectively.

It is vital that our frontline colleagues have confidence in the equipment and vehicles that they use on a daily basis. This is important not only for practical operational efficiency but for the morale, motivation and safety of our colleagues. Fleet assets need to be developed and procured with a detailed understanding of the environment that they will be operated within and be reflective of working practices and associated risks. We will engage with users throughout the lifecycle, sharing trends in the industry to identify emerging solutions that would most benefit our community and risk reduction. This will enable us to target industry and supplier engagement, helping us influence development based on colleague's feedback, benefitting both suppliers and our communities.

Requirements will need to represent value for money and we will need to work closely with end users to ensure that needs are prioritised appropriately based on a detailed analysis of cost versus benefit/risk reduction. Consultation and engagement activities will be commonplace, as such Engineering teams will engage with users on all aspects of the vehicles and equipment, including suitability, difficulties, reliability and replacement. We will use current communication channels and develop these to inform the wider organisation of fleet activity and development in a timely manner. This will be achieved via our Appliances Policy and Equipment Implementation Group (APEIG).

THEME 3 - Collaboration

We will ensure we procure the most suitable and appropriate fleet and associated equipment by:

- Continuously reviewing and developing the operational vehicles and equipment framework and processes to improve decision making and support the IRMP while securing a whole lifecycle approach
- Investigating and exploiting new and emerging technologies to reduce the risks to communities and staff identified in our community risk profile; and improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Service
- Establish and share a centralised fleet and equipment stores facility and combined procurement of spares to yield potential savings
- Ensuring we continue to deliver a cost effective, fit for purpose, sustainable procurement strategy.

In order to achieve the best possible investment we will ensure that the end user is at the forefront of decision making in terms of concept design, specification, stowage and implementation, through to disposal for all vehicles and associated equipment.

3.5 ESFRS will consider opportunities for shared facilities, workshops and collaborations with other emergency services.

Reviewing facilities available to all services and identify key locations for the required facilities/activities. This includes a dedicated heavy vehicle maintenance area, a dedicated light vehicle maintenance area complemented with dedicated storage facilities. This will be considered in line with any potential ITF project for shared workshops and collaboration with external partners.



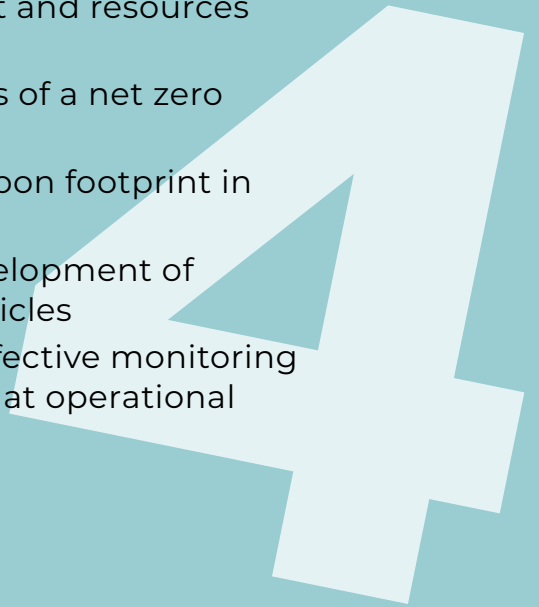


THEME 4 - Reducing Environmental Impact

4.1 Over the next decade the Government has proposed significant changes in environmental regulation and requirements surrounding vehicles and vehicle management, including air quality related restrictions, whole-life-costing considerations in vehicle procurement and the proposed ban on the sale of diesel and petrol vehicles from 2030. ESFRS will monitor developments and act accordingly in good time.

We have a significant role to play in protecting the environment such as reducing the volume of carbon emissions created by emergency situations, and by reducing the risk of fire and other emergencies through our approach to fighting fires and fire prevention. We recognise that the benefits in doing this can also have wider ranging positive effects such as improving the health and wellbeing of people living and working in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. The Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy will aid the Service in meeting its obligations in relation to working towards carbon neutrality by:

- Protecting the natural environment in the way we respond to incidents along with the methods we adopt to fight fires and other sector related incidents analysing and evaluating new and emerging firefighting technologies and the impact on the environment
- Ensure the operating picture follows the use and deployment of equipment and resources against national operational guidance
- Developing our fleet and response vehicles to aspire to meet the aspirations of a net zero carbon emissions by 2030
- Develop along with the energy saving trust a baseline evaluation of our carbon footprint in developing a carbon strategy
- Working with partners and transport operations groups to support the development of alternate fuel provisions for emergency response or organisational fleet vehicles
- Adopting 14001 environmental fleet management systems to ensure the effective monitoring and data collection, to inform our vehicle use, driving performance and use at operational incidents.



Several environmental initiatives are currently in place within the Fleet Service:

- Emissions testing as part of routine servicing
- Recycling of lead, acid and other batteries
- Environmentally safe disposal of waste engine oil and other engine and vehicle fluids
- Recycling of scrap metals including aluminium ladders
- The introduction of Continuously Regenerating Trap (CRT) exhaust particulate filters to certain vehicles to reduce soot/carbon emissions
- The use of fuel additives to ensure the highest level of fuel particulate combustion.

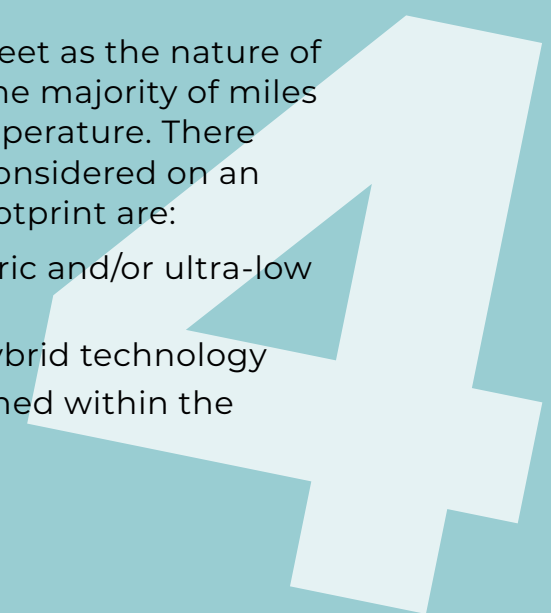
4.2 Carbon Footprint Analysis.

ESFRS is a member of the Energy Saving Trust who are determining our current baseline carbon footprint and will offer avenues of improvement in this arena.

By studying the current fuel use within our fleet it will be possible to calculate our fleet's carbon footprint. As new technology is introduced into the fleet, the current fuel usage of the ESFRS fleet will reduce as will our carbon footprint.

There is a substantial amount of maintenance required for our current HGV fleet as the nature of the service dictates that vehicles will operate on short unplanned journeys. The majority of miles covered are undertaken before the power unit reaches normal operating temperature. There are also a number of legal, safety and environmental issues that need to be considered on an ongoing basis. Specific areas we will focus on to reduce the service carbon footprint are:

- Strategic replacement of fleet under natural replacement lifecycle to electric and/or ultra-low emission variants
- Consideration for alternative fuel propulsion systems such as Hydrogen, hybrid technology
- Premature vehicle replacements where normal asset plans cannot be aligned within the appropriate time frame



- Hybrid-drive conversion of existing fleet where possible or practical
- Development of the associated refuelling infrastructure (e.g. electric vehicle charge-points). Activities are also being undertaken to engage with the national Fire and Rescue Sector (FRS) in the research and development of a zero emissions fire appliance.



Three year Strategy Action Plan that is captured in Service Delivery Support Directorate Plan

Priorities for year 1 per themes 2021/22

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1 - Staff and public safety		
Secure improved CCTV and telemetry systems to capture image and data, ensure more effective monitoring of our fleet and reduce fuel consumption, vehicle accidents and ensure driver compliance with professional standards	January 22	Reduction in vehicle accidents, fuel consumption and increase in driver compliance and reduced insurance premiums
We will embed health and safety inspections across our work estate in the Engineering department	March 22	Reductions in health and safety incidents
We will invest in training for our Engineering team in all light and heavy fleet and equipment following a training needs analysis exercise	March 22	Well trained staff

Theme 2 – Efficiency and Effectiveness		
Secure the maximum benefit from the proposed efficiencies	January 22	Reduction in vehicle accidents, fuel consumption and increase in driver compliance and reduced insurance premiums
Review internal maintenance provision against outsourced contracts	November 21	Monitoring and achievement of savings and efficiencies
Review the formulation of a more efficient programme of cyclical safety inspections and major servicing regimes	November 21	Compliance with road safety regulation
Review the current engineering estate as a working environment, and evaluate a whole service provision for suitable LGV, light fleet and equipment storage facilities	March 22	Fit for purpose facilities for fleet servicing
Explore opportunity to reduce spend with Fleet Category Specialist with shared contracts/shared facilities, evaluate economies of scale through large scale provision of consumables	Ongoing	Reduce revenue budget
We will continue to review and improve our performance and embed the performance and assurance framework	March 22	KPI reporting and monitoring in place.
Implement the Fleet and Equipment Management Thematic Plan	September 22	Departmental objectives

Theme 3 – Collaboration		
Implement the governance structure required to enable a single strategic manager to manage two teams across different organisations and different political landscapes	April 21	Recruitment of Strategic Manager
Review current external contracts and look at any collaboration opportunities between East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services	November 21	Efficiencies across services through procurement
Review facilities available to both services and identify key locations for the required facilities/activities. This includes a dedicated heavy vehicle maintenance area, a dedicated light vehicle maintenance area complemented with dedicated storage facilities. This will be considered in line with any potential ITF project for shared workshops and collaboration with SECAMB	March 22	Efficiencies across services through collaboration

Theme 4 – Reducing Environmental Impact		
We will work to protect the natural environment in the way we respond to incidents along with the methods we adopt to fight fires and other sector related incidents and analyse and evaluate new and emerging firefighting technologies and the impact on the environment	Ongoing	Measuring success through incident debrief and organisational learning
Developing our fleet and response vehicles to aspire to meet the aspirations of a net zero carbon emissions by 2030	Ongoing	Reduction in emissions by movement to alternative fuel
Review facilities available to both services and identify key locations for the required facilities/activities. This includes a dedicated heavy vehicle maintenance area, a dedicated light vehicle maintenance area complemented with dedicated storage facilities. This will be considered in line with any potential ITF project for shared workshops and collaboration with SECamb	March 22	Efficiencies across services through collaboration

Priorities for year 2 2022/23

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1 - Staff and public safety		
Review all policies and procedures and align best practice so that Engineering teams are working within the parameters of the CFOA (NFCC) Transport Operations Group's Fleet Management best practice manual	December 22	Policies reviewed and in date
We will invest in training for our Engineering team in all light and heavy fleet and equipment	Ongoing	Well trained staff
Develop internal fleet management systems that provide a robust auditing process to provide a robust and compliant system allowing access to management information relevant to the KPMs developed	March 23	Introduction of performance framework
Explore opportunity to reduce spend with Fleet category specialist with shared contracts/shared facilities, evaluate economies of scale through large scale provision of consumables	Ongoing	Reduce revenue budget

Theme 3 – Collaboration

We will work to protect the natural environment in the way we respond to incidents along with the methods we adopt to fight fires and other sector related incidents and analyse and evaluate new and emerging firefighting technologies and the impact on the environment

Ongoing

Measuring success through incident debrief and organisational learning

Developing our fleet and response vehicles to aspire to meet the aspirations of a net zero carbon emissions by 2030

Ongoing

Reduction in emissions by movement to alternative fuel

Priorities for year 3 2023/24

What we will do	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1 - Staff and public safety		
Explore opportunities to introduce apprentices back into the service allowing workforce succession planning for the future	April 24	Apprenticeship scheme in place
We will invest in training for our Engineering team in all light and heavy fleet and equipment	Ongoing	Well trained staff

Theme 2 – Efficiency and Effectiveness		
Explore opportunity to reduce spend with Fleet Category Specialist with shared contracts/shared facilities, evaluate economies of scale through large scale provision of consumables	Ongoing	Reduction in revenue budget
Develop systems and internal governance to enable the introduction of ISO 9001 accreditation	September 23	Attain accreditation
Update our approach to vehicle renewals reducing our overall fleet size of fire appliances and specials in line with IRMP 2020	March 24	Reduction in fleet
Review the departmental infrastructure and resource structure to seek efficiencies in delivery	April 24	Effective restructure/alignment

Theme 3 – Collaboration

Investigate the appetite for a merged departmental function with WSFRS/ WSCC	April 25	Development of business case
Implement a single team structure and future proof facilities plan to provide a resilient and effective outcome. Establish and share a centralised fleet and equipment stores facility, combined procurement of spares to yield potential savings	Depending on outcome of business case	Development of business case

Theme 4 – Reducing Environmental Impact		
Complete the Light Fleet Review-seeking alternative fuel use and low emission vehicles, seek to share vehicle use and reduce unnecessary travel	January 24	Reduction in emissions and reduction in vehicle movements
We will work to protect the natural environment in the way we respond to incidents along with the methods we adopt to fight fires and other sector related incidents and analyse and evaluate new and emerging firefighting technologies and the impact on the environment	Ongoing	Measuring success through incident debrief and organisational learning
Developing our fleet and response vehicles to aspire to meet the aspirations of a net zero carbon emissions by 2030	Ongoing	Reduction in emissions by movement to alternative fuel

Priorities for year 4 2024/25

Theme 3 – Collaboration		
Investigate the appetite for a merged departmental function with WSFRS/ WSCC	April 25	Development of business case
Implement a single team structure and future proof facilities plan to provide a resilient and effective outcome. Establish and share a centralised fleet and equipment stores facility, combined procurement of spares to yield potential savings	Depending on outcome business case	Development of business case
Undertake a project review identifying any additional efficiencies or project variances to provide best practice and assure stakeholders of value for money across East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, West Sussex County Council and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. Any additional benefits or strategic direction outlining potential opportunities or efficiencies that may be realised from further collaboration should be considered during this period and included in the project's longer term proposals	December 25	This project will be the enabler to expand on the collaboration and aligning of other departments and structures to further support the duty to collaborate across the sector

Theme 4 – Reducing Environmental Impact

Adopting 14001 environmental fleet management systems to ensure the effective monitoring and data collection, to inform our vehicle use, driving performance and use at operational incidents. Consider the implementation of ISO 14001 environmental fleet management systems

MAY 24

Accreditation against ISO 14001



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Planning for a Safer Community - Response & Resilience Strategy

2021-2025

Page 425



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

EAST SUSSEX
FIRE & RESCUE
300 BAR



Contents

Foreword – Chief Fire Officer and Chairman	4
Strategic Context	6
Purpose of the Strategy – Building a Picture of the Risk	9
Approach to Efficiency	16
Environmental & Sustainability	19
Collaboration	20
Measuring success, performance measurement, quality assurance and review	21
Themes	23
Theme 1: Integrated Risk Management Plan key deliverables	24
Theme 2: Operational Preparedness	26
Theme 3: Operational Response	30
Theme 4: Intra-operability & Inter-operability	34
Theme 5: Operational Learning & Assurance	36
Theme 6: Professionalism	38
Appendix A - Four Year Action Plan	39

Strategy Foreword

Roy Galley Chairman

I am delighted to present the Response & Resilience Strategy 2021 - 2025. This strategy underpins the Integrated Risk Management Plan that was approved by the Fire Authority in September 2020 and seeks to address the improvements required as identified with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services inspection outcome report following our inspection in 2019. The findings concluded that ESFRS was good at responding to fires and other emergencies and good at responding to national risks. This strategy builds on that assessment and ensures that when we are required to respond, we will do so in a timely manner with the right staff, who have the right skills, the right equipment and the right support.

