

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20

Introduction

The [Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority](#) is responsible for ensuring that it delivers its services in accordance with the prevailing legislation, regulations and government guidance and that proper standards of stewardship, conduct, and professional competence are followed to by those working for and with the Authority. This ensures that the services provided to the people of Kent and Medway are delivered efficiently, effectively and fairly, that public money is used wisely, is properly accounted for and achieves optimum value for money. The Authority is committed to continuously improving its services to meet the needs of the public; reviewing and developing what it does and consulting with the public where appropriate.

In discharging these responsibilities, the Authority is required to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for the control and management of its business affairs, service performance and finances, and for the management of the risks it faces. The Authority is required to comply with the requirements of [Section 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) by undertaking an annual review of its systems of internal control. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is the review of these systems of internal control along with an assessment of their effectiveness.

Additionally, government guidance requires the Authority to undertake a separate self-assessment of operational performance (known as the Operational Assurance Statement), and this is incorporated within this Statement. [Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#) requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England in connection with the discharge of their functions. FRAs have a statutory duty to have regard to the National Framework. The Operational Assurance Statement is the assessment of the position of the Authority against the National Framework.

On 1 June 2018, a revised [Fire and Rescue National Framework](#) was issued by the Home Office, replacing the 2012 National Framework. This revision was undertaken in order to reflect the changes that have occurred as part of the government's fire reform programme. These changes included expanding the role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to become the agency responsible for inspecting FRAs and its subsequent renaming as [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](#), plus the establishment of the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) to replace the Chief Fire Officers' Association. The Framework also reflects the provisions in the [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#) on emergency services collaboration and changes to FRA governance. The Operational Assurance Statement has been written against the requirements set out in the seven sections of the revised framework.

The Annual Governance Statement and Operational Assurance Statement set out the results of the assessment for 2019/20 and should enable the reader to form a view of how the Authority meets its duty to deliver services to the people of Kent and Medway effectively and fairly.

What is governance?

The [Governance Framework](#) is the structure which allows the Authority to carry out and deliver its published objectives whilst providing the oversight to ensure that Members and employees abide by the requirements set out in our [Code of Corporate Governance](#). It consists of the systems, controls and procedures that ensure that positive activities are undertaken and that undesirable events are avoided through an assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of the risks faced by the Authority.

The processes being reviewed for this Statement have operated throughout the whole of the financial year ending 31 March 2020 and have remained in operation up to the date of approval of the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts, subject to those changes and additions made during the year as referred to below. An assessment of the effectiveness of the key elements of the framework which are in place to meet the Authority's responsibilities under the Code of Corporate Governance are set out in the following pages, together with details of any new or revised policies and procedures introduced during the year.

Who is responsible for ensuring good governance?

The Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority has overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance arrangements are in place, with the Authority meeting five times a year to conduct its business. The Chief Executive has management responsibility for ensuring that effective controls and processes are implemented across the Authority in compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance, and that these are regularly reviewed and updated with regular reports submitted to the Authority. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services is responsible for ensuring that effective financial controls are in place, the provision of an effective internal audit function, and for reviewing the overall effectiveness of the Governance Framework.

The responsibility for ensuring that appropriate systems of internal control are introduced and complied with, remain effective and are regularly reviewed, is delegated to a number of senior managers at Director or Assistant Director level across the Authority. They are charged with delivery of those functions incorporated within each of the functional elements comprising the overall Governance Framework. Where the Authority has developed arrangements to work in collaboration with other fire and rescue authorities or other public bodies, such as the police, every effort is made to ensure that the principles of good governance that are in place within the Authority also operate within the management processes of those collaborative arrangements.

What this statement tells you

This Statement is in two parts and provides, firstly, a summarised account, based on a self-assessment, of how our management arrangements meet the principles of good governance set out in our Code of Corporate Governance; and secondly, how we deliver the requirements of the current Fire

and Rescue National Framework; and how we obtain assurance that these are both effective and appropriate. It is written to provide a clear, simple assessment of how the Governance Framework has operated over the past financial year and identifies any improvements made and any weaknesses or gaps in the arrangements that require addressing.

Its main aim is to provide the reader with confidence that the Authority is effectively managed, and delivers the services required in accordance with current legislation and our stated aims, objectives and values. The following pages provide links to our website to enable the reader to access the key governance documents and evidence that we monitor compliance in line with the requirements of our Code of Corporate Governance.

Once approved by Authority, the Annual Governance Statement is [published on our website alongside the statement of accounts](#). Paper copies of this report are also available from: Kent Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, The Godlands, Tovil, Maidstone ME15 6XB, or by telephone on 01622 692121. We will also accept requests made via social media.

The Assurance Process – How we provide and use assurance information

IDENTIFY	ASSESS	REVIEW	ACT
What do we want assurance on?	How is that assurance provided?	How is that assurance reviewed and validated?	What do we do with the information received?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That we comply with our Code of Corporate Governance • That we deliver the services, and objectives set out in our Customer & Corporate Plan • That we take account of the views of stakeholders and customers • That we use and account for public money properly • That the risks we face are effectively managed • That we comply with legislation, regulation and statutory guidance • That we get the best out of our Members and staff • That we collaborate effectively where it improves services • That we demonstrate high standards of ethical behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The External Auditor’s Reports • The Internal Auditor’s Reports • HMICFRS inspection reports • Feedback received from our customers and partners • Senior managers’ self-assessment of key controls, including compliance with the CIPFA statement on “The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government” • Operational Assurance processes • Performance and risk monitoring and reporting • Continuous coaching dialogue and performance management • Comparison with our peers • Awards and accreditations received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular performance reports have been presented to Members via the Authority • Regular reports reviewed and monitored by Corporate Management Board and Corporate Portfolio Board • Regular monitoring of key performance information • Publishing of key performance information and data for public access and scrutiny • Regular reports and information to Government Departments • External and Internal Audit validation • Public scrutiny and challenge of key performance and financial information published on our website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate our results to the public • Consider the findings, learn from the information received, and respond accordingly • Update our plans to deliver improvements • Revisit our key controls and make improvements where required • Provide additional training and support where needed • Monitor the achievement of the changes we make and the direction of travel • Develop a specific action plan to deliver any governance improvements required • Learn from experiences and continually look to improve

How did we do?