The strategy sets out how we will provide our operational response and resilience services over the next four years. Our Integrated Risk Management Plan, Planning for a Safer Future 2020-25 agreed a range of operational and other change proposals that will ensure that East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service can continue to effectively deliver all of its statutory duties and continue to be an effective fire and rescue service.



Dawn Whittaker Chief Fire Officer

The role of a fire and rescue service has significantly changed to involve a much broader range of activities than that of simply responding to emergency incidents. We also recognise that it is very rare for us to respond to an emergency on our own and we will continue to carry out joint planning with our partners to ensure we are prepared to deal with all types of emergency on a local, regional and national scale.

We want to help our communities be resilient and prepared for emergencies as best they can, so that they are able to help themselves. We will work closely with other partners, businesses and community groups to support this...for example in areas likely to flood we will seek to ensure people and businesses have grab bags prepared with items such as essential medications and insurers details etc. ready in the event of evacuation.

This strategy closely aligns with our Prevention and Protection and People Strategies in showing how we will work closely with our colleagues across the organisation to deliver the purpose and commitments of the Fire Authority. The actions and changes set out in this strategy will be managed and delivered by the Service Delivery Directorate.



Strategic Context

Legislation such as the Fire and Rescue Services Act and the Civil Contingencies Act gives us a clear statutory mandate to respond to fires and other emergencies once alerted and to provide the necessary resources to deliver that response effectively. In complying with this legislation we will ensure that, regardless of the circumstances (e.g. time of day, weather conditions etc.) every member of our communities will receive access to an emergency response service.

The purpose of providing an emergency response is to save life, protect property and also to prevent or mitigate harm to the environment. Response arrangements are one element within our integrated risk management planning process and they have been developed to make best use of our resources. To that end, the Service has the following key functions fully embedded within its business policies, plans and procedures, to ensure that they are both robust and resilient:

- Emergency call handling and lifesaving advice provision
- Operational appliances and equipment remaining in a high state of operational readiness
- Operational stations and equipment placed at strategic positions within the Service's main conurbations commensurate with risk and agreed response standards
- Operationally competent crews with the key skills to deliver a response service
- Key sources of operational intelligence to ensure risk based information remains current
- Effective water supplies (hydrants, High Volume Pump, water carriers and access to open water)
- Fire Investigation capability at post emergency incident phase capability.

Our view on community resilience is a holistic one. Whether a community is large, small, specific, geographic or transient our role as a Fire & Rescue Service is to support our communities to prepare for worst case scenario so they know how to positively react at the time of crisis, and that they can recover and improve, post crisis.

Community resilience is not agencies doing it for them – it's motivated from within the community but ensuring they have the necessary support from statutory agencies, such as the Fire & Rescue Service to assist with guidance, training, provide logistic support and so on.

As a Fire & Rescue Service we are committed to the building of resilient communities and do this through both the work we undertake through the Local Resilience Forum (Sussex Resilience Forum as detailed in Theme 4) and through the activities outlined in the Prevention & Protection Strategy.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places additional responsibilities on us as a Category 1 responder. We work in close partnership with the Sussex Resilience Forum to ensure there is a robust community risk register and pre-planning arrangements in place in the event of a major incident occurring, whilst taking close account of our own business continuity arrangements to guarantee our core emergency response Services remain effective during such events.

In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework, we will also have regard to the National Risk Register and collaborate with wider Category 1 and 2 responders to ensure interoperability when responding to regional or national events.

Through the National Resilience programme, the Authority will ensure its operational response capability is maintained for the High Volume Pump and Mass Decontamination Unit, stationed and crewed within our local area.

In order that our firefighters remain safe whilst providing a first-class service to our community, we will ensure that we meet all of the legislative requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act. In addition, we will also meet all of the moral requirements for maintaining a fit, safe and healthy workforce thus enabling staff to deal with the often urgent need to carry out rescues or mitigate disaster through our People Strategy.

Over recent years influential national reports such as the State of Fire report have increased scrutiny on fire and rescue services, with the change of governmental departments, the move under the Home Office and the subsequent Fire Reform Programme the Service recognises that continuous improvement is essential. This Response and Resilience Strategy has been created to help balance the impact of and respond effectively to these external drivers while still ensuring the Service can meet the demands identified through its community risk management process.

National Framework Document

The Framework document sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue service. It states:

- The Government's expectations for the fire and rescue service
- What Fire Authorities are expected to do
- The support the Government will provide in helping them meet these objectives
- Operational Assurance Statement.

HMICFRS Inspection

Fire and Rescue Services are assessed annually under Section 28B of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 via HMICFRS inspections and reported to the Secretary of State, results are captured globally in the national State of Fire and Rescue – The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2019 and locally as specific organisation reports.

The inspection concentrates on efficiency, effectiveness and people, and supports the driving of improvements in these three main areas both in individual fire and rescue services and the sector nationally. The implementation of both the Response & Resilience Strategy and the Prevention & Protection Strategy will assist ESFRS in successfully achieving the expectations of the public it serves and its Purpose to make communities safer as well as discharging the areas for improvement identified by our own HMICFRS inspection.

Purpose of the Strategy – Building a Picture of the Risk

The Response and Resilience Strategy describes how we will meet our statutory duties in respect of getting to and dealing with emergencies as quickly and effectively as possible. This is achieved through the deployment of our firefighters at a number of key locations that are continuously available to respond to all areas.

Plan	Outline direction
Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)	The IRMP sets out the Authority's assessment of local risk to life and, in line with this assessment, how resources will be deployed to address these risks. The IRMP will be supplemented by annual objectives and associated programmes and projects that deliver the required improvements.
Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), including Revenue & Capital Budgets	The MTFP sets out the Authority's financial position over the medium-term and ensures resources are managed effectively and revenue and capital budgets are aligned with corporate objectives.
Service Delivery Strategies	Response & Resilience, Prevention & Protection, Fleet & Equipment, People, Health Safety & Wellbeing, IT and Procurement strategies.
Directorate Plan	Service Delivery Support Directorate overview of priorities and objectives.
Operational Planning & Policy Thematic Plan	We will maintain an iterative thematic plan to document key 'in-year' work activities that contributes to the realisation of the Response & Resilience Strategy and responds to the development and delivery of response and resilience.

This strategy, like the other 7 core strategies drives our business and our approach. All of our strategies are a vital part in our planning framework and each supports our Integrated Risk Management Plan and the associated strategy action plans form the Corporate Plan. In addition to setting out how we will deliver our aims, they also feed into our planning cycle to inform our future priorities. We expect that we will continue to face a very challenging financial climate going forward which will be impacted by the significant pressure on public spending due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next four years are therefore likely to require further innovation and changes to the way we operate and deliver our services and this strategy will help us achieve this.

We provide an emergency response to save lives, protect property and also to prevent or mitigate harm to the environment. We have 24 fire stations, covering the risk of the local area and providing resilience across the County and City.

The stations are staffed in three main ways:

- Wholetime shift: these are crewed 24 hours a day, 365 days per year by full-time firefighters
- Wholetime Day-Crewed (DC): operational firefighters are on the fire station during the daytime only. For our service, this is typically between 08:30 and 18:30. Outside of these times, firefighters are still available to attend incidents through responding to an alerter
- On-call (OC): operational firefighters respond to an alerter when an emergency call is received and they are contracted to provide a certain amount of availability per week and must live or work within a specified parameter of the fire station.

We share our Control Centre with Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and it is based at the Joint Fire Control (JFC) in Salford, Surrey. The JFC team has a number of duties including answering 999 calls, sending engines to incidents and moving fire engines to provide cover at strategically important locations.



Our attendance standards

Our attendance standards are measured from when a call is received to the first fire engine arriving at the incident:

- an 'On-station' response should be within 10 minutes 70% of the time
- an 'On-call' response should be within 15 minutes 70% of the time.

In the first instance, our priority is to avoid emergency incidents occurring and we have set out our approach to achieving this goal in our Prevention & Protection Strategy. However, in the event that we do have to respond to emergencies, we will do so in a safe, measured and effective way ensuring that we minimise the impact to our citizens and on our communities. Set out in this section is an overview of the operational risks and challenges that East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service faces on a daily basis. The full explanation of each of the risks can be found within both the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the Operational Response Review (ORR). This strategy specifically identifies how we intend to respond to these risks.

Fire in the Home risk

Fire represents the 'traditional' risk of the fire and rescue service. In terms of fire patterns and trends, we now understand that fire; especially in the home, is as much a social phenomenon as it is a combustion process. For this reason, the incidence of fire very much follows similar trends to other social factors. Alcohol and drugs use, mental and physical illness and socioeconomic factors all play a part. This lends itself to a level of predictability in terms of trends.

In terms of risk to people, fires develop much faster and at higher temperatures than they have in the past and this is a common factor that applies to fires in the home and in other buildings. As a consequence, far more investment in the provision of home fire safety advice has been made. Our approach to 'prevention activities' is detailed in the Prevention & Protection Strategy and explains the integration of Prevention, Protection and response activity to effectively reduce risk.

Fires in Commercial Settings

In relation to larger/commercial buildings, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove consists of many high, medium and low rise structures. The approach to modern methods of construction, for many of these buildings presents very different risks for the Service. There are buildings with much bigger compartments; often with very high fire loading and despite the fact that the vast majority comply with the relevant legislative requirements, they are not always fitted with fire sprinklers.

In addition, we have modified and invested into a system that ensures holistic system for Firefighter risk info protection and prevention that supports our drive to ensure effective, accurate and timely exchange of information between teams at critical times.

Road Risk

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove has a total length of 5,361km road across the ESFRS area. There are no motorways and fewer than 50 miles of dual carriageway in the service area. Consequently, the road infrastructure is poor. This increases road traffic collision risks, our service response times and limits the local economy. Due to tourism related traffic, this issue is further exacerbated in the summer months, particularly during school and bank holidays. The Fire & Rescue Service will continue to be a contributory partner to the Sussex Safer Road Partnership.



Water Risk

Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death in the UK and ESFRS is committed to working with our partner agencies to ensure everyone is equipped with the necessary information they need to protect themselves and their loved ones. East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove have one of the highest number of accidental drownings in the UK, hence the commitment in the current Integrated Risk Management Plan (2020-2025) as a key community risk. Due to its seaside proximity to London, Brighton & Hove alone attracts more than 11 million visitors each year. Along with the coastal risk, East Sussex also comprises many rivers, lakes, marshes and reservoirs.

Heritage Risk

There are a wide variety of heritage and cultural risks across the county of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, including a significant number of graded/listed buildings, thatched properties, sporting venues such as the Amex stadium and the South Downs National Park. These site-specific risks are considered carefully and policies, procedures and processes relating to these risks are defined, refined and aligned through the Operational Risk Information process.



Environmental Risk

The south coast is particularly vulnerable due to low atmospheric pressure over the English Channel, high tide levels (spring tides) and storm surges, caused by gales driving storms through the channel. There are significant parts of the ESFRS area that represent a flood risk, both from coastal and fluvial flooding. A number of areas benefit from flood defences, but other areas represent a significant risk from flooding.

Wildfire

Climate change is causing hotter and drier summers; this has the potential to increase the risk of wild fires occurring. These incidents demand vast resources from their local fire and rescue services.

Over border risks

In addition to all the risks within our area, there are also risks that sit just outside in neighbouring counties, for example, Gatwick and Shoreham airports in West Sussex and a nuclear power station in Kent.

Sections 13 and 16 of the Fire Services Act 2004 places an obligation on fire and rescue services to group together, where practicable, to provide mutual assistance in the execution of their functions. ESFRS has contractual arrangements in place with its neighbouring services in terms of reinforcement schemes to ensure serious emergencies are attended in an efficient and effective manner.



National Risk

The Government monitors the most significant emergencies that the UK could face over the next five years through its National Security Risk Assessment. The National Risk Register (NRR) is the public version of this assessment.

The Community Risk Register (CRR) provides information on the biggest emergencies that could happen in Sussex, together with an assessment of how likely they are to happen and the impacts if they do. This includes the impacts to people, their houses, the environment and local businesses.

Looking at all of the risks together also assists emergency services, local authorities and other organisations plan their joint response. The CRR aims to help these agencies make decisions on emergency planning work, and will help them develop better relationships whilst considering their capabilities and capacity.

Approach to efficiency

As a publicly-funded organisation, people rightly expect us to use our resources responsibly and efficiently. The public, local politicians and our staff want to see that we are cutting spending where it is no longer required, and protecting frontline services as much as possible. We believe we have been rising to this challenge and have demonstrated that we are doing everything that might be expected of us in trying to share services with others, collaborating to save time and money, and eliminating spend where it is no longer required.

This strategy will enable improvements in operational productivity and the Service will work with the NFCC Efficiency and Productivity Group to develop consistent approaches to measuring and reporting these improvements.

Our Operational Response Review was the most significant piece of operational risk analysis work we have undertaken in recent years. The results of the analysis have enabled us to focus our attention over the next four years to improve our service delivery and reduce the risk our communities are facing as articulated within the IRMP.

The financial impact of the final IRMP proposals on the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme is summarised in the table below. From a revenue perspective the proposals deliver a reduction in cost of £0.525m by 2025/26 or a total of £1.125m over the period.



The cost of the Capital Programme reduces by £0.568m over the period. This has the potential to reduce forecast borrowing costs by approximately £0.040m per annum by the end of the period. Additional revenue savings of £0.250m by 2023/24 also result from changes to policy and practice agreed alongside the IRMP proposals. This brings the total revenue saving to £0.775m pa by 2025/26 or £2.050m over the six year period.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Revenue Impact							
IRMP Proposals	25	44	-74	-171	-424	-525	-1,125
Changes to policies & practices	0	-50	-125	-250	-250	-250	-925
Total Revenue Impact	25	-6	-199	-421	-674	-775	-2,050
Capital Impact	71	-74	-600	35	0	0	-568

Efficiency through Collaboration

Shared Control function

Our move to share a Joint Control Room Surrey and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services using the same tri-service mobilising system will lead to many efficiencies in how we handle emergency calls and mobilise crews to incidents. This includes the ability to mobilise across three county borders, with the ability to automatically call on the nearest fire engine, without the need to request its use if that fire appliance belongs to one of the other two Services.

Ambulance stand-by points

We have plans to modify up to 10 of our fire stations to allow ambulance staff to share space. We are working towards a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SECamb which sets out the proposed co-location of ambulance service resources at the sites, including office space for ambulance staff, welfare facilities and ambulance parking bays.

Increasing collaboration

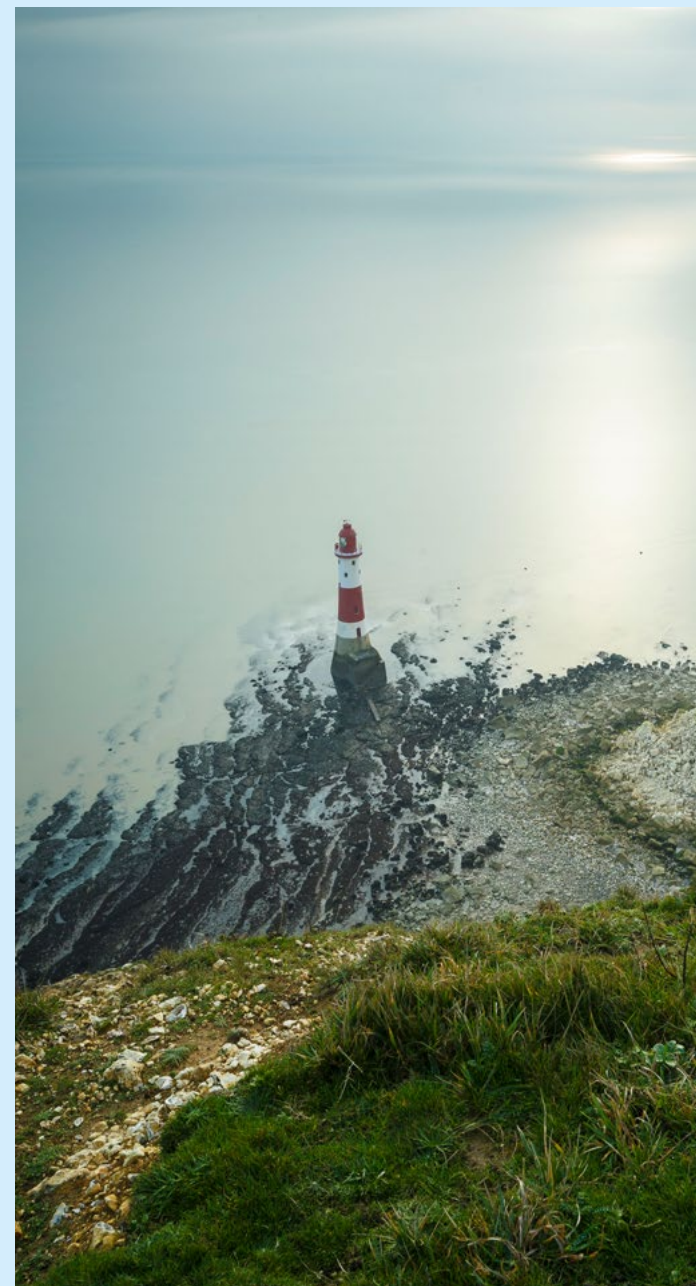
Over the period of this strategy a four fire service collaboration board called 4F has been established with West Sussex, Surrey and Kent Fire and Rescue Services. This collaboration will continue to explore meaningful opportunities for working more closely with our emergency services partners.



Environmental & Sustainability

We have a significant role to play in protecting the environment such as reducing the volume of carbon emissions created by emergency situations, by reducing the risk of fire and other emergencies through our approach to fighting fires and fire prevention. We recognise that the benefits in doing this can also have wider ranging positive effects such as improving the health and wellbeing of people living and working in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. The Response and Resilience Strategy will aid the Service in meeting its obligations in relation to working towards a reduction in carbon that is found in the environment,

- How we can minimise our impacts on the environment, including those caused by emission of greenhouse gases
- To better protect the natural environment in the way we fight fires and other incidents
- To reduce the environmental, social and economic impacts of fires by continually reducing the number of fires – every fire we attend has a very real cost to people, places and planet, so prevention wherever possible is our aim.



Collaboration

(Please see Efficiencies section for details on Collaborations).

Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver interoperability (between fire and rescue authorities) and interoperability (with other responders such as other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums) in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP).

Collaborating with others to ensure resources are providing best value and minimising risk to the communities that ESFRS serves must be a key priority. Working with others in collaboration does present challenges and will always be in the public's interest.

ESFRS is part of the South East region of fire services which includes: Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Surrey Fire & Rescue Service & West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service which together have a 4F Board specifically to drive collaboration.

As part of this collaboration the 4F Board approved a 4F Operational Alignment Group providing structured operational engagement with principal stakeholders from West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS), East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS), Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) (participants in the Joint Fire Control project (JFC)) and Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) to enable and drive a programme of work in respect to operational alignment across the 4F within a collaborative and partnership ethos.

The purpose of delivering this programme will be to enable the four Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their service provision for the benefit of their communities.

In doing so, the FRAs will also be able to demonstrate that they have met the requirements of the Policing and Crime Act and the expectations of Government contained within the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (Amended May 2018).

Measuring success, performance measurement, quality assurance and review

Success will be measured through a number of already established organisational audit approaches. This will be led by both the Assistant Director of Operational Support & Resilience and the Assistant Director of Safer Communities on an annual basis.

Audit areas will include:

- Areas of improvement in relation to firefighting, rescues and hazardous materials identified through the Operational Assurance process and incident command reviews.
- Fatal Fire and Serious Incident Reviews
- Fire Investigations
- Health and Safety including thematic sampling
- Training planning, delivery and recording
- Risk information gathering and environmental responsibilities
- Station security, business continuity and resilience
- End of month returns
- Relevant areas from HMICFRS inspections.

We will also monitor progress of the strategy in the following ways:

Key Performance Measures (KPMs)

We will utilise appropriate Key Performance Measures that monitor the success and progress of the annual directorate business plan that contains the strategic objectives that translates this strategy into actions that ensure continual improvement. Each of the strategic objectives will also be linked to the four Service Commitments.

Reporting Progress

Scrutiny of progress against the strategy will be undertaken by the Strategy Board who will receive regular exception reports from the Assistant Director – Operational Support and Resilience, the strategic lead for this area.

Measuring Perceptions/Sense Checking

We will regularly ask for feedback aligned to our Employee Engagement Framework from our operational staff to inform us of our progress with the Response & Resilience Strategy. Their opinions and suggestions will be used to measure and influence improvement.

Keeping it current

We will provide a progress report and update the plan annually to keep it fresh and in line with emerging national issues.

Themes

To ensure ESFRS deal with the risks in a safe, measured and effective way ensuring that we minimise the impact to our citizens and on our communities 7 strategic themes have been identified all of which have the Safe Person concept running through them.

THEME 1 - Integrated Risk Management Plan

key deliverables

The actions in this strategy will ensure that the service has sufficient and proportionate emergency response arrangements to always respond to and effectively manage a wide range of risks and threats, delivered through a range of local, regional and national delivery models.

The Operational Response Review was the most significant piece of operational risk analysis work undertaken in recent years and was the backbone of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). We began by identifying the many and varied risks across our service area - past, present and future. This enabled us to consider how best to deploy our resources in terms of firefighters, appliances and equipment to provide the most effective response to emergencies across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. This has allowed us to plan how we will deliver a fire & rescue service that reduces or mitigates those risks in the most effective way.

We have a number of areas where we want to focus our attention over the next five years in order to improve our service delivery and reduce the risk our communities are facing.

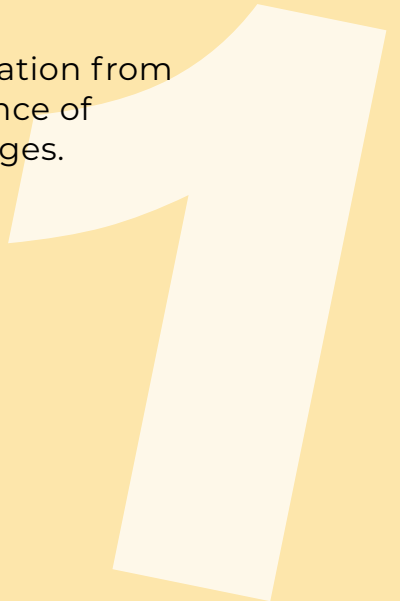


THEME 1 - Integrated Risk Management Plan

key deliverables

The main areas of work for the next five years are:

- Introduction of an Operational Resilience Plan as a Policy document repealing Core Stations Policy and amending Combined Crewing Policy
- Introduction of a Flexible Resourcing Pool (FRP)
- Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Combined Salary Contracts
- Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Flexible On-call contracts to support operations, prevention, protection and specialist capabilities
- Introduce a Flexible Mobilisation Policy
- Introduce a Logistics management function within taking into consideration the management of the FRP, Officers rota, duty systems overview and necessary support to ES Fire Control
- Introduce a one-Watch duty system at Battle Fire Station to work over 5 days with an establishment of 7
- Introduce a one-Watch duty system at six Stations including the reclassified fire station at The Ridge to work over 7 days with an establishment of 9
- Replacement and re-categorisation of seven PAPA4 appliances with specialist vehicles and operational spares.
- Introduction of a PAPA2 at Bohemia Road in cognisance of interdependent workstreams/packages
- Reclassification of The Ridge Fire Station from 24/7 Shift to DCDS 7-day in cognisance of interdependent workstreams/packages.



THEME 2 - Operational Preparedness

As part of the Response & Resilience Strategy the Service will maintain personnel with appropriate skill sets and resources to allow an effective response to a range of incident types as informed by the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

There is also a range of potential incidents that due to their location or complexity, require additional equipment for their resolution. These include fires where there is poor road access, accidents involving heavy goods vehicles or trains, or fires away from the water network. These incidents require the provision of specialist vehicles such as off-road vehicles, water carriers, aerial ladder platforms and high-volume pumps. While these incidents require additional equipment, the training for the use of this equipment can be achieved - with careful planning and location of vehicles - within the training time available for firefighters. As such we ensure we can meet this full range of standard incidents through the provision of a specialist vehicle fleet crewed, when required, by personnel who also crew fire engines.

Through the People Strategy the Service will maintain personnel with appropriate skill sets and resources to allow an effective response to a range of incident types as informed by the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

This includes operational training, whether it be basic training or maintenance of competence against the types of incidents we attend and the equipment we use, incident command training, emergency fire appliance driving, specialist fire appliance provision, water rescue and rescue from height capability as well as supporting national emergency response. The latest IRMP identifies further evolution of our delivery models to meet the identified community. Through the People Strategy we will also ensure staff learn new skills to ensure the delivery of new innovative initiatives devised as a consequence of the annual assessment of risk. Workforce planning will be a key element of operational readiness ensuring that there are sufficient personnel of the right skills to maintain emergency response and that succession planning and training are early considerations.

THEME 2 - Operational Preparedness

Focusing on key FRS risks the Operational Planning & Policy department will work closely with other teams and departments to ensure that responders have the correct appliances, equipment, PPE, information, instruction and training to deal with the wide range of foreseeable incidents.

This will be achieved by ensuring that we are aligned to other key service strategies and the supporting departments where cross over exists, for example this strategy sits hand in glove with the People Strategy in terms of workforce planning, ensuring our staff have the right skills and maintain competence through a framework of training; the Fleet & Equipment Strategy in terms of how the development and advancement of new technology can enhance performance and safety at an incident, the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy ensures we follow the safe person concept whilst the Prevention & Protection Strategy outlines a new holistic risk reduction methodology ensuring we reduce risks both in our communities and to our operational workforce.

The current provision of personnel trained to provide resilience cover in times of a significant loss of personnel, will be continued to ensure that the Service can maintain its statutory duty to respond to emergencies. To provide assurance that current business disruption plans are valid and appropriate the Service will ensure that each plan is reviewed annually and live tested at intervals of not more than 2 years.

In accordance with our IRMP 2020 – 2025, ESFRS is developing an operational resilience plan to ensure the most effective and efficient emergency response cover can be maintained during high periods of operational activity or business disruption events. This plan ensures 18 appliances are available at the start of the day, with an additional 6 to be drawn upon through flexible mobilisation as required.

Joint Fire Control (JFC) will apply the operational resilience plan and wherever necessary make use of mutual aid or national resilience arrangements. The Operational Planning & Policy team will look to optimise appliance availability using flexible crewing groups, combining station personnel to form whole crews, positioning these appliances at strategic locations to enhance cover. They will also consider officer cover within this.

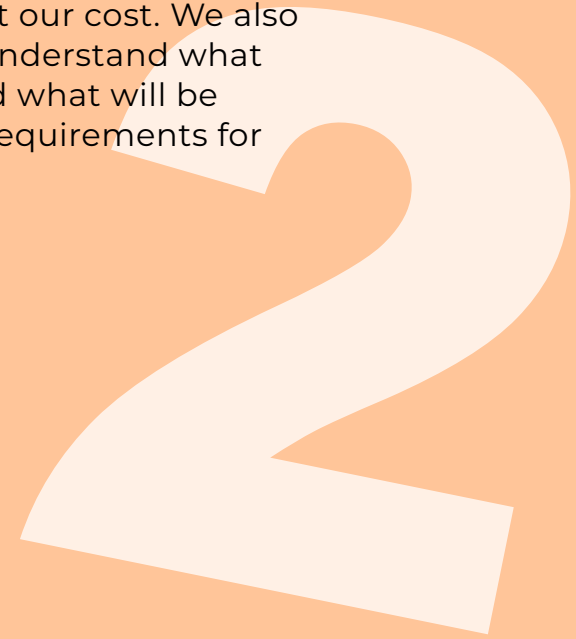
THEME 2 - Operational Preparedness

This team will also monitor and flag the performance of the Joint Fire Control against the agreed performance measures and key performance indicators within the Section 16 agreement.

Work is ongoing to align further operational procedures as a tri service, and one of these is around the Grenfell Tower report that identifies improvements that could be made across the Sector and the need for a Fire Survival Guidance policy which is being aligned and exercised in the tri service Joint Fire Control.

East Sussex FRS continue to work in partnership with local Water Authorities to ensure water is available for use as firefighting media when required. We ensure we deliver the requirements of Part 5 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, by ensuring we have entered into an agreement with local Water Authorities to ensure the availability and potential charging of water supplies in an emergency. We have also entered into an agreement to ensure all relevant hydrants are clearly marked and maintained.

To facilitate this, we have a team of hydrant technicians overseen and supported by the Operational Planning & Policy department. We utilise these members of staff to regularly test the hydrants and report any maintenance or repair requirements to the Water Authority to resolve at our cost. We also respond to Local Authorities Planning Applications to ensure the applicants fully understand what is required by the Fire Authority with regards to the provision of water supplies and what will be required during the Building Control consultation process with regards to access requirements for firefighting.



THEME 2 - Operational Preparedness

The main areas of work for the next five years to optimise our response preparedness are:

- Ensuring we identify the requirement for and maintain specialist capabilities and roles linked to the Service areas foreseeable risks e.g. ship alongside, water, wildfire and animal rescue, working at height, environmental protection
- Support JFC delivery model through resource management team, effective governance and performance management framework
- Oversee and coordinate transition from airwave to ESN ensuring operation requirements are achieved and effective coverage is secured locally. Work with blue light partners to ensure efficient and reflective transition
- Undertake an annual assessment of risk to continue to ensure that we have the correct appliances, equipment, PPE, information, instruction and training to deal with a wide range of foreseeable incidents within our communities
- Fully embed the revised Site Specific Risk Information process for operational crews
- Develop and embed a clear risk based Exercise Programme for operational crews that clearly aligns to the risks
- We will explore and research emerging firefighting technology.