The Authority is required by section 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to undertake an annual review of the systems of internal control and to prepare an Annual Governance Statement which sets out the results of that review. Under section 10 of the Regulations, the AGS must be published alongside the Annual Statement of Accounts. The overall level of assurance is assessed against a five-tier RAG (red, amber, green) rating. The criteria that inform this rating are drawn from the definitions in the assurance levels used by Internal Audit. Consequently, for the 2019/20 financial year the assurance levels were expanded from three to five tiers in order to ensure consistency with the approach set by Internal Audit. These are displayed on page 56 of this Statement. The 2019/20 review was undertaken between March and April 2020 and has been informed by the following:

- The views of the External Auditor, in the External Auditor's Findings Report 2018/19 and the Annual Letter, presented to the [June 2019](#) and [October 2019](#) Authority meetings respectively.
- The views of the Head of Internal Audit contained in the Internal Auditor's Annual Report 2018/19 and the Internal Audit 2019/20 mid-year progress report, presented to the [June 2019](#) and [December 2019](#) Authority meetings respectively.
- The results of the self-assessments undertaken by senior officers responsible for functional areas of the Service and validated by the Corporate Management Board, including the level of awareness of the role and interrelationship between control systems.
- External awards and recognition, including the Authority being awarded '[Good](#)' by HMICFRS across all three inspection areas.
- A review of our performance against our stated objectives and targets for 2019/20.
- The risk management process and a review and update of the Corporate Risk Register presented to the [April 2019](#) Authority meeting.
- The effectiveness of any changes and improvements made to the governance framework during the last financial year.
- An assessment of our response to the covid-19 pandemic and its consequent effects upon the Authority's governance arrangements (NB: due to the preparation dates of the AGS, this only covers March 2020).

The effects of covid-19

During March 2020 the effect of covid-19 upon the Authority's governance arrangements was limited. This was principally because there were no Authority meetings scheduled for March. However, in terms of service delivery and day-to-day working, there were a range of effects. These were mainly due to all of the corporate teams working from home and the temporary suspension of some non-emergency functions and secondary activities. In addition the Authority undertook a range of additional work in order to work with and provide assistance to Kent County Council, the Kent Resilience Forum, the South East Coast Ambulance service and a number of other agencies, such as Age UK. The Authority was able to manage the additional work and it did not result in any negative effects upon either the operation of the Authority's governance arrangements or ability to fulfil its statutory functions.

The level of assurance for 2019/20

On the basis of our internal review of the operation of the Governance Framework (including the effects of covid-19) and our assessment against the provisions of the National Framework (Operational Assurance Statement) the level of assurance for the 2019/20 financial year has been assessed as **SUBSTANTIAL** for both elements. This indicates that in general strong systems and sound controls are in place, but that there are some processes where one or more of the following were identified. However these do not have a significant impact on residual risk exposure:

- Some control documentation is still under review.
- Any findings identified in reviews will be progressed.
- Further training and/or knowledge of some policy areas will be undertaken as necessary.

Our analysis of the assurance available against each of the six frameworks is set out in pages 8 to 20 of this Statement. This identifies the main changes to the framework last year, those planned for the coming year and the information used to provide assurance of the effectiveness of the controls in place. Delivery of the agreed improvements will be monitored by senior management.

The Governance Framework

The overarching governance framework is made up of six functional frameworks. Collectively these ensure that the key principles of governance are delivered and the requirements set out in the Code of Corporate Governance are met. The Authority has identified the top level key control systems which make up each of the functional frameworks, which are in turn supported by a range of regulations and guidance underpinning each element. The effectiveness and compliance within each of these has been assessed by the appropriate senior manager referred to in the table below.

The six frameworks that make up the governance framework

1. Financial Management Framework

Owner: Director Finance

Financial Management Order
 Financial Planning Order
 Risk Financing and Insurance Order
 Exchequer Services Order
 Procurement Policy
 Risk Management Order
 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Order
 Anti-Money Laundering Policy
 Anti-Bribery Policy
 Officers' Scheme of Delegations

2. Service Delivery Framework

Owner: Director Operations

Incident Command and the Management of Operational Incidents
 Safeguarding Policy
 Automatic Fire Alarm Policy
 Driving at Work Policy
 Health and Safety Policy
 Statement of Intent (HSF1)
 Emergency Planning and Contingencies Policy
 Co-responders and IECRS Policy
 Enhanced Availability Policy

3. Democratic Framework

Owner: Clerk to the Authority

The Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997
 Authority Standing Orders
 Members' Code of Conduct
 Convention on Member/Officer Relations
 Committee Terms of Reference
 Code of Corporate Governance

4. Information Management Framework

Owner: Asst Dir Corporate Services

Information Technology Policy
 Freedom of Information Policy
 Data Protection and Information Security Policy
 Subject Access Request Policy
 Publication and Retention Scheme 2019 to 2023
 Service-wide privacy notice
 Suite of individual privacy notices

5. Performance Management framework

Owner: Asst Dir Corporate Services

Feedback and Allegations Order
 Transparency Policy
 Policy Handling Order
 Community Right to Challenge Policy

6. Human Resources Framework

Owner: Asst Dir Human Resources

Code of Conduct for Employees
 Schemes of Conditions of Service (Grey Book and Green Book)
 Pay Policy
 Whistle-Blowing Policy
 Pensions Policy
 Disciplinary Procedure
 Working Time Policy and Guidance
 Recruitment, Selection and Promotion Procedure

Our self-assessment for 2019/20

1. Financial Management Framework

The Financial Management framework continues to operate well with the External Auditor commenting on the high quality of the final accounts and the supporting information. The Authority's financial statements were submitted in a timely fashion and an unqualified opinion on the accounts was issued in advance of the national deadline of 31 July 2019. A strong anti-fraud culture ensured that no issues were reported during year. The Medium Term Financial Plan is robust with reasonable assumptions made in the absence of firm information.

The internal auditor has undertaken eight separate reviews during the year. Whilst all audits have now been completed for the year, only five have been formally reported to Members, with the outcomes of the remaining three audits (Information Governance, Health and Safety Framework, Property Statutory Compliance) being presented to the July Authority meeting. Of the five that have been reported, one gained a high assurance (Financial Strategies), three gained a substantial assurance and the fifth was a limited assurance (Fire Setters). Furthermore, action plans are being put in place to address all of the auditor's recommendations.

There has been a wide ranging review of policies in the framework. A strong and well publicised financial management control framework exists with all documentation within its review dates, all of which is made available to staff through the internet. Financial support and training for managers is provided by finance staff as required. Financial management is considered to be strong, with active management and regular monitoring of expenditure. The Authority has a prudent level of general reserves in place as well as specific earmarked reserves for key infrastructure projects.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Policy • Disposal of Assets Procedures • Charitable Donations and Grants Policy • Supplier References Policy • Officers' Scheme of Delegations (this is updated as required) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Order • Risk Financing and Insurance Order • Officers' Scheme of Delegations (this is updated as required) • Premises Sharing Order • Exchequer Services Order • Financial Management Order • Financial Planning Order • Anti-Money Laundering Policy • Anti-Bribery Policy • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Order 	<p>Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24</p> <p>Annual Accounts 2018/19</p> <p>Financial update for 2019/20, KMFRA December 2019</p> <p>Budget Outturn Report 2018/19 and Financial Update for 2019/20, KMFRA June 2019</p> <p>Financial update for 2018/19, KMFRA April 2019</p> <p>External Auditor's Findings Report 2018/19 KMFRA June 2019</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charging and Commerciality	<p>Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report, KMFRA December 2019 (including audit of Financial Strategies)</p> <p>Internal Audit Annual Report 2018/19 KMFRA June 2019</p> <p>Financial Strategies</p> <p>Assets Strategy and Commercial and Procurement Strategy (within Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Assets Strategy and Commercial and Procurement Strategy, KMFRA December 2019</p> <p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019</p>
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2. Service Delivery Framework

Following the establishment of the Operational Assurance (OA) team in 2018, the Authority has continued to develop and refine its ability to collate information and learn from incidents. To ensure that this knowledge continues to drive improvements in operational performance, the 'Critical Incident Framework' (CIF) was introduced in 2019. Because incidents range from relatively simple events to highly complex and dynamic environments, the CIF provides a way to categorise them to ensure the information, intelligence and data recorded are proportionate to the 'criticality' of the incident, thereby reducing inefficiencies related to information gathering and maximising the benefit of the data and information that are collected. The criticality of an incident depends on a number of factors, such as the number of people injured, killed or affected, premises destroyed or damaged, environmental damage, the scale of KFRS resources required, if specialist resources are required, and the scale of multi-agency response. The CIF sits within the OA team, who were established in 2018 to monitor, review and improve the quality of operational response. The effectiveness of this new approach was clear in the 'Substantial' assurance awarded to the OA team in the 2019 internal audit.

We have continued to improve our arrangements to protect children and vulnerable adults, reflecting the increase in activities we undertake in this area. In 2019, a Safeguarding Manager was appointed to provide oversight and co-ordination of the Authority's safeguarding activities. Combined with the training given to staff and previous work in this area, we believe these measures will continue to improve both our processes and improve our ability to safeguard any vulnerable individuals we come into contact with.

The Authority is required to undertake regular operational exercises against key current risks and threats in Kent and Medway. In 2018/19 a three year training and exercise plan was developed to co-ordinate these Service-level exercises. Following on from the pandemic scenario exercise undertaken in 2018, a business continuity exercise was undertaken in late 2019 to review, test and update our planning arrangements for industrial action, which included looking at full industrial action and Action Short of Strike (ASOS). This allowed us to test our procedures, ensuring a cohesive response whilst being able to maintain our front line emergency response and critical support functions. The Authority's Business Continuity Management function was awarded a 'Substantial' assurance level in the audit undertaken in 2019.

With the policy framework a number of documents have been updated. The level of fire activity last year was lower than that seen in the previous few years. A higher level of activity than we expected occurred for 2016/17 through to 2018/19 which can be attributed to spells of prolonged dry weather in each year. As a result, performance against the fire indicators remains higher than target, with one year left in the medium-term reporting period. In 2019/20 there were reductions in grassland and rubbish fires when compared to the previous year and accidental fires in the home continue to be at the lowest levels we have ever seen. Road traffic collisions attended by us was also lower in 2019/20 than the previous year. These incidents and the number of people who die or suffer life-changing injuries as a result, is a priority area for us and our partners. Co-responding with the Ambulance Service continues to work effectively with in excess of 6,000 incidents attended last year..