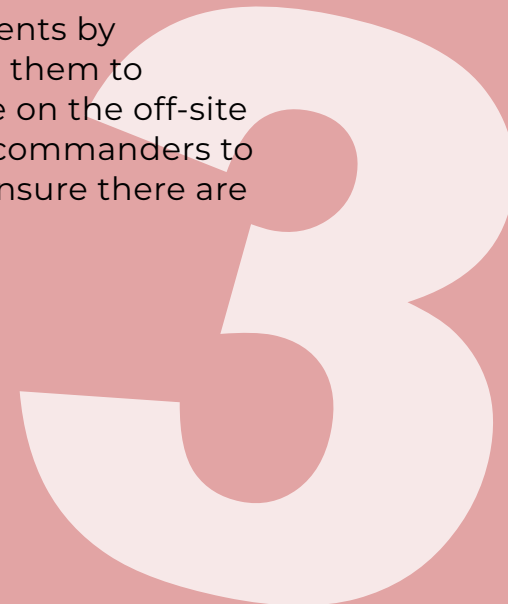
THEME 3 - Operational Response

When an emergency occurs, to successfully resolve it, there is a need for information to be passed via the 999 system, to a Control Room, which can then mobilise and maintain communications with allocated resources and other agencies. Our arrangements to achieve this consist of contracting Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to deliver the majority of the required aspects of this duty through a Joint Fire Control (JFC). This will be actioned via a Section 16 agreement, from the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, which relates to the 'arrangements for the discharge of functions.'

The Joint Fire Control also continually monitors the position of available resources and relocate those resources when required to ensure that our personnel services and equipment are always in the most efficient location for responding to potential emergencies.

Incidents that require personnel, services and equipment greater than those available on two fire engines creates complexities that require a higher level of command competence for their successful resolution. The resolution of the most complex emergency incidents also requires multi-agency groups of tactical and strategic managers meeting away from the incident to identify and address the wider impact.

ESFRS will ensure that we have the appropriate level of command available for all incidents by providing equipment and training to our middle and senior managers. This is to enable them to respond directly to incidents to take on command or to attend off-site meetings to take on the off-site responsibilities. For planning purposes we will ensure we always have enough on duty commanders to effectively resolve an incident. To support our commanders at these incidents we will ensure there are 2 incident command vehicles that can be mobilised to larger incidents.



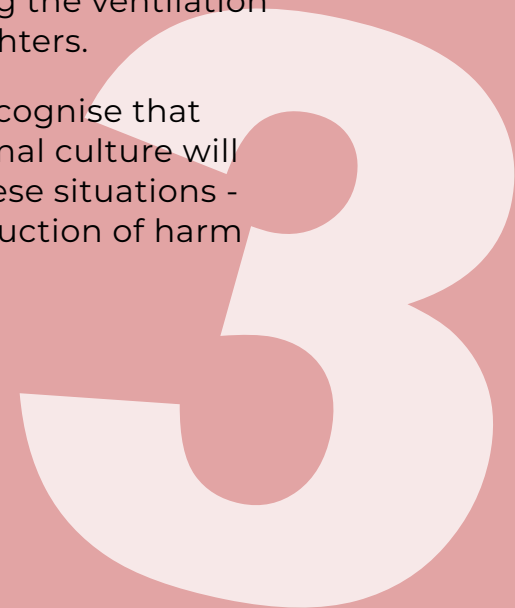
THEME 3 - Operational Response

When attending any of these incidents and bringing them to a successful conclusion will ensure that we meet our requirements towards the health, safety and wellbeing of our team members by having well developed policies and procedures drawn from national operational guidance; a competent work force trained in the application of these policies and procedures; robust dynamic and analytical risk assessment processes and by ensuring that risk is always considered with respect to potential benefits. 'At every incident the greater the potential benefit of fire and rescue actions, the greater the risk that is accepted by commanders and firefighters. Activities that present a high risk to safety are limited to those that have the potential to save life or to prevent rapid and significant escalation of the incident.'

To assist our commanders in their decision-making we will ensure there is a range of specialist advice available - either through the mobilisation of a specifically trained specialist or through telephone advice.

The incidents that create the greatest challenges for maintaining the safety of our own teams are those where there is a fire within a building. To ensure we can deal with these incidents as safely as possible, we will provide equipment and training to support an overall firefighting approach. Identifying the location of the fire, attacking the fire from a position of safety, managing the ventilation profile of the fire before entering, extinguishing the fire and decontamination of firefighters.

While these arrangements will ensure that we will meet all normal requirements we recognise that there is always a potential for novel or unfamiliar emergency incidents. Our organisational culture will support our commanders to be able to produce creative and innovative decisions in these situations - that are focused on the saving of life, the prevention of significant escalation or the reduction of harm - through the use of operational discretion.



THEME 3 - Operational Response

Post Operational Response

Once the initial operational response phase of an incident has been dealt with, operational crews will turn their attentions to a number of activities that ensures the successful conclusion of an incident as well as providing additional assurance and support to the community affected. This includes consideration of any form of investigation that may need to be undertaken.

Whenever we can, after a fire has been extinguished, our crews will deliver safety messages to the neighbouring homes in an effort to help prevent a similar occurrence. In this way we hope to raise awareness to the dangers from fire and also gives a start on how best to reduce the likelihood of a fire in the home.

Experiencing something as unexpected as a fire, a collision or any other form of rescue can be difficult - particularly in instances where suffering or loss of life have been witnessed. That's why it's important to us to offer the appropriate psychological support through our Occupational Health provider and a Trauma Risk Management programme to our members of staff. Looking after the community post incident is just as important as the service's Prevention, Protection and Response duties, therefore, we will further explore how we can be better aware of mental health risks to members of the public affected by an incident and signpost them to help/support.



THEME 3 - Operational Response

The main areas of work against this theme for the next five years are:

- To embed the Joint Fire Control operating model and develop, deliver and embed the operational benefits
- That we will have a suite of policies and procedures drawn from National Operational Guidance and other outcome reports/investigations such as Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Bombing
- Continuing to develop our Tactical Advisor cadre to ensure we can provide robust and specialist advice to our Incident Commanders
- To explore how we can be better aware of mental health risks of members of the public affected by an incident and provide signposting to support/help
- Ensure the appropriate systems deliver an automated solution for collecting, interrogating and providing accurate risk information to staff across the Service and that exchange of information between departments is effective and complies with GDPR
- Embed post incident considerations into the available technology.



THEME 4 - Intra-operability & Inter-operability

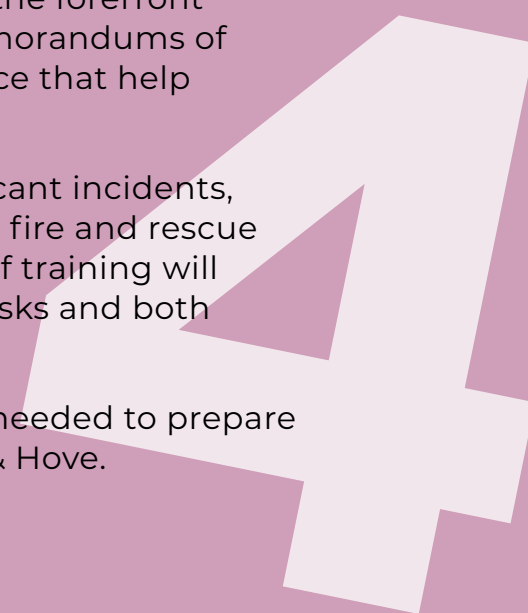
Many of the emergencies to which we are called require expertise and assistance from more than just the Fire and Rescue Service. To this end we will ensure that we work closely with colleagues across all agencies, but in particular other 'blue light' services, to make sure we are aware of each other's capability and limitations with the aim of delivering the best possible service in concluding any emergency we may jointly face.

Our ability to work conterminously with other Fire and Rescue Services is critical to frontline emergency response and supports our drive to deliver high performing services, engaging with our communities and having a safe and valued workforce. As such, we continue to strengthen our networks on receipt of calls within the Joint Fire Control centre with SFRS and WSFRS and with 4 key areas of frontline service delivery looking at joint breathing apparatus procedures, joint emergency response policies, joint purchase of Incident Command Units and joint Fire Investigation teams/protocols.

From an interoperability, externally facing perspective, we are working with our Category 1 responder colleagues as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act by taking a lead role in the Sussex Resilience Forum delivery, response and training groups to ensure we remain influential and at the forefront of joint working activities. The OP&P team will head-up the revision of the formal Memorandums of Understanding with our blue-light colleagues in SECamb and Sussex and Surrey Police that help improve community safety, the health agenda and ultimately driving down risk.

To ensure that the Service can respond efficiently and effectively to major and significant incidents, there will be a range of tactical exercises and joint training, where possible with other fire and rescue services and key partners, planned throughout the period of this strategy. Key areas of training will be determined by due consideration of the National Risk Register, local community risks and both national and local operational learning.

The Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) is a partnership, made up of all the organisations needed to prepare for and respond to any major emergency within East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove.



THEME 4 - Intra-operability & Inter-operability

The Forum covers the Sussex Police area and includes the emergency services, local authorities, Environment Agency and health agencies along with voluntary and private agencies. Under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) every part of the United Kingdom is required to establish a resilience forum.

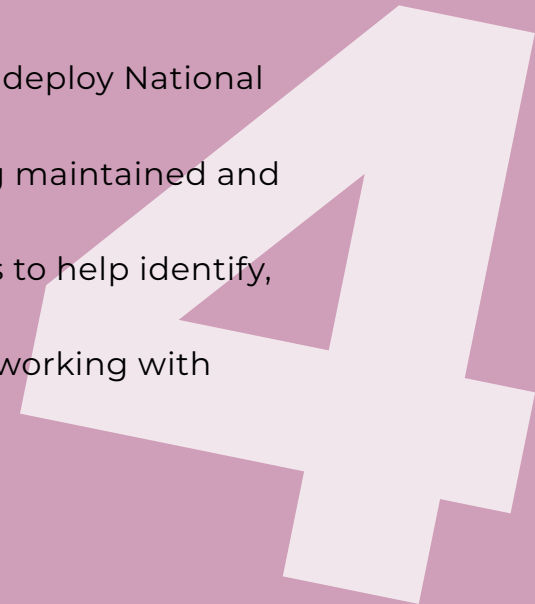
During emergencies we work together to focus on the needs of the victims, vulnerable people and responders. The partnership has developed a range of capabilities, which we regularly test and exercise, necessary to help us manage most emergencies.

ESFRS has statutory duties as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007, in relation to National Resilience assets, to ensure they are being satisfactorily discharged.

The National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) visit ESFRS to undertake an assurance process to ensure we, as hosts for National Resilience assets (High Volume Pump (HVP) and the Mass Decontamination Unit (MD)), achieve and maintain an effective operational capability to respond to national and major emergencies.

Work for the next five years includes:

- Ensuring that the necessary skills and attributes are being maintained in order to deploy National Resilience assets effectively
- To identify and confirm that the National Resilience capability equipment is being maintained and that defects are managed in accordance within the terms and conditions of use
- Continuing to play a leading role in the LRF, working with key partners at all levels to help identify, plan, train against and respond to risks both locally, regionally and nationally
- Ensuring we have effective multi-agency response plans for our high risk sites by working with partners to further embed the JESIP approach to managing incidents.



THEME 5 - Operational Learning & Assurance

We are committed to learning from incidents and exercises with a view to making future improvements based on the learning outcomes identified. The Operational Planning & Policy team will, so far as it is reasonably practicable, align policies and procedures to national programmes e.g. National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) and Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). The benefits of these are recognised and will continue to provide feedback, where appropriate, that will influence national procedures through the use of the National Operational Learning (NOL) and the Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) portals as a vehicle to facilitate this.

The Service has a defined and managed Operational Assurance (OA) process. Within this process monitoring the outcomes from Fire Investigations (FI), outcomes identified within the National Operational Learning or Joint Operational Learning databases, as well as recommendations from external enquiries including Coroner reports all takes place. Our current incident monitoring process is under review which forms a key aspect of our improvement journey, taking into consideration both NOGP advocated processes and the NFCC Standard for Operational Learning.

Proactive monitoring during emergency incidents is a planned area of development for ESFRS that will enable us to provide much needed evidence that helps to triangulate our annual statement of assurance.

The Incident Debriefing Process has a distinct identity and both historical and new learning is communicated through various platforms including 'Assurance in Action' and 'Core Brief' publications, which are vital in embedding the learning process. All new Level 2 Response Officers and above will be trained to carry out debriefs to add resilience and authenticity to the process. The Operational Planning & Policy team will lead on any multi-agency debriefs delivered via the Local Resilience Forum, with any multi-agency learning progressed via the Joint Operational Learning (JOL) online platform.

The Operational Assurance process is linked to various ESFRS departments to track and ensure end-to-end learning.

THEME 5 - Operational Learning & Assurance

The Station audit programme is designed to support the continual improvement of our front line delivery services in terms of effectiveness, compliance with service operational and administrative procedures but above all, to ensure that the operational preparedness and safety of crews remains a priority. The purpose of the audits is to ensure that the current levels of knowledge and skills of crews on stations is benchmarked against current policies and procedures and assess the embedding of changes to ensure that operational preparedness and firefighter safety is maintained to a high level.

The Service undertakes fatal fire reviews to identify and analyse trends and patterns of accidental dwelling fatal fires, including those fires which result in injury. The learning from these reviews has helped to set the agenda of future community safety and prevention work as set out in the Prevention and Protection Strategy.

In summary, over the next 5 years through this strategy and against this theme we will:

- Further embed the end-to-end operational assurance process
- Continually review and refine the annual station audit programme to continue to test operational preparedness and firefighter safety
- Deliver the Grenfell Tower 1 plan capitalising on the national learning to the benefit of the public and staff.



THEME 6 - Professionalism

The national Fire Standards Board are now releasing the first of a suite of standards which will cover activities carried out by fire and rescue services. The aim of these organisational standards is to drive improvement and enhance professionalism, helping to identify what good practice looks like for the benefit of both fire and rescue service personnel and the communities we serve.

The first Fire Standards released relate to the Services' public facing duties. Each identifies the desired outcome for the community, what services must have in place to achieve that outcome and the expected benefits of achieving it.

The Safer Communities Directorate has an embedded Support & Delivery Framework, which is the framework through which it is intended the supportive processes and systems will be provided.

Work for the next five years will be:

- To ensure the relevant professional standards as released by the NFCC are implemented.