Partnership working is a key feature of how the Authority operates. We have worked hard to develop strong and lasting working relationships with Kent Police, South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb), other fire and rescue services, local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and many other agencies. These are partnerships that are delivering real improvements to our customers throughout Kent and Medway, as evident in the increasing number of life-threatening medical emergencies we respond to and the safe and well visits we undertake.

The strength of our partnership working arrangements was evident in the actions that were undertaken in support of partner agencies during the covid-19 pandemic. These included: supporting SECAMB with the logistics and delivery of PPE to ambulance facilities across Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey; making KFRS Fleet Technicians available to assist with ambulance breakdowns, responding to falls in the home; working with SECAMB and partner fire services to produce risk assessments, policy documents and a memorandum of understanding to provide KFRS firefighters as drivers for ambulances; supporting SECAMB with testing equipment and PPE; and releasing KFRS staff who work part-time for SECAMB in order for them to work full-time on SECAMB duties. In addition, we assisted KCC with the distribution of food parcels to the vulnerable and elderly, delivered meals for Age UK and provided pharmacies with support for delivery of prescriptions.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement Policy • Firefighter Access and Buildings Policy • Flying Flags at Authority Premises • Licensing and Events Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent (HSF 1) • Safeguarding Policy • Risk Based Inspection Policy 	<p>Community Safety Strategy and Operational Response Strategy (within Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022)</p> <p>Community Safety Strategy and Operational Response Strategy (within Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022)</p> <p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Community Safety Strategy and Operational Response Strategy, KMFRA, December 2019</p> <p>Our Customer Promise</p> <p>Performance Management updates to KMFRA</p> <p>Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report, KMFRA December 2019 (including audit of Ops Assurance and Business Continuity Management)</p>

3. Democratic Framework

The existing democratic framework has continued to function well and provides a strong framework for Members and Officers working together. The key documents are reviewed annually to incorporate any changes or updates as necessary.

The Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 was amended over the past year to reflect the appointment of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) as a member of the Fire Authority. In addition, the Authority's Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed and updated in 2019 as part of both a general refresh and also to give consideration to the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code 2020.

Another important development was the publication in 2019 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life of a review of ethical standards in local government – the first such review since the Standards Board for England was abolished in 2012. As a consequence of the proposals contained within this review, the Kent Secretaries Group (the body representing Monitoring Officers across Kent) propose to review and update the Kent Model of the Code of Conduct. This is in turn likely to affect the Members' Code of Conduct published by KMFRA as it is based on the Kent Model. Once the Kent Model has been updated, a report will be brought to a future meeting of the Authority to consider and agree any revisions to the Members' Code of Conduct.

Following approval by KMFRA in June 2017 for the abolition of both the General Purposes Committee and the Planning and Performance Committee, the Authority has been operating within a changed governance structure based on a single Authority meeting held five times per year. This single Authority structure has worked well, allowing the Authority to undertake its democratic oversight and decision-making functions efficiently and effectively. In 2018 the Police and Crime Commissioner became a (non-voting) member of the Authority, then once legislation permitted, from February 2020 became a full Member with constituent voting rights. This increases the number of Members of the Fire Authority to twenty six.

The Independent Member's report on Member behaviour reported a nil return as no complaints had been received. A Members' handbook is issued to all appointed Members setting out the full framework and Code of Conduct for Members, as well as how to access support and information from officers. The Clerk to the Authority attends all Member meetings so is on hand to advise on protocol and procedures. All Authority meetings are open to the public and publicised in advance; copies of reports and minutes recording decisions are published on our web site.

In response to covid-19, using the powers contained within the Coronavirus Act 2020, the July 2020 meeting of the Authority will held virtually, using video conferencing software and will be streamed live online.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 • Authority Standing Orders • Convention on Member/Officer Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' Code of Conduct • Authority Standing Orders 	<p>Authority Constitutional Documents</p> <p>Request for the PCC to become a Member of KMFRA, February 2020</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' Code of Conduct • Code of Corporate Governance • Senior Officer Appointment and Conditions Committee – Terms of Reference 		<p>Member Allowances Scheme 2020/21, KMFERA February 2020</p> <p>Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies for 2019/20, KMFERA June 2019</p> <p>Appointment of Monitoring Officer, KMFERA June 2018</p> <p>Review of Governance Arrangements and approval for the move to a single Authority meeting. KMFERA June 2017</p>
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4. Information Management Framework

Information security remains a key issue for the Authority and an increase in collaborative working with other public authorities, as well as an increase in cyber-attacks such as ransomware and denial of access on public agencies in the UK, has heightened the potential risks. All staff have undertaken compulsory data protection and security training and additional controls have been introduced to limit the risk of unwanted exposure. A refreshed version of this training will be re-issued in 2020/21. The Authority continues to remind staff of the dangers and the consequences of breaches of data protection policies and there is a dedicated section of the intranet to provide staff with information about this. We operate high levels of protection and security and regularly review and test these.

As part of our preparations for the introduction of the Data Protection Act 2018, the Assistant Director Corporate Services was appointed as the Authority's Data Protection Officer and an audit was completed of the data held across the Authority and these data were then linked to one of the six legal bases enshrined within the Act. A number of key policies were updated and a new Data Protection and Information Security Policy was introduced (this was also refreshed in late 2019) along with a separate Subject Access Request Policy. A global privacy statement is in place and 31 privacy notices have been published on our website. These continue to be updated and added to as necessary. Moreover, all of our employees have received training about GDPR and the principles of data protection, something that also forms part of the induction package for new colleagues joining the Service.

In late 2019, Kent County Council conducted an internal audit of information governance within the Authority. This rated the assurance level for information governance within KFRS as 'Substantial', confirming that internal control, governance and management of risk are sound overall and that the arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal controls are largely suitably designed and applied effectively.

During 2019/20 there was a notable decrease in Freedom of Information Act requests, with the number falling by 26%. All FOI requests bar one were responded to within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days, with the average response time being just nine working days – less than half that of the statutory limit. The Authority also meets the additional reporting requirements of the Freedom of Information Code of Practice 2018. Confidentiality and data sharing agreements have been put in place with key partners to ensure as far as possible that similar standards of security operate across these arrangements where data sharing exists. Finally, data impact assessments are also undertaken on all projects and key policies to ensure that data privacy issues are identified and effectively managed.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection and Information Security Policy • Publication and Retention Scheme 2019 to 2023 • Suite of privacy notices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Technology Regulations and Guidance • Publication and Retention Scheme 2019 to 2023 	<p>External IT Security report*</p> <p>Update to Data Protection and Information Security Policy, December 2019</p> <p>Data Protection and Information Security Policy</p>

		<p>Framework. KMFRA, October 2018</p> <p>Freedom of Information Update. KMFRA February 2020.</p> <p>Annual report on FOI requests. KMFRA October 2019</p> <p>Publication and Retention Scheme (updated for 2019 to 2023).</p> <p>Freedom of Information Policy</p> <p>Subject Access Request Policy</p> <p>Privacy Statement and Privacy Notices</p> <p>IT and Business Change Strategy (within Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022).</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the IT and Business Change Strategy, KMFRA December 2019</p> <p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019</p> <p>*This report is excluded from release under Section 24 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</p>
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5. Performance Management Framework

The Performance Management Framework is well established and includes opportunities for public and staff consultation and feedback on our proposals, plans and performance, which are always taken into account as part of our decision-making. We publish our plans and performance targets on our website and regularly provide updates of progress against these targets. There have been no major identifiable failures and a number of policies were reviewed against the cyclical programme to ensure they remain either in date or reflect changes to policy and practice.

In April 2019, our updated Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-2023 was approved by KMFRA. The document has been named the Customer and Corporate Plan in line with our stated focus on the customer. The plan itself is structured in a customer-facing way around safety at home, safety on the roads, community resilience, business safety and operations. Underpinning the plan is a set of eight strategies. At the December 2019 meeting of the Authority, Members were advised that the eight strategies had been reviewed and remained fit for purpose.

The Authority publishes on its website all data required by government, together with additional information for which we receive regular requests or which aids assessment of its performance. This includes the Localism Act 2011, the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 and the Freedom of Information Code of Practice 2018. We have put in place arrangements to enable you to contact us about our services and performance and measures to ensure these are responded to promptly. We regularly review and report on complaints and other feedback received. Although we only receive a small number of complaints (14 founded complaints in 2019/20, of which the majority are driving-related) we take each one seriously and will always investigate them. In contrast we receive a large amount of positive feedback: for 2019/20 we received 109 compliments.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Right to Challenge Policy • Feedback and Allegations Policy • Transparency Policy • Review of the Customer and Corporate Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency Policy • Community Right to Challenge Policy (annual review) • Review of our performance against the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update, KMFRA October 2019</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan consultation update, February 2020</p> <p>Financial performance reports</p> <p>Procurement Reports</p> <p>Performance Management updates to each KMFRA meeting</p> <p>Annual Report on Customers' Feedback. KMFRA October 2019</p> <p>Performance and Data Strategy (within Customer</p>

		and Corporate Plan 2018-2022) Update on progress to deliver the Performance and Data Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019
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6. Human Resources Framework

We are committed to ensuring KFRS is a place where staff feel comfortable with their own identity and are treated with dignity and respect. Great importance is placed on supporting colleagues with their physical and mental wellbeing and we have developed a culture which actively challenges the stigma around mental health and the associated barriers to seeking help and support for mental well-being. We introduced the Employee Assistance Programme, which provides access to a range of support, and have established a network of Wellbeing Champions to provide a confidential service to support colleagues' physical and mental wellbeing. All staff have completed mandatory online training in psychological support and wellbeing and we are currently delivering a two day mental health first aid training course to all managers. We have trained 43 'Mental Health First Aiders', which include staff in a variety of roles across the Service and further courses are planned with and booked throughout 2020.

The conduct of staff is taken very seriously and we have a Code of Conduct which clearly sets out the standards of ethical and professional behaviour we expect. All staff are encouraged to maintain their professional competence and seek development opportunities. Consequently we have updated the appraisal process so we can move away from the traditional "annual appraisal", as we do not believe this helps people perform to the best of their ability. In place of this we have built an environment where everyone is given regular feedback and where appropriate performance coaching is supplemented by a talent benchmarking process. There is an active programme of staff engagement, combined with a network of Staff Forum representatives. Another important initiative is the development of the Integrated Assurance and Learning Model (ILAM). With the initial work having commenced in early 2020, ILAM combines the eight elements of our operational learning and assurance work to create an integrated approach to learning and testing for operational staff. The aim of ILAM is to ensure the Authority has an effective and safe operational workforce that has been tested as competent and is licenced to respond to the varied range of incidents we attend.