Four Year Action Plan

Priorities for year 1

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1	Introduction of an Operational Resilience Plan as a Policy document repealing Core Stations Policy and amending Combined Crewing Policy	Work towards the ORP with full implementation by April 2024
	Introduction of a Flexible Resourcing Pool (FRP)	Full implementation by December 2022
	Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Combined Salary Contracts	Commence research ready for full implementation by April 2024
	Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Flexible On-call contracts	To support operations, prevention, protection and specialist capabilities for full implementation by December 2022
	Introduce a Flexible Mobilisation Policy	Work towards full implementation by Dec 2022
	Replacement and re-categorisation of seven PAPA4 appliances with specialist vehicles and operational spares	Working towards with full implementation by April 2023
	Introduction of a PAPA2 at Bohemia Road	Working towards April 2025 implementation

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 2	Ensuring we identify the requirement for and maintain specialist capabilities and roles linked to the Service areas foreseeable risks e.g. ship alongside, water, wildfire and animal rescue, working at height, environmental protection	A comprehensive and structured programme of training for operational staff Maintenance of competence performance measures
	Support JFC delivery model through developing a resource management team, effective governance and performance management framework	A fully integrated RMT that is the conduit between JFC and ESFRS Measurement of the agreed SLAs between JFC
	Oversee and coordinate transition from airwave to ESN ensuring operation requirements are achieved and effective coverage is secured locally. Work with blue light partners to ensure efficient and reflective transition	Working towards successful implementation of the ESN across the Service
	Undertake an annual assessment of risk to continue to ensure that we have the correct appliances, equipment, PPE, information, instruction and training to deal with a wide range of foreseeable incidents. within our communities	An up-to-date overview of risk within our community and a response plan fit for purpose
	Fully embed the revised Site Specific Risk Information process for operational crews	A detailed database of risk information that crews can access through the MODAS terminal

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 3	To embed the Joint Fire Control operating model and develop, deliver and embed the operational benefits	A resilient JFC that is fully embedded
	That we will have a suite of policies and procedures drawn from National Operational Guidance and other outcome reports/investigations such as Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Bombing	Up to date policies and procedures that reflect national guidance and other key investigations
	To explore how we can be better aware of mental health risks of members of the public affected by an incident and provide signposting to support/help	To ensure we provide a holistic service to our community

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 4	To identify and confirm that the National Resilience capability equipment is being maintained and that defects are managed in accordance within the terms and conditions of use	A robust process that ensures that regional and national deployments are done quickly, effectively, efficiently and safely
	Ensuring we have effective multi-agency response plans for our high risk sites by working with partners to further embed the JESIP approach to managing incidents	To ensure a joint situational awareness and lexicon in our operational responders further enhancing an efficient, effective and safe response to our communities
	To ensure effective working practices and training is established with SECamb when assisting them (such as Assistance to Ambulance calls)	A robust Memorandum of Understanding that provides clinical governance and a training plan ensuring operational crews are able to provide the best possible level of care whilst ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves
	Further embed the end-to-end operational assurance process	That learning is embedded into our operational response to ensure an efficient, effective, and safe response of our operational staff

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 5	Deliver the Purple and Red risks identified in the Grenfell Tower 1 Plan capitalising on the national learning to the benefit of the public and staff	To ensure an efficient, effective and safe response to our communities
	Continually review and refine the annual station audit programme to continue to test operational preparedness and firefighter safety	That learning is embedded into our operational response to ensure an efficient, effective and safe response of our operational staff
Theme 6	To ensure the relevant professional standards as released by the NFCC are implemented	To ensure compliance against the professional standards

Priorities for year 2

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1	Introduction of an Operational Resilience Plan as a Policy document repealing Core Stations Policy and amending Combined Crewing Policy	Work towards the ORP with full implementation by April 2024
	Introduction of a Flexible Resourcing Pool (FRP)	Full implementation by December 2022
	Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Combined Salary Contracts	Commence research ready for full implementation by April 2024
	Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Flexible On-call contracts	Support operations, prevention, protection and specialist capabilities for full implementation by December 2022
	Introduce a Flexible Mobilisation Policy	Work towards full implementation by Dec 2022
	Replacement and re-categorisation of seven PAPA4 appliances with specialist vehicles and operational spares	Working towards with full implementation by April 2023
	Introduction of a PAPA2 at Bohemia Road	Working towards April 2025 implementation
	Introduce a one-Watch duty system at Battle Fire Station to work over 5 days with an establishment of 7	Working towards full implementation by April 2024
	Reclassification of The Ridge Fire Station from 24/7 Shift to DCDS 7-day in cognisance of interdependent workstreams/packages	Working towards full implementation by April 2024

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 2	Ensuring we continue to identify the requirement for and maintain specialist capabilities and roles linked to the Service areas foreseeable risks e.g. ship alongside, water, wildfire and animal rescue, working at height, environmental protection	A comprehensive and structured programme of training for operational staff
	Oversee and coordinate transition from airwave to ESN ensuring operation requirements are achieved and effective coverage is secured locally. Work with blue light partners to ensure efficient and reflective transition	Working towards successful implementation of the ESN across the Service
	Review the Site Specific Risk Information process for operational crews	Ensure the detailed database of risk information that crews can access through the MODAS terminal is fully implemented and embedded
	Develop and embed a clear risk based Exercise Programme for operational crews that clearly aligns to the risks	A refined and shared Exercise timetable

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 3	To embed the Joint Fire Control operating model and develop, deliver and embed the operational benefits	A resilient JFC that is fully embedded
	Continually review our policies and procedures drawn from National Operational Guidance and other outcome reports/investigations such as Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Bombing	Up-to-date policies and procedures that reflect national guidance and other key investigations
	We will review our Tactical Advisor cadre to ensure we can provide robust and specialist advice to our Incident Commanders with a report to Ops Committee with the proposals	To ensure our Incident Commanders have the right information and right support at the incident ground
	Deliver a signposting service to members of the public affected by an incident that provides signposting to support/help	To ensure we provide a holistic service to our community
	To develop an Outline Business Case for an in-cab solution for post incident considerations	To use the available technology to ensure an efficient service is maintained

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 4	Ensuring that the necessary skills and attributes are being maintained in order to deploy National Resilience assets effectively	Our staff are highly trained and maintained competent to ensure the effective, efficient and safe deployment of national resilience assets
	To identify and confirm that the National Resilience capability equipment is being maintained and that defects are managed in accordance within the terms and conditions of use	A robust process that ensures that regional and national deployments are done quickly, effectively, efficiently and safely
	Ensuring we have effective multi-agency response plans for our high risk sites by working with partners to further embed the JESIP approach to managing incidents	To ensure a joint situational awareness and lexicon in our operational responders further enhancing an efficient, effective and safe response to our communities
Theme 5	Further embed the end-to-end operational assurance process	That learning is embedded into our operational response to ensure an efficient, effective and safe response of our operational staff
	Deliver the outstanding Red risks and Amber risks identified in the Grenfell Tower 1 Plan capitalising on the national learning to the benefit of the public and staff	To ensure an efficient, effective and safe response to our communities
Theme 6	To ensure the relevant professional standards as released by the NFCC are implemented	To ensure compliance against the professional standards

Priorities for year 3

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1	Introduction of an Operational Resilience Plan as a Policy document repealing Core Stations Policy and amending Combined Crewing Policy	Work towards the ORP with full implementation by April 2024
	Enhancements to On-call – Introduction of Combined Salary Contracts	Commence research ready for full implementation by April 2024
	Introduction of a PAPA2 at Bohemia Road	Working towards April 2025 implementation
	Introduce a one-Watch duty system at Battle Fire Station to work over 5 days with an establishment of 7	Working towards full implementation by April 2024
	Reclassification of The Ridge Fire Station from 24/7 Shift to DCDS 7-day in cognisance of interdependent workstreams/packages	Working towards full implementation by April 2024

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 2	Review the work we have done to ensure we continue to identify the requirement for and maintain specialist capabilities and roles linked to the Service areas foreseeable risks e.g. ship alongside, water, wildfire and animal rescue, working at height, environmental protection	A comprehensive and structured programme of training for operational staff that has been reviewed
	Oversee and coordinate transition from airwave to ESN ensuring operation requirements are achieved and effective coverage is secured locally. Work with blue light partners to ensure efficient and reflective transitio	Working towards successful implementation of the ESN across the Service
Theme 3	Continually review our policies and procedures drawn from National Operational Guidance and other outcome reports/investigations such as Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Bombing	Up-to-date policies and procedures that reflect national guidance and other key investigations
	Implement the findings of the Tactical Advisor cadre to ensure we can provide robust and specialist advice to our Incident Commanders; (yr 1, 2 & 3)	To ensure our Incident Commanders have the right information and right support at the incident ground
	Review the signposting service to members of the public affected by an incident that provides signposting to support/help	To ensure we provide a holistic service to our community
	Design and implement an in-cab solution for post incident considerations	To use the available technology to ensure an efficient service is maintained

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 4	A programme of JESIP training and exercising events against risks within our communities to be developed and implemented	A joint approach to training and developing to ensure JESIP principles continue to be embedded
Theme 5	Review the changes made and refine the end-to-end operational assurance process	That learning is embedded into our operational response to ensure an efficient, effective and safe response of our operational staff
Theme 6	To ensure the relevant professional standards as released by the NFCC are implemented	To ensure compliance against the professional standards

Priorities for year 4

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Theme 1	Introduction of an Operational Resilience Plan as a Policy document repealing Core Stations Policy and amending Combined Crewing Policy	Work towards the ORP with full implementation by April 2024
Theme 2	Oversee and coordinate transition from airwave to ESN ensuring operation requirements are achieved and effective coverage is secured locally. Work with blue light partners to ensure efficient and reflective transition	Successful implementation of the ESN across the Service
Theme 3	Continually review our policies and procedures drawn from National Operational Guidance and other outcome reports/investigations such as Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Bombing	Up-to-date policies and procedures that reflect national guidance and other key investigations
	We will explore and research emerging firefighting technology with a report to Ops Committee and SLT with recommendations	To ensure the Service uses available firefighting technology to drive down the risks to our Communities and our workforce
	To use the available technology to ensure an efficient service is maintained	To use the available technology to ensure an efficient service is maintained
Theme 4	Review the programme of JESIP training and exercising events against risks within our communities	A joint approach to training and developing to ensure JESIP principles continue to be embedded
Theme 6	To ensure the relevant professional standards as released by the NFCC are implemented	To ensure compliance against the professional standards
	To develop a revised Response & Resilience Strategy for 2026 - 2030	A strategy that aligns to the IRMP and identifies the continual improvement journey for the next 4 year period.



Prevention & Protection Strategy

2021-2026

Page 477



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



Contents

Strategy Foreword	Page 4
Strategic Context	Page 6
Purpose of the Strategy	Page 10
Approach to efficiency	Page 12
Environmental & Sustainability	Page 14
Collaboration & Partnership Working	Page 15
Measuring Success, Performance Measurement, Quality Assurance & Review	Page 17
Strategy Themes	Page 20
1. Continue to carry out our core role of enforcing the Fire Safety Order	Page 20
2. Integrate our Prevention, Protection and Response Activities	Page 21
3. Reduce risk in the home and wider community by recording and accessing risk information	Page 23
4. Develop a competent and sustainable Prevention and Protection function and workforce	Page 24
5. Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals from Automatic Fire Detection	Page 25
6. Deliver our fire safety consultation and fire investigation services	Page 26
7. Preventing deaths and injuries by undertaking Home Safety and Safe & Well visits	Page 27
8. Protect our vulnerable communities by meeting our safeguarding responsibilities	Page 28
9. Develop community engagement with a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ensuring equality of access	Page 29
5 Year Action Plan	Page 30

Strategy Foreword

Roy Galley Chairman

I am delighted to present the Prevention and Protection Strategy 2021 - 2026. This strategy underpins the Integrated Risk Management Plan that was approved by the Fire Authority in September 2020 and seeks to address the improvements required as identified with our Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services inspection outcome report following our inspection in 2019. This strategy builds on that assessment and ensures that our Prevention and Protection activities strive to identify the highest risk people and premises and provide an appropriate response to reduce the risk to our employees and the community.

This strategy closely aligns with our Response and Resilience and People Strategies in showing how we will work closely with our colleagues across the organisation to deliver the purpose and commitments of the Fire Authority. The actions and changes set out in this strategy will be managed and delivered by the Service Delivery Directorate.



Dawn Whittaker Chief Fire Officer

The effectiveness of the work we do as an emergency service is totally dependent on having a balanced strategy for Prevention and Protection work and of course Response.

Our organisation operates in a complex environment of changing demand where the public justifiably expects delivery of professional and value for money emergency services. Increased collaboration between local services is one of the ways we can achieve the continuous improvement we strive for and in addition, common sense opportunities to work closer together will be fully explored and implemented when it is in the best interests of our residents to do so.

We are proud of the service that our staff and Volunteers provide to the public and use our resources to meet the needs of the communities we serve. This is challenging given the significant reductions in public sector funding and we regularly review and update our savings plans as the financial situation around us changes.

This strategy sets out how we will provide our Prevention and Protection priorities over the next five years.



Strategic Context

This strategy outlines the departmental actions required to implement and fulfil the commitments made in the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) specifically for Prevention and Protection and also the department's contribution to the wider organisational commitments. The detail on how this strategy will be implemented can be found within the Safer Communities Corporate Business Plan and in more detail within the relevant thematic action plan.

There have been a number of key inquiries, external reviews and legislative changes that continue to impact the Fire & Rescue Service. These include:

- Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004
- Fire and Rescue National Framework
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Bill
- Review of the Building Regulation
- The Police & Crime Act 2017 (Duty to Collaborate)
- HMICFRS Inspection Report for ESFRS
- HMICFRS State of Fire and Rescue Report
- The NFCC Fire Safety Competency Framework
- The NFCC Person Centred Framework (Home Safety Visit or HSV)
- The NFCC Prevention Programme
- The NFCC Equality of Access
- The Care Act 2014
- The Children's Act 1989 & 2004
- The Government Fire Reform Programme
- The Thomas Review
- Grenfell Tower Inquiry
- Apprenticeship Levy.

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS), along with all other public sector organisations, faces an unprecedented period of change with a drive to deliver enhanced and ever expanding services to the public at a significantly lower cost.

The need to deliver effective Prevention and Protection Services is central to our thinking. However, this is complicated by an ever-growing difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified and competent staff in an environment that is highly competitive and greatly influenced by the private sector.

This strategy provides an overview on how we plan to meet these challenges and risks and how we will prioritise our work within the Prevention and Protection arena.

East Sussex Fire Authority is responsible for providing Prevention, Protection and Response services to the communities of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. In September 2020 the Fire Authority approved an IRMP for the Service. An IRMP is a key planning document and describes how we will keep our residents, and those that work or travel through our area, safe over the coming years. It describes the main risks to our communities and how we are proposing to use our available resources efficiently to reduce those risks.

Our Prevention and Protection Strategy underpins the IRMP and articulates what focus we will have in these areas in order to fully implement the IRMP over the next five years.

With continuing uncertainty in relation to future funding the Fire Authority will need to continue to adopt a strategic approach to delivering efficiencies across all areas of the Service. The Service's current Medium Term Finance Plan identifies the need to make new savings of up to £2.5m by 2025/26.

It is worth noting that the Government recognises the significant demands being placed on Protection services as a result of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry outcomes and legislative reviews. As such the Service has been allocated additional one-off funding to help make the improvements needed. Without long-term funding certainty it is difficult for the Service to commit to ongoing investment in its Protection service. The Service, along with the NFCC and the LGA, will be lobbying Government to provide the long term funding necessary to meet the additional statutory responsibilities resulting from new legislation post Grenfell Tower.

Over recent years influential national reports such as the State of Fire report have increased scrutiny on fire and rescue services, with the change of governmental departments, the move under the Home Office and the subsequent Fire Reform Programme the service recognises that continuous improvement is essential. This Prevention and Protection Strategy has been created to help balance the impact of and respond effectively to these external drivers while still ensuring the service can meet the demands identified through its Community Risk Management (CRM) process.