The latest report on the gender pay gap (as of 31 March 2019) shows a mean pay gap of 3.9% in favour of females, which equates to £0.62 per hour more than the rate of pay received by males. This is an increase on the 2.4% (£0.23) for 2018 and is likely due to significant female representation at Corporate Management Board and senior management level. However, median male pay is 2.7% (£0.41) more than females, up from the 2.6% (£0.40) on the previous year and is representative of the fact that the workforce is predominately male.

Organisational sickness rates have stayed at the expected levels through 2019/20 with the anticipated peaks and troughs in the individual monthly rates. For 2019/20, the absence rate due to sickness among operational staff was 4.13% and for corporate teams the rate was 2.91%. Reportable accidents remain in single figures, standing at eight for 2019/20.

To ensure we have the number of firefighters that we need, over the past two years we have recruited two cohorts of new wholetime firefighters. The 21 firefighters who comprise the first cohort and the 24 who make up the second, were our first new wholetime recruits for 10 years. Combined with further recruitment of on-call firefighters, we are starting to make significant changes to our profile. Moreover, recruitment for a third cohort of firefighters will open in April 2020.

In direct response to covid-19, in order to support staff the Authority introduced the 'Covid-19 Testing Policy', in order to allow symptomatic members of staff or their immediate family to have a covid-19 antigen test; and the Annual Leave Carry Over Policy, which allows for a relaxation of the normal rules on the carrying over, rescheduling or delaying annual leave due to covid-19.

The following framework documents were updated/introduced during the past year	During the coming year we plan to review/introduce the following documents	Sources of assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Related Regulations • Special Leave Regulations • Supporting Attendance at Work Regulations • Social Media Regulations • Recruitment & Selection Procedure • Apprenticeship Scheme • Covid-19 Testing Policy • Annual Leave Carry Over Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of ILAM • Development of a new 'Organisational Change Policy' • Exit Interview Procedure (will be incorporated into a new policy called 'Leaving the Organisation') • Overtime Grey Book • Day Duty System • Industrial Relations Uniformed • Appraisals and Continuous Professional Development • Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Guidance – Grey Book • Working Time Policy and Guidance • Whistle Blowing Policy • Flexible Rostering Duty System – Shift, DC and CTERC • Compulsory Transfer Procedure • Modified Duties and Reasonable Adjustments Guidance • Flexible Duty Systems – Level 2 & 3 • Recall to Duty Guidance • Code of Conduct for Employees • Pay and Other Payments for Service Support • Employment Checks Procedure 	<p>Gender Pay Gap Report 2019 Gender Pay Gap Report 2017 and 2018. KMFRA April 2019. Internal Audit Annual Report 2018/19 KMFRA June 2019 (including audit of Recruitment) People Strategy (within Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022) Update on progress to deliver the People Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019</p> <p>We have a number of different internal groups who we will consult with regarding new policies and procedures, e.g. FBU, Wellbeing Champions, Staff Forum, LGBT Allies.</p> <p>Feedback through staff forum representatives</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industrial Relations & Joint Consultation – Service Support• Bullying and Harassment Regulations	
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Operational Assurance Statement 2019/20

Government guidance requires the Authority to undertake a separate self-assessment of operational performance (known as the Operational Assurance Statement). Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England in connection with the discharge of their functions. FRAs have a statutory duty to have regard to the National Framework. The Operational Assurance Statement is the assessment of the position of the Authority against the National Framework. The revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England came into effect on 1 June 2018 and is organised around the following seven sections:

Section 1. Introduction

This section highlights five priorities for all FRAs in England. These are to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents.
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face.
- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide.
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Section 2. Delivery of functions

This section deals with risk assessment and countywide resilience, and how the FRA plans to mitigate these risks through either operational response, or prevention activities. The Framework also sets a number of expectations of what an integrated risk management plan (IRMP)¹ should contain.

Section 3. National Resilience

This section requires FRAs to make arrangements to support national resilience, including working across borders and responding to terrorist incidents.

Section 4. Governance

This section sets out the processes by which a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) can prepare a business case to take sole charge of their local FRA, and submit that case to the Secretary of State. It is a requirement for FRAs to provide any information the PCC may reasonably require in order

¹ NB: Within KFRS, the Safety and Wellbeing Plan is a consultation document with the outcomes reflected in the Customer and Corporate Plan. We choose not to use the term 'Integrated Risk Management Plan' because, as a public facing document, we find that Safety and Wellbeing Plan is better understood.

to develop such a case. It also sets out the role of the NFCC in providing operational advice and guidance to the sector as part of the national coordination and advisory framework.

Section 5. Achieving value for money

This section contains a number of recommendations regarding reserves. It also makes engagement in national procurement schemes mandatory, but only where appropriate. For example, if a national procurement of goods or services has been recently undertaken, FRAs will be expected to use any framework contract that results. If they choose not to, there is an expectation they will need to account for that decision.

Section 6. Workforce

This is a largely new section in the Framework. All FRAs are expected to have a workforce strategy which aligns with the national workforce strategy. Following a consultation early in 2017, the Government has included wording in the draft Framework which limits the practice of re-engaging retired staff at all levels of the workforce, except in absolutely exceptional circumstances.

Section 7. Inspection, intervention and accountability

This section places responsibilities on FRAs to cooperate with the inspection process and requests for information and data. It restates the powers of intervention into a failing (or at risk of failing) FRA which are available to the Secretary of State under Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. This new edition makes meeting the transparency code relevant to each FRA mandatory (for KMFRA this is the Local Government Transparency Code 2015).

Section 1. Introduction

1.1 Powers

Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (“the 2004 Act”), the Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework:

- a) must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;
- b) may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions; and
- c) may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

1.2 Priorities

The priorities in this Framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
- identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
- collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
- be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
- develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

How to we meet these requirements?

The Authority has published an [Operational Response Strategy](#) which is concerned with making sure the right resources are in the right place at the right time. This is one of the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan.

In 2018 we published our Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-22. This was refreshed in April 2019 and will be further refreshed towards the middle of 2020, when it will also be renamed the Customer Safety Plan.

Where do we get assurance from?

[Update on progress to deliver the Operational Response strategy. KMFRA, December 2019 \(Item No. B2\)](#)

[KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019 \(Item No: B1\)](#)

[Confirmation by KMFRA that the Customer and Corporate Plan and supporting strategies remain fit for purpose. KMFRA, December 2018 \(Item No: B4\)](#)

[KMFRA approval for the Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022 and the Operational Response Strategy that supports its delivery. KMFRA, April 2018 \(Item No: B1\)](#)

[Our Customer Promise](#)

[Performance Management updates to KMFRA](#)

	Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report (including audit of Ops Assurance and Business Continuity Management), KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: C1)
<p>We publish a Safety and Wellbeing Plan², as well as the technical appendices and strategies supporting the plan. This sets out the key changes to the way the Authority provides its services to the communities of Kent and Medway.</p> <p>We report the outcomes of consultation on the Safety and Wellbeing Plan.</p>	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Supporting Information to the Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2018</p>
<p>All projects proposed in the Safety and Wellbeing Plan and subsequently approved by KMFRA are reflected in the Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23.</p>	
<p>We have a mature risk assessment process which draws in data from a variety of internal databases and external sources.</p>	<p>Kent Community Risk Register</p> <p>Update on Corporate Risk Register. KMFRA, October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Update on Corporate Risk Register. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B4)</p>
<p>We are a key organisation within the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF). The KRF is a local resilience forum which has been set up to ensure that agencies and organisations plan and work together, to ensure a co-ordinated response to emergencies that could have a significant impact on communities in Kent.</p>	<p>Kent Resilience Forum</p>

² From November 2013, the Integrated Risk Management Plan was referred to as the Safety Plan. A significant proportion of the Plan now focuses on the Authority's role in maintaining public health, either through emergency response, or through safety interventions delivered in the home. For this reason, the name of the plan was renamed in November 2015 to Safety and Wellbeing Plan. It is only a vehicle for consultation, and the majority of the requirements of IRMPs are actually delivered by the Corporate Plan in this Authority.

<p>Our People Strategy (one of the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan) sets out how we develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.</p>	<p>Update on progress to deliver the People Strategy. KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p>
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<h2>Section 2. Delivery of functions</h2>	
<p>2.1 Identify and Assess Every fire and rescue authority must assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities, whether they are local, cross-border, multi-authority and/or national in nature from fires to terrorist attacks. Regard must be had to Community Risk Registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.</p> <p>Fire and rescue authorities must put in place arrangements to prevent and mitigate these risks, either through adjusting existing provision, effective collaboration and partnership working, or building new capability. Fire and rescue authorities should work through the Strategic Resilience Board where appropriate when determining what arrangements to put in place.</p>	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<p>The Authority publishes a Safety and Wellbeing Plan in order to consult on the services required to meet future needs. The priorities within this are developed following an assessment of risks across the county.</p>	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p>
<p>As part of the development of the Safety and Wellbeing Plan, we conduct a comprehensive review of the risk profile across the county. This supporting information is published on our website.</p>	
<p>The outcomes of the safety and wellbeing plan, once agreed by KMFRA are then fed into the Customer and Corporate Plan. This is structured in a customer-facing way around safety at home, safety on the roads, community resilience, business safety and operations. These five</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the draft Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23 (including the eight supporting strategies). KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>

objectives are underpinned by eight corporate strategies that support its delivery.	
Progress to deliver the actions that underpin each of the eight supporting corporate strategies is reported to KMFRA.	Update on progress to deliver the Corporate Strategies. KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)
We publish a county-wide risk profile , which considers risks related to geography, demographics, population, dwellings and other buildings.	
We have a mature risk assessment process which draws in data from a variety of internal databases and external sources.	Performance update. KMFRA Feb 2020 (Item No: C1)
We conduct detailed analysis and carry out thorough assessments of risk.	Kent Community Risk Register
The Authority produces a Corporate Risk Register detailing the potential strategic, operational and programme risks it faces.	Risk Register Update. KMFRA, Oct 2019 (Item No: C1)
We are a key organisation within the Kent Resilience Forum.	Kent Resilience Forum
Our emergency cover analytics team, (which includes risk profiling across the county) is co-located with the new Operational Assurance team to ensure operational learning is fed into profiling.	
We engage with Community Safety Partnerships. This interaction provides essential local intelligence and is complimented by our Collaboration Team's, who work with other agencies such as parish councils and the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC).	Kent Community Safety Agreement
2.2 Prevent and Protect Fire and rescue authorities must make provision for promoting fire safety, including fire prevention, and have a locally determined risk-based inspection programme in place for enforcing compliance with the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in premises to which it applies.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?