Legislation

The Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) places a statutory duty on East Sussex Fire Authority to promote fire safety in its area. Fire and Rescue Authorities are encouraged to develop, in collaboration with partners as appropriate, a wide-range of local community safety initiatives to reduce risk to people living, working and visiting local areas and improve community safety outcomes in the long-term. In particular the Service will profile the individual, premises and community risk through its own and partner's systems on an ongoing basis to identify and reach those people and premises most vulnerable from/to fire as well as other causes of injury or death and to assess the effectiveness of our wider community safety activities. The fulfilment of our Civil Contingency responsibilities, as defined in Statute, is also supported through this strand of the Prevention and Protection Strategy. The Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) also covers the FRS powers to investigate the cause and reason for spread of fire the management of which falls under this department.

ESFRS is the enforcing authority for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This is the principal legislation for the responsible person of a premises to comply with to ensure they have provided suitable fire safety measures to keep people on the premises safe from fire. ESFRS believes in firm but fair enforcement of fire safety law, prioritising its inspection and enforcement action based on risk and to use statutory powers to take formal enforcement action only where it is justified on the basis of risk or significant or repeated non-compliance with the law.

Additionally, Primary Authority Partnerships are operated under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 and ESFRS are statutory consultees under the Building Regulations.

HMICFRS Inspection

Fire and Rescue services are assessed annually under Section 28B of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 via HMICFRS inspections and reported to the Secretary of State, results are captured globally in the national State of Fire and Rescue – The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England and locally as specific organisation reports.

The inspection concentrates on efficiency, effectiveness and people, and supports the driving of improvements in these three main areas both in individual fire and rescue services and the sector nationally. The implementation of both the Prevention & Protection Strategy and the Response & Resilience Strategy will assist the Service in successfully achieving the needs of the community it serves and its purpose to make communities safer as well as discharging the areas for improvement identified by our own HMICFRS inspection.

To implement these priorities, we will need to make full use of all of our resources both within the Protection and Prevention departments as well as on our community fire stations.



Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy, like the other six core strategies drives our business and our approach. All of our strategies are a vital part of our planning framework and each supports our IRMP and the resulting action plans link to the Corporate Plan. In addition to setting out how we will deliver our aims, they also feed into our planning cycle to inform our future priorities. We expect that we will continue to face a very challenging financial climate going forward which will be impacted by the significant pressure on public spending due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The next five years are therefore likely to require further innovation and changes to the way we operate and deliver our services and this strategy will help us achieve that.

Our Purpose through the ESFRS IRMP 2020-2025 is to make our communities safer. Our Strategic Intent in order to achieve this is to ensure that through our Prevention and Protection activities ESFRS will strive to identify the highest risk people and premises and provide an appropriate response to reduce the risk to our employees and the community to the lowest level practicable.

The Fire Authority's Commitments that underpin its purpose and help it to discharge its legal duties and respond to the needs of the diverse and evolving community are to:

- Deliver high performing services
- Educate our communities
- Develop a multi-skilled, safe and valued workforce
- Make effective use of our resources.

These commitments are intrinsic to steering the Prevention and Protection Strategy and its associated action plans that improve the safety of the community the Authority serves. Throughout all of our activities we will demonstrate that we are proud of the service we provide, show integrity in our work, are accountable for our actions and that we respect our colleagues and members of the community.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

Identifies and considers the risks in our area and provides resourcing options for the Fire Authority to consider. Informed by the Strategic Assessment of Risk.
Three to five years in timescale.

Medium Term Financial Plan

Sets out the financial framework for using Service finances to deliver the priorities.
Three to five years in timescale, refreshed annually.

Service Strategies

Contains the actions, including projects that we deliver our purpose and commitments.
Three to five years in timescale.

Corporate Plan

Contains the actions required to deliver the purpose and commitments including the annual IRMP action plan.
One year in timescale.

Directorate Business Plans

Translate the strategies into activities along with day-to-day tasks for the directorate.
One year in timescale.

Thematic plans and delivery plans

Are the next level plans based on Themes identified in the strategies, for example Road, Water, Home Safety thematic plans and are further cascaded to delivery plans within the Safer Communities directorate.

Rolling Reviews

Staff are set objectives and targets through the rolling review process so they understand how their particular role helps deliver the overall aims of the Service.

Approach to efficiency

As a publicly-funded organisation, people rightly expect us to use our resources responsibly and efficiently. The public, local politicians and our staff want to see that we are reducing public spending where it is no longer required and protecting frontline services as much as possible. We believe we have been rising to this challenge and have demonstrated that we are doing everything that might be expected of us in trying to share services with others, collaborating to save time and money and eliminating spend where it is no longer required.

Our Operational Response Review (ORR) was the most significant piece of operational risk analysis work we have undertaken in recent years. The results of the analysis have enabled us to focus our attention over the next five years to improve our service delivery and reduce the risk our communities are facing as articulated within the IRMP. This strategy will enable improvements in operational productivity and the Service will work with the NFCC Efficiency and Productivity Group to develop consistent approaches to measuring and reporting these improvements.

The cost of the Capital Programme reduces by £0.568m over the period. This has the potential to reduce forecast borrowing costs by approximately £0.040m per annum by the end of the period.



	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
Revenue Impact							
IRMP Proposals	25	44	-74	-171	-424	-525	-1,125
Changes to policies & practices	0	-50	-125	-250	-250	-250	-925
Total Revenue Impact	25	-6	-199	-421	-674	-775	-2,050
Capital Impact	71	-74	-600	35	0	0	-568

Additional revenue savings of £0.250m by 2023/24 also result from changes to policy and practice agreed alongside the IRMP proposals. This brings the total revenue saving to £0.775m pa by 2025/26 or £2.050m over the six year period.

Alternative delivery models are currently being considered for Prevention to ensure a sustainable and effective service to local communities. An administration review has also commenced with a view to improving interoperability between departments and overall efficiency of the Service. Through collaboration the service is also seeking to achieve efficiency through aligning resources regionally.



Environmental & Sustainability

We have a significant role to play in protecting the environment such as reducing the volume of carbon emissions created by emergency situations, by reducing the risk of fire and other emergencies through our approach to fighting fires, fire Prevention and Protection. We recognise that the benefits in doing this can also have wider-ranging positive effects such as improving the health and wellbeing of people living and working in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. The Prevention and Protection Strategy will aid the Service in meeting its obligations in relation to working towards a reduction in carbon that is found in the environment:

- How we can minimise our impacts on the environment, including those caused by emission of greenhouse gases
- To better protect the natural environment in the way we fight fires and other incidents
- To reduce the environmental, social and economic impacts of fires by continually reducing the number of fires – every fire we attend has a very real cost to people, places and planet, so Prevention wherever possible is our aim.

Collaboration & Partnership Working

It is recognised that one way to improve efficiency and effectiveness at the same time as increasing resilience is to collaborate with other services and other stakeholders. The Service has a comprehensive collaboration framework that has enabled and supported both national and local partnership working. The Service contribute to shaping national direction by being heavily involved with national groups such as the various NFCC work streams, consultation groups and workshops. ESFRS are also committed to providing comment and feedback to Government and the NFCC with regards to any formal or informal consultations, including those related to Standards, National Operational Learning and other guidance material.

More locally we will continue to support the regional Protection Group in its efforts to achieve effective collaboration in areas such as legal, building consultation and fire engineering, policy development and training.

Collaborative working is essential to achieve all that we have set out to do and plan to do in the future. This is a key area of work where we know real improvements to people's lives can be made through working effectively with other organisations.

Collaboration and partnership working with statutory authorities is an effective way to reduce risks for vulnerable people and the effective delivery of the Prevention Strands (home / fire, water and road safety). We will continue to develop these relationships across Social Care, Health partners, the Police and with the third sector.

In addition to existing partnerships, the Service will actively seek out new collaboration to benefit the community and so that we can provide the community with a level of protection from fires and other emergencies that is second to none with a workforce that is appropriately trained and equipped. We will also undertake a review into alternative Prevention delivery models.

Over the period of this strategy (2021-2026) the four fire service collaboration board called 4F established with West Sussex, Surrey and Kent Fire and Rescue Services will continue to explore meaningful opportunities for working more closely with our emergency services partners.



Measuring Success, Performance Measurement, Quality Assurance & Review

Success will be measured through a number of already established organisational review processes. This will be led by both the Assistant Director of Safer Communities and the Assistant Director of Operational Support & Resilience on an annual basis. Audit areas will include:

- Areas of improvement in relation to firefighting, rescues and hazardous materials identified through the Operational Assurance process and incident command reviews.
- Fatal Fire and Serious Incident Reviews
- Fire Investigations.
- Health and Safety including thematic sampling.
- Training planning, delivery and recording.
- Risk information gathering and environmental responsibilities.
- Station security, business continuity and resilience.
- End of month returns.
- Relevant areas from HMICFRS inspections.

We will also monitor progress of the strategy in the following ways:

Key Performance Measures (KPMs)

We will utilise appropriate Key Performance Measures that monitor the success and progress of the annual corporate directorate business plan that contains the strategic objectives that translates this strategy into actions that ensure continual improvement. Each of the strategic objectives will also be linked to the four Service Commitments.

Operating through the Support and Delivery framework (Performance Management framework) will enable staff and volunteers to deliver effective and timely Prevention and Protection interventions with performance measures set locally following the assessment of community risk to determine the activities necessary to reduce the risk in local communities. Performance will be monitored through exception reports provided to the Safer Communities Management Team – Performance Management meeting (SC-PM) and support provided by all Safer Communities departments and Service directorates to deliver the interventions and activities that will reduce the risk associated with those identified as being most vulnerable.

Themes

With the above strategic influences and our purpose in mind we have identified the following key strategic themes that we will focus on over the coming years.



THEME 1 - Continue to carry out our core role of enforcing the Fire Safety Order

We will continue to carry out audits on premises covered by the Fire Safety Order (FSO) using our trained Inspecting Officers (IOs). We will advise and enforce where appropriate and will take legal action through prosecutions when in the public interest.



THEME 2 - Integrate our Prevention, Protection and Response Activities

Our Risk Based Inspection Program (RBIP) will complement existing risk reduction activities and processes by allowing us to more effectively and accurately identify the types and levels of risk in our built environment.

The term RBIP is used to describe our holistic risk reduction strategy across the Service. As such all staff who have contact with the community will be trained to identify risk and carry out the required actions to reduce that risk either themselves or by reporting the risk to another department using our CRM database. This process will ensure that we take advantage of every single interaction we have with our community to drive down 'risk'.

The aim of this theme is to put in place the necessary activities, processes and systems to develop an accurate understanding and recording of the risk of fire for a person or in a premises. Specifically it is to create an understanding of the premises and people most likely to be impacted by fire. This understanding of risk will enable the Service to direct resources to where they can be most effective in reducing the impact of fire and therefore reduce the potential for loss of life, serious injury, commercial, economic and social costs and meet ESFRS's statutory obligations. This process complements the existing Building Risk Review (BRR) programme and ultimately allows us to allocate our resources to other high risk premises. This holistic approach will also incorporate the annual assessment of risk and will ensure synergy across all other Prevention strands such as road and water safety.



We will:

- Revise our current RBIP methodology to clearly define risk using the following categories:
 - ◊ Individual Risk
 - ◊ Societal Risk
 - ◊ Firefighter Risk
 - ◊ Environmental Risk
 - ◊ Heritage Risk
 - ◊ Community Risk.
- Clearly define high risk within these categories, the appropriate staff groups and competencies required to reduce the risk and the appropriate partner relationships to be developed to support us in the reduction of risk
- Introduce a cyclic and dynamic nature to the current process to ensure we are agile and flexible in adapting to the changing risk environment
- Ensure the revised RBIP recognises and incorporates the contribution and integration of all ESFRS activities and interventions to the reduction of risk in a premises and the associated risk reduction to the person
- Ensure that we recognise the value of information gathered and the associated recording of that information through all activities and interventions in assessing the risk of a premises and the use of that information to support incident command and inform future Prevention and Protection priorities through better methods of identification and targeting of risk
- We will ensure the annual assessment of risk is an integrated part of the RBIP and ensure the holistic approach across Prevention, Protection and Response is clearly understood by all staff
- We will continue to develop our Community Volunteers and Youth Engagement activities, working closely with operational crews and community partners.

THEME 3 - Reduce risk in the home and wider community by recording and accessing risk information

We will invest in and enhance our risk database CRM to ensure it is accurately populated and complements our strategic themes 1 & 2 to enforce the FSO and to record information on vulnerability to reduce risk in the home and wider community, integrating Prevention, Protection and Response with regards to risk reduction. This includes the identification and reduction of firefighter risk through our established Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) process.



THEME 4 - Develop a competent and sustainable Prevention and Protection function and workforce

We will fully embed the Fire Safety Competence Framework and separate Assurance Framework within our Service.

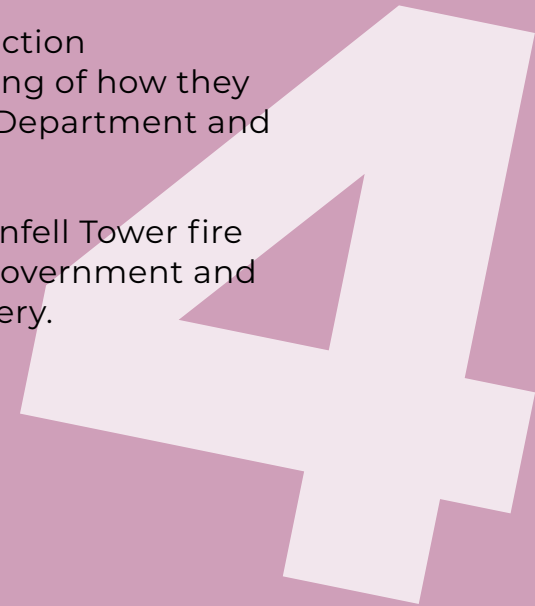
We will meet our corporate commitment with regards to achieving a trained, competent and valued workforce by ensuring all our staff are trained to the level required by the framework and are accredited by an external 3rd party body as recommended by the NFCC.

We will implement Home Safety Visit (HSV) training to operational crews to ensure that they consistently deliver high quality HSVs utilising the core competencies defined in the NFCC Person-Centred approach and continue to train Safe & Well Advisers to maintain knowledge and skills. Training will be supported by a Quality Assurance framework covering both Prevention and Protection and complementing the response assurance process.

We will continue to develop our Prevention and Protection initiative libraries and provide operational crews with support to deliver Prevention in line with outcomes of the Assessment of Community Risk.

We will review our development pathways to ensure compliance with the NFCC protection competency framework. We will also ensure that employees have a clear understanding of how they can develop themselves to move to other roles within the Prevention and Protection Department and Service.

The additional work streams required to be delivered by the Service following the Grenfell Tower fire and a number of other serious incidents and subsequent inquiries, is recognised by Government and one-off funding has been provided to enable the Service to uplift our Protection delivery.



THEME 5 - Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals from Automatic Fire Detection

The Service is committed to implementing a 'nil response' to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) actuating in commercial premises through the IRMP. Ultimately the Service is committed to supporting the development of a culture in commercial and managed residential premises which ensures that when a premises is occupied the fire alarm is managed by the Responsible Person for the safety of the occupants and business continuity and the fire & rescue service is called only if a fire is confirmed. When the premises is unoccupied the fire alarm is monitored remotely to protect the premises and business and to give early warning of fire. This limits property and business losses, contributes to firefighter safety, protecting the environment through early detection of fire and alerting of the fire & rescue service.

A similar culture should be promoted in peoples own homes where they 'manage' their own false alarms and only call ESFRS if there is a fire or any doubt about the cause of the smoke alarm actuating.

Protection officers will co-ordinate and be accountable for delivery of the overall project outcomes but recognise that a holistic approach is required that incorporates work streams in Prevention, Protection and Response activities and in particular through the control and mobilising function.



THEME 6 - Deliver our fire safety consultation and fire investigation services

We choose to investigate fires using the powers provided to us within the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 Section 45, to establish the probable cause and to ensure we learn lessons from every incident to improve our service to the community.

We are actively working in collaboration with our neighbouring Fire and Rescues Services to deliver consistent and professional fire investigations to achieve the greatest learning from every incident and to assist the Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts. We are also working in collaboration with our partner Services to implement the latest FI Code of Practice and competence standard.

The Service is a statutory consultee under a range of legislation and the Fire Safety teams will continue to ensure they respond to consultations in a positive and timely manner as detailed in the Service Response Charter.



THEME 7 - Preventing deaths and injuries by undertaking Home Safety and Safe & Well Visits

ESFRS engage in the NFCC's Person-Centred framework for Home Safety Visits and ongoing staff training has been modelled on the developing training element of the framework. There is a holistic approach whereby our Home Safety and Safe & Well Visits also contribute to the reduction of all risks as detailed in strategic theme 2.

In line with the NFCC approach we recognise 4 levels of risk on which to base the prioritisation of support and intervention:

Very High-Risk: The provision of support to imminent safety and fire risk as identified by the Service and key strategic partners

High-Risk: The provision of support to high-risk households and individuals through a person centred home safety visit

Medium-Risk: The provision of support to medium-risk households and individuals through targeted campaigns and a Home Safety Visit or information pack

Low-Risk: The provision of support to lower-risk households and individuals through a Home Safety Visit or self-help options.

Through its hierarchy of risk ESFRS has developed an assessment tool for identifying risk category and has implemented timescales by which visits will be booked and completed and are subject to performance monitoring and a Quality Assurance process

THEME 8 - Protect our vulnerable communities by meeting our safeguarding responsibilities

Safeguarding responsibilities are delivered through a safeguarding framework outlined within the ESFRS Safeguarding Adults and Children manual note. All staff and Volunteers are required to undertake mandatory annual safeguarding training and the Service's Safeguarding Co-ordinators ensure that all safeguarding obligations are undertaken including reporting of internal and external safeguarding alerts and safer recruiting.

ESFRS is a member of the NFCC's national and regional Safeguarding Boards and the Service is represented on the Adults Boards and Children's Partnership Boards of Brighton & Hove and East Sussex.

Legislative and procedural compliance is provided through bi-annual audits by the Adults and Children's Partnership Boards. Governance of Safeguarding within ESFRS is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Panel which in turn reports to the HR Strategic Group.



THEME 9 - Develop community engagement with a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ensuring equality of access

We have engaged in the NFCC Equality of Access approach and will continue to develop community engagement with a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in an approach that complements the internal EDI focus outlined in the People's Services strategy.

We seek to engage with all sections of our communities to educate and reduce risk through our Prevention programme (Home/fire, Water, Road safety) with a focus on groups at greater risk by ensuring that our Prevention services are made available to groups of people who are underrepresented and difficult to engage. Through working with local partners, operational crews and our Partnership & Engagement business partners we offer bespoke appropriate Prevention messaging utilising translation services, including the website translation tool, literature and guidance in other languages and Prevention advice designed to effectively engage as necessary. For instance, we offer a dementia friendly resource for Home Safety Visits and education packages delivered by our Education Team for people with specific learning disabilities.



Five year Strategy Action Plan

Priorities for year 1

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Embed new approach to risk ST 1, 2 & 3	<p>A 3 year process to update and populate our risk database (CRM) with actual risk rather than perceived risk, to inform future activity</p> <p>Milestone 1 – produce Triage process</p> <p>Milestone 2 – produce a new RBIP Policy</p> <p>Milestone 3 – Issue year 1 list of perceived high-risk premises</p>	Year 1 – produce a list of initial perceived high-risk premises for all staff to visit through a COVID lens
Support delivery of our CRM upgrade work stream ST 3	<p>All story boards agreed by end of September 2021</p> <p>Attendance at all planning meetings and during the sprint reviews.</p>	<p>The Protection module of the CRM upgrade will be implemented by June 2022</p> <p>The 3 CRM modules (SSRI, Prevention and Protection) must complement each other and facilitate the new RBIP process</p> <p>They must also complement and feed the new Business Information System to ensure accurate up-to-date information is available to inform decisions</p>

<p>Respond to the learnings from incidents of significance including Grenfell Public inquiry to improve our enforcement of the FSO and our advice to the community</p> <p>ST 1, 2 & 4</p>	<p>We will support the Service's Operational Assurance process by identifying, contributing to and completing actions identified during debriefs and serious/fatal fire reviews</p> <p>We will implement the 10 main Grenfell Tower Inquiry actions relevant to Protection and assist other departments in the delivery of their actions</p>	<p>All actions identified from debriefs both internally and externally Joint Operational Learning/National Operational Learning (JOL/NOL) will be completed within agreed timescales</p>
<p>Review and implement required enhancements to Protection quality assurance framework</p> <p>ST 1,4 & 6</p>	<p>Assurance Framework in place and embedded within Protection Governance Structure by the end of 2021</p> <p>Draft Policy to be amended and agreed by the end of September 2021</p>	<p>All 4 Offices to receive an annual assurance visit by the end of March 2022</p> <p>100% of crews Fire Safety Checks to be audited on an ongoing basis for the next 12 months by competent Fire Safety Officers</p> <p>A process will be in place by the end of March 2022 to receive, record and monitor changes required as a result of new guidance and information</p> <p>We will also ensure we respond to national policy consultations in a timely manner</p>

<p>Utilise Government Grant funding to deliver upskilling Protection training for all staff and to recruit new members of staff</p> <p>ST 4</p>	<p>6 new trainees will be recruited by the end of September 2021</p> <p>All staff will receive Protection upskilling training by the end of March 2022 from our seconded and FTC staff recruited using Government funding. This includes either face-to-face or e-Learning packages dependant on the work group</p>	<p>6 new trainees on a development plan by the end of September 2021</p> <p>All staff received Protection training by the end of March 2022</p>
<p>A new Legislative Change Board will be introduced to manage relevant legislative changes across the Service</p> <p>ST 1 & 6</p>	<p>All changes are received, understood, assessed and implemented in a prioritise way using resources s required across the Service. This includes the new Fire Safety Act by the end of March 2022, as well as the incoming Building Safety Bill which is yet to be enacted</p>	<p>All known changes required by the Fire Safety Act to be embedded within the Service by the end of March 2022</p> <p>Structures set up in the form of a Board to manage the incoming Building Safety Bill changes by the end of September 2021</p>
<p>Embed and comply with the competence framework for Fire Safety</p> <p>ST 4</p>	<p>All staff will work to achieve compliance with the new competency framework</p>	<p>All existing staff will achieve compliance with the competence framework by the end of March 2022</p> <p>All new starters will be placed on a supported development programme</p>

<p>Embed and improve our annual assessment of risk process by improving our risk information accuracy and the volume of risk information on our system</p> <p>ST 3</p>	<p>Our CRM database will be updated with information available from existing external databases by the end of March 2022</p>	<p>This information will be used to inform local risk profiles and the resultant resource allocation from the Protection department to reduce this risk. It will also help inform our Protection education and partnership initiatives</p>
<p>Lead a task and finish group to implement the changes set out in the IRMP in relation to AFA reduction</p> <p>ST 5</p>	<p>A Communication Strategy will be agreed and engagement with the business community will commence by the end of September 2021</p>	<p>Our agreed AFA Reduction Strategy will be implemented by the end of March 2022</p>
<p>Complete EIAs for all Prevention and Protection initiatives and policies</p> <p>ST 1</p>	<p>All activities held within our library will have an agreed EIA attached to it to ensure we are delivering equality of opportunity to our community and not unfairly or unjustifiably disadvantaging any members of the community</p>	<p>100% of our Policies and initiatives will be completed by the end of March 2023</p> <p>EIAs to be completed for 50% of the listed activities in our library by the end of March 2022</p> <p>30% of our Policies will have an accompanying EIA by the end of March 2022</p>

<p>Embed and improve our annual assessment of risk process by improving our risk information accuracy and the volume of risk information on our system</p> <p>ST 3</p>	<p>Our CRM database will be updated with information available from existing external databases by the end of March 2022</p>	<p>This information will be used to inform local risk profiles and the resultant resource allocation from the Protection department to reduce this risk. It will also help inform our Protection education and partnership initiatives</p>
<p>Lead a task and finish group to implement the changes set out in the IRMP in relation to AFA reduction</p> <p>ST 5</p>	<p>A Communication Strategy will be agreed and engagement with the business community will commence by the end of September 2021</p>	<p>Our agreed AFA Reduction Strategy will be implemented by the end of March 2022</p>
<p>Complete EIAs for all Prevention and Protection initiatives and policies</p> <p>ST 1</p>	<p>All activities held within our library will have an agreed EIA attached to it to ensure we are delivering equality of opportunity to our community and not unfairly or unjustifiably disadvantaging any members of the community</p>	<p>100% of our Policies and initiatives will be completed by the end of March 2023</p> <p>EIAs to be completed for 50% of the listed activities in our library by the end of March 2022</p> <p>30% of our Policies will have an accompanying EIA by the end of March 2022</p>

<p>We will introduce a public sense check programme through which we will engage with the public on key matters by raising at a number of identified established and engagement groups (touchstone forums)</p> <p>ST 1</p>	<p>We will engage with appropriate stakeholders to gain the most benefit from these Forums</p>	<p>Due to COVID we will aim to achieve 1 Touchstone Forum by the end of March 2022</p>
<p>Embed the new HSV manual note</p> <p>ST 4, 7, 8, 9</p>	<p>Out for consultation that closes on the 17 August 2021</p>	<p>Draft agreed and implemented</p> <p>Reasonable amendments made and re-circulated for consultation if necessary</p>
<p>Deliver HSV training to operational crews</p>	<p>Autumn 2021</p>	<p>All operational crews trained and QA process implemented</p>
<p>Introduce Quality Assurance for all HSV delivery</p> <p>ST 4, 7</p>	<p>Autumn 2021 following completion of HSV training for Ops Crews</p>	<p>High quality HSVs delivered Service-wide</p> <p>Reduction in fire related incidents, injuries and deaths</p> <p>Number of QA checks completed by operational crews</p> <p>Number of QA checks undertaken by Community Safety Manager</p>

Embed the Partnership & Engagement Business Partners across the 3 geographical groups ST 4, 7	Central & East P&Es in place from 21 June 2021 West P&E FTC advertised following recruitment process	Closer working between Groups and Community Safety resulting in enhanced partnership working, increase in HSVs delivered and re-start delivery of the Prevention strands
Support delivery of our CRM upgrade (HSV), including appropriate user training ST 3, 4, 7	Awaiting implementation in late summer 2021 User training will be implemented once the HSV product has been rolled out	Reduction in the admin processes associated with the legacy database Provide additional admin capacity for work that has not been able to be delivered. Standardised application of the hierarchy of risk thereby improving risk forecasting
Review the thematic action plans and ensure that every initiative in the library has an evaluation toolkit that is used consistently ST 4,7	One of the first tasks for the new P&E business partners by July 2021	Ensure that the Prevention strand action plans reflect the risks indicated through the Assessment of Community Risk Ensure that the Initiative Library remains current and includes evaluation tools
Further develop our Children & Young Persons (CYP) engagement programme ST 4,7,9	Education Team undertake a review and refresh of CYP Engagement Policy and all related activities by summer 2021 (during the school holidays)	Refreshed CYP Policy reflects current risks and mitigating activities

Fully embed the processes and procedures developed through the alternative Prevention model review ST 4, 8, 9	The draft outcome report will identify opportunities to be considered - February/March 2022	Fully costed Prevention plan that will identify current and future needs in respect of ESFRS and partner agencies
Refresh the Annual Assessment of Risk (AAR) ST 4, 7	Review the AAR and station profiles to reflect any changes in risk - January 2022	Update and refresh station profiles and the percentage quota for Prevention and Protection delivery Prevention and Protection activities match the risk associated with the geographical area

Priorities for year 2

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Deliver against our audit, consultation and complaint PIs ST 1 & 6	Annual targets met by end of March 2023	Monthly targets achieved as shown on CRM and on the EoM returns Number of Inspections of high risk premises completed Number of Operational Fire Safety Checks Number of Protection engagement events Number of attendees at Protection engagement events
Embed new approach to risk reduction ST 1, 2 & 3	A 3 year process to update and populate our risk database (CRM) with actual risk rather than perceived risk, to inform future activity	Year 2 – By April 2022, produce a list of both perceived and actual high risk premises for staff to visit at an agreed rate which has been partly informed by information gathered during actual visits in year 1
Utilise Government Grant funding to continue to develop our trainees ST 4	6 new trainees will be recruited by the end of September 2021. They will be supported through a 2 year development pathway to become full Inspecting Officers	6 new trainees continuing their development plan

Respond to the learnings from incidents of significance including Grenfell public inquiry ST 4 & 6	Milestones are as contained within the Grenfell action plan and any other OA action plans	All actions contained within the Grenfell action plan and general OA action plans to be completed within the agreed timescales
Finalise EIAs for all Protection and Prevention initiatives and Policies ST 1	Policies and Initiatives to have a current EIA by the end of March 2023	100% of Policies and Initiatives to have a current EIA by the end of March 2023.
Continue to use the 'Legislative Change Board' to manage workloads required by changes in legislation or guidance ST 1, 2, 4, 6	Initial Building Safety Bill requirements to be understood and policies, procedures and systems to be in place with partners to manage the new BSR process for high risk buildings by the end of December 2022	Legislative Change Board to be held at least once per quarter as a minimum. All Policies and Procedures to be up-to-date and compliant with latest guidance and legislation.
Evolve the Services IRMP driven AFA UWFS Policy ST 5	Produce a paper for SLT providing an overview of the impact from changes carried out to date and propose any further changes if appropriate	Review team set up to carry out AFA change review
Complete delivery of our CRM upgrade work stream ST 3	MVP sprints to take place in April 2022 with training for staff taking place with tablets in May 2022 and June 2022	The Protection module of CRM will be in place, with staff trained and effectively using the new product by the end of July 2022.

Review the embedding of the Prevention and Protection standards ST 1, 4	We will embed the relevant fire standards as they are released and following a full gap analysis. This will be achieved by the end of March 2022	Implementation of and compliance with new Protection and Prevention Fire standards as they are released
Review implementation of alternative Prevention models ST 4, 8, 9	6 months after implementation, to review the arrangements and outcomes - September 2022	Review progress and how that has impacted delivery of Prevention
Review HSV Quality Assurance ST 4, 7	6 months after QA implemented – review progress and update the policy to reflect lessons learnt - April 2022	Delivery of high quality HSVs across the Service Reduction in fire related incidents, injuries and deaths
Review our CYP engagement ST 4, 9	6 months after CYP refresh: Review progress - March 2022	Delivery of high quality targeted CYP activities to reduce risks to young people (home / fire, road and water
Review Prevention strands ST 4	Review implementation of the refresh of the Assessment of Community Risk to ensure that the action plans are relevant and accurate and the Initiatives Library remains current - October 2022	Prevention activities match the risk associated with the geographical area Reduction in harm, fire related incidents and injuries / death associated with home / fire, road and water

Priorities for year 3

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Deliver against our audit, consultation and complaint PIs ST 1 & 6	Annual targets met by end of March 2024	Monthly targets achieved as shown on CRM and on the EoM returns
Embed new approach to risk reduction ST 1 & 2 & 3	A 3 year process to update and populate our risk database (CRM) with actual risk rather than perceived risk, to inform future activity	Year 3 – produce a list of both perceived and actual high risk premises for staff to visit at an agreed rate which has been partly informed by information gathered during actual visits in year 1 and 2. This process will continue in future years
Continue to use the Legislative Change Board to manage workloads required by changes in legislation or guidance ST 1, 2, 4, 6	Initial Building Safety Bill requirements to be understood and policies, procedures and systems to be in place with partners to manage the new BSR process for high risk buildings by the end of Dec 2022	Legislative Change Board to be held at least once per quarter as a minimum All Policies and Procedures to be up-to-date and compliant with latest guidance and legislation
Ensure all our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited	We will ensure all our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited to the agreed process	All new IOs and existing IOs will need to be reaccredited by peer assessors at a cost to the Service

Review effectiveness of CRM	We will carry out a review of the effectiveness of our new CRM system in complementing our RBIP process	A full review of our process and the effectiveness of our supporting database will be completed by the end of March 2024. This will inform future plans
Utilise Government Grant funding to achieve a sustainable Protection capability ST 4	6 new trainees will be recruited by the end of September 2021. They will be supported through a 2 year development pathway to become full Inspecting Officers	6 new trainees continuing their development plan
Evolve the Services IRMP driven AFA UWFS Policy ST 5	Produce a paper for SLT providing an overview of the impact from changes carried out to date and propose any further changes if appropriate	Review team set up to carry out AFA change review
Review implementation of alternative Prevention delivery models ST 4, 8, 9	12 months after previous review, to further review the arrangements and outcomes - September 2023	Review progress and how that has impacted delivery of Prevention Increase in Prevention activity Reduction in incidents, injuries and death
Review HSV Quality Assurance process ST 4, 7	12 months after QA reviewed – further review progress and update the policy to reflect lessons learnt - April 2023	Delivery of high quality HSVs across the Service Reduction in fire related incidents, injuries and deaths

Review our CYP engagement ST 4, 9	12 months after CYP refresh: Further review progress - March 2023	Delivery of high quality targeted CYP activities to reduce risks to young people (home / fire, road and water
Review Prevention strands ST 4	Following the previous year's Assessment of Community Risk to ensure that the action plans are relevant and accurate and the Initiatives Library remains current - October 2023	Prevention activities match the risk associated with the geographical area Reduction in harm, fire related incidents and injuries / death associated with home / fire, road and water

Priorities for year 4

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Deliver against our audit, consultation and complaint PIs ST 1 & 6	Annual targets met by end of March 2025	Monthly targets achieved as shown on CRM and on the EoM returns
Review the RBIP (risk reduction) process ST 1 & 2 & 3	Review the 3 year process now complete to update and populate our risk database (CRM) with actual risk rather than perceived risk, to inform future activity	Provide a final paper to SLT on impact and proposed changes
Ensure all of our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited ST 4	We will ensure all our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited to the agreed accreditation process	All new IOs and existing IOs will need to be reaccredited by peer assessors at a cost to the Service
Review the Services Protection staffing profile to ensure we are fit for the future ST 1 & 6	Produce a report with HR on the likely impact on the department of staff retirements and movements, etc.	Identify any corporate risk areas with regards to competencies and put in place a plan to address these risks
Review implementation of alternative Prevention delivery model ST 4, 8, 9	12 months after previous review, to further review the arrangements and outcomes - September 2023	Review progress and how that has impacted delivery of Prevention Increase in Prevention activity Reduction in incidents, injuries and death

Priorities for year 5

What we will do & related Strategic Theme(s) (ST)	Key milestones including final completion	Performance targets/success measures
Deliver against our audit, consultation and complaint PIs ST 1	Annual targets met by end of March 2026	Monthly targets achieved as shown on CRM and on the EoM returns
Implement changes agreed following last year's RBIP (Risk reduction) review ST 1 & 2 & 3	Review the 3 year process now complete to update and populate our risk database (CRM) with actual risk rather than perceived risk, to inform future activity	Provide a final paper to SLT on impact and proposed changes
Ensure all our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited ST 4	We will ensure all our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers are accredited to the agreed accreditation process	All new IOs and existing IOs will need to be recredited by peer assessors at a cost to the Service
Deliver the training and recruitment requirements identified by the department review carried out last year ST 1,2, 4 & 6	Recruit staff required and develop them to the required standard to enable us to deliver our statutory responsibilities	Carry out a recruitment drive as required Fund and deliver a training programme to develop staff to the required level
Review implementation of alternative Prevention delivery model ST 4, 8, 9	12 months after previous review, to further review the arrangements and outcomes - September 2023	Review progress and how that has impacted delivery of Prevention Increase in Prevention activity Reduction in incidents, injuries and death



East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Introduction

- 1 Corporate governance is a term used to describe how organisations direct and control what they do. As well as systems and process this includes cultures and values. For local authorities this also includes how a Fire Authority relates to the communities that it serves. Good Corporate Governance requires local authorities to carry out their functions in a way that demonstrates accountability, transparency, effectiveness, integrity, impartiality and inclusivity. Corporate Governance is also the structure through which strategic objectives are set and performance monitored. Best practice principles in that regard flow from the Turnbull report, namely the assessment of corporate risk, effective management systems and the enabling of the organisational culture.
- 2 East Sussex Fire Authority (the Authority) is committed to demonstrating that it has the necessary Corporate Governance arrangements in place to perform effectively.
- 3 This Code is a public statement that sets out the way the Authority will meet that commitment. As such it represents a key component of the Authority's governance arrangements. The Code has been developed to be consistent with the CIPFA/SOLACE 2016 Framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" and is based upon the seven principles of good governance:

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievements of the intended outcomes

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

The Code also sets out the mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the Authority's Corporate Governance arrangements.

East Sussex Fire Authority's Corporate Governance Principles

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

- 4 The Authority will foster a strong culture based on our shared values of pride, accountability, integrity and respect. The Authority will achieve this by adopting, monitoring and keeping under review:

- a Code of Conduct for Members, built upon the Nolan Principles of Public Life;
- an Employee Code of Conduct;
- a Register of Members Interests;
- a register of Declarations of Conflicts of Interest and Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality accepted;
- induction programmes for both Officers and Members;
- a Competency Framework and Appraisal Scheme;
- an Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Strategy;
- the roles of Members and Officers in decision-making;
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies allowing reporting and actioning; and
- a whistleblowing policy providing protection to individuals raising concerns.

5 Standards complaints will be considered by the Scrutiny and Audit Panel.

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

6 The Authority will seek and respond to the views of stakeholders and the community. The Authority will do this by:

- publishing a Corporate Plan setting out our purpose and commitments to the community and the outcomes we intend to achieve;
- establishing a business planning process, including the development of a medium term finance plan;
- publishing regular reports of our performance against the Authority's key performance indicators, as set out in the Corporate Plan;
- approving and implementing a comprehensive Communications & Consultation Strategy setting out a range of methods of engaging with the community and stakeholders, including those groups which are harder to reach;
- recognising that people are different and giving everyone the same or an equal opportunity to information, advice and support in ways that are suited to the needs or circumstances of the individual;
- producing clear guidance and a defined approach promoting good governance in our partnership working and collaborations;
- providing the public with the opportunity to ask questions, submit petitions or make representations to the Authority;
- publishing the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) providing information in relation to how the Authority delivers its services;
- providing a modern, effective IT strategy and solutions that meet the needs and aspirations of the organisation and the communities we serve.

7 The Authority understands the key role it has to play in supporting collaboration and partnership working within East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove and also the role our partners play in assisting the Authority to deliver on its objectives.

The Authority ensures good governance in respect of partnerships and collaboration by:

- Reviewing and evaluating partnerships on a regular basis;
- Auditing partnership and collaboration strategies and policies through internal audit; and

- Ensuring that partnerships and collaborations offer value and contribute to the Authority's strategic objectives.

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

- 8 The Authority will, in exercising Strategic Leadership, develop and communicate its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users. It will report regularly on activities, performance and the Authority's financial position. Timely, objective and understandable information relating to the Authority's activities, achievements, performance and financial position is provided through the publication of:
- an Integrated Risk Management Plan covering a period of three or five years;
 - a Medium Term Financial Plan;
 - a clear framework for financial governance based on Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
 - established budgeting systems, clear budget management guidance and regular reporting of financial performance against budget forecasts to Officers and Members;
 - externally audited accounts;
 - detailed performance information.
- 9 The Authority will aim to deliver high quality services to the public in an efficient and effective way. The Authority will do this by:
- delivering services to meet local needs through the Integrated Risk Management Planning process, and putting in place policies and procedures to ensure that they operate effectively in practice;
 - developing effective relationships and partnerships with other public sector agencies and the private and voluntary sectors;
 - actively pursuing and implementing collaboration opportunities with the Police, Ambulance, other Fire Services and local authorities;
 - responding positively to the findings and recommendations of external auditors, reviewers and statutory inspectors and putting in place arrangements for the implementation of agreed actions;
 - comparing information about services with those provided by similar organisations, assessing why levels of efficiency, effectiveness and quality are different and considering alternative means of service provision, processes and procurement to maximise opportunities and improve value for money where appropriate.

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievements of the intended outcomes

- 10 The Authority will achieve this by:
- publishing a detailed Medium Term Financial Plan including actions to ensure financial sustainability;
 - producing a performance management framework, ensuring plans are met and remedial action taken;
 - putting processes in place to ensure that data quality is high, so as to enable objective and rigorous decision making;
 - having monthly Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings together with regular Assistant Director meetings where issues are raised and actions agreed;

- having a risk management process to identify where interventions may be required;
- having a sound understanding of community risk and service demand (current and future) informing resource allocation decisions.

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

- 11 The Authority will ensure that those charged with governance have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well. The Authority will do this by:
 - operating robust and transparent recruitment and selection processes;
 - cascading regular information to Members and staff;
 - arranging regular Member Seminars to provide a forum for sharing information, consultation, training and demonstration of operational procedures;
 - providing resources that support Member and Officer development;
 - promoting schemes supporting ongoing professional development;
 - undertaking the annual appraisal of the Chief Fire Officer and setting objectives that contribute to the Authority's purpose and commitments, strategy and plans and that incorporate key development needs.
- 12 The Authority will ensure that the necessary roles and responsibilities for effective Governance are identified and allocated through its Constitution so that it is clear who is accountable for decisions that are made. The Authority will do this by:
 - electing a Chair, establishing Panels and nominating Member Leads with defined responsibilities;
 - agreeing a clear scheme of delegated responsibilities to Senior Management;
 - undertaking regular reviews of the Constitution;
 - putting in place effective and comprehensive arrangements for the scrutiny of services;
 - making the Chief Fire Officer responsible and accountable for all aspects of operational management;
 - ensuring that at all times arrangements are in place for the proper administration of its financial affairs (S112 Officer);
 - ensuring that at all times arrangements are in place for ensuring actions are taken in accordance with Statute and Regulation (Monitoring Officer);
 - developing protocols to ensure effective communications between Members and Officers.

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management

- 13 The Constitution sets out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Areas of potential change are identified and the Constitution is amended accordingly.
- 14 The Authority will operate a risk management strategy and risk management framework, taking account of both strategic and operational risks and ensuring that they are appropriately managed and controlled. This approach will aid the achievement of the Authority's strategic priorities, supports its decision making processes, and protect its

reputation and other assets and is compliant with statutory and regulatory obligations. The Authority will ensure that the risk management approach:

- enables a culture of risk awareness;
- formally identifies and manages risks;
- involves elected members in the risk management process;
- maps risks to financial and other key internal controls;
- documents and records details of risks in a risk management information system;
- monitors the progress in mitigating significant risks, and reports this to Members;
- reviews and, if required, updates its risk management process at least annually;
- considers risk within all projects.

- 15 The Scrutiny & Audit Panel has the responsibility of providing independent assurance of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides an independent review of the Authority's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

- 16 The Authority will achieve this by:

- publishing relevant information relating to salaries, business interests and performance data on its website;
- having a Procurement team who provide advice and issue clear guidelines for procuring goods and services;
- having a Scrutiny & Audit Panel that operates in accordance with guidance provided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA);
- publishing information to the Authority and its Panels as part of established accountability mechanisms;
- acting upon the findings or recommendations of Internal and External Audit Reports;
- preparing an Annual Governance Statement;
- preparing an Annual Statement of Assurance;
- preparing a Corporate Plan.

- 17 The Authority is committed to the publication of transparent performance information. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Budget reports;
- Operational performance reports;
- a Medium Term Financial Plan;
- A Corporate Plan;
- Statement of Accounts;
- Annual Governance Statement;
- Annual Statement of Assurance;
- Information as required under the Local Government Transparency Code.

Monitoring & Review

- 18 The Assurance & Governance Group is responsible for monitoring Corporate Governance Arrangements and reviewing the progress on the governance issues contained within the Annual Governance Statement.
- 19 The Scrutiny & Audit Panel is responsible for arrangements relating to:
 - Monitoring and reviewing risk, control and governance processes and associated assurance processes in order to ensure that Internal Control systems are effective and that policies and practices comply with statutory and other regulations and guidance;
 - Reviewing the accounts prior to approval by the Authority;
 - External Audit;
 - Internal Audit;
 - Risk management;
 - Making recommendations concerning relevant governance aspects of standing orders.
- 20 The Scrutiny & Audit Panel is also responsible for promoting high ethical standards across the Authority, overview of the Member and Officer codes and other relevant protocols.
- 21 The Scrutiny & Audit Panel will ensure that the Authority's governance arrangements are kept under continual review through:
 - Reports prepared by officers with responsibility for aspects of this code;
 - The work of Internal Audit;
 - External Audit opinion;
 - Other review agencies and inspectorates;
 - Opinion from statutory officers.

Annual Governance Statement

- 22 The Authority will publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) each year. This process is led by the Assurance & Governance Group and provides an overall assessment of the Authority's Corporate Governance arrangements and an appraisal of the key controls in place to manage principal governance risks. The AGS will also provide details of where improvements need to be made in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
- 23 The Annual Governance Statement will be published with the Authority's Statement of Accounts.