<p>We have a single strategy for Community Safety, incorporating both prevention and protection, as we recognised that the two disciplines need to work more closely together to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. This is one of the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan.</p> <p>We focus prevention and protection work on those at highest risk.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the draft Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23 (including the eight supporting strategies). KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Community Safety strategy. KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>KMFRA approval for the Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022 and the eight strategies that support its delivery. KMFRA, April 2018 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>HMICFRS KERS Inspection report 2018/19 (Section: Preventing fires and other risks)</p>
<p>The Authority has a specialist team of Safe and Well Officers working across Kent and Medway. We deliver approximately 20,000 Safe and Well visits annually, using referrals from other agencies and direct mail (with Exeter data) to help recruit and target those at most risk.</p>	<p>Safe and Well update. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Community and Business Fire Safety Update. KMFRA, Feb 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Community Safety and Technical Fire Safety teams have been reorganised and renamed. The primary focus of the restructure has been to ensure we deliver a more effective service in a more economical and efficient manner which will meet the future needs of our customers.</p>	<p>KMFRA, Oct 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Authority is a member of the Safeguarding Group run by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). The group aims to share best practice between FRAs nationally.</p> <p>We are committed to protecting and supporting vulnerable people including children, young people and adults.</p> <p>In accordance with our legal responsibilities, partnership arrangements and data sharing protocols we share information to assist action by other agencies where the safeguarding of the vulnerable person is outside the scope and capabilities of the Service.</p>	<p>Regular Safeguarding updates to KMFRA:</p> <p>KMFRA, Oct 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>KMFRA, June 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Our Safeguarding commitment and Feedback and Allegations Policy</p>

<p>We have an operational Premises Risk Management (PRM) System that captures operational risks around the county. This provides a central repository for all premises risk data.</p>	<p>Internal Audit, Review of Premises Risk Management Audit. KMFRA, July 2017 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>The risk assessment methodology for the PRM system has been developed in line with the risk assessment methodology for the Kent Community Risk Registers (KCRR). As such, the levels of risk across both systems can be directly compared, allowing joint priorities to be determined. The KCRR and PRM are used by the Operational Planning Team to produce a list of exercises that will need to be completed each year.</p>	<p>Internal Audit report on Exercise Planning. KMFRA, June 2018 (Item No: B4). This found the process for planning exercises to be “robust and sufficient in design”.</p>
<p>Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, we developed and implemented a co-ordinated activity to offer reassurance to local residents and ensure that high-rise residential buildings in Kent and Medway are as safe as possible.</p> <p>Following this, we also implemented a plan to undertake a number of high-rise exercises to test local plans and firefighting operations.</p>	<p>Community and Business Fire Safety Update. KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Operational Update on the implications for Kent and Medway following the Grenfell Tower fire. KMFRA, October 2017 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>In 2018 we set up the Complex Buildings Programme; a piece of work to ensure that when we respond to incidents in complex buildings we are trained to the latest standards, consistently select and apply the relevant processes and have all the information and equipment needed to keep our customers and firefighters safe whilst dealing with the incident efficiently.</p>
<p>Our Business Safety Team run a Risk Based Inspection Programme, that targets premises at most risk to use resources as efficiently as possible.</p>	<p>Regular updates to the Authority, KMFRA, June 2019 (Item No. C1)</p>
<p>We have worked closely with a number of local authority partners to develop the Better Business for All and the Primary Authority Scheme. These initiatives bring businesses and regulators together in order to reduce the regulatory burden for businesses.</p>	
<p>Our Business Portal is a one stop shop to provide businesses, with the information they need to know to stay safe.</p>	

<p>The Authority is an active and leading member in the South East FRS Regional Business Continuity Group.</p>	
<p>2.3 Respond Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements. Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>We have a published Operational Response Strategy, which sets out our approach to emergency response. This is one of the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan.</p>	<p>Update on progress to deliver the Operational Response strategy. KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>KMFRA approval for the draft Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23 (including the eight supporting strategies). KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>The service plays an active role in the National Operational Learning process and is committed to adopting National Operational Guidance.</p>	<p>Update on implementation of National Operational Guidance (NOG). KMFRA, Dec 2019 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>The Authority has provided a 24/7 on-site emergency response capability to Eurotunnel since the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994. The service is provided under a contract with Eurotunnel to provide the first line of response (FLOR) to any rescue emergency inside the Channel Tunnel.</p> <p>The UK and French FLOR teams regularly work together, undertake joint training and exercises take place annually.</p>	<p>Channel Tunnel Update. KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Channel tunnel Bi-National Emergency Plan updated Sept 2019</p>
<p>The Authority works with its French counterparts to provide the second line of response (SLOR) to any emergency event in the Channel Tunnel.</p>	<p>Bi-national exercises are undertaken with the Authority's counterparts in France. The most recent of these was BINAT 30, a joint UK-French exercise in the Channel Tunnel, this took place over the 18 and 19 January 2020.</p>
<p>Business continuity plans (including recovery plans) are in place for all reasonably foreseeable risks to the Authority. Our plans are designed to enable us to respond effectively to emergencies which may affect the delivery of our core functions.</p>	<p>Emergency Planning and Contingencies Policy. A copy of this is available on request.</p> <p>A Service-wide business continuity exercise was conducted in May 2019.</p>

<p>All business continuity plans are validated through exercises (both live and table top) to ensure they are comprehensive, fit for purpose and realistic.</p>	<p>Business Continuity Management reviewed in 2019/20 Internal Audit and given Substantial Assurance rating. Internal Audit Progress Report KMFRA, Dec 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Authority participates in a national annual exercise on Business Continuity Awareness Week.</p>	
<p>We conduct risk assessments of locations of higher risk in Kent and Medway, such as places that store large amounts of chemicals.</p>	
<p>The Authority is required to undertake regular operational exercises against the key current risks and threats in Kent and Medway. In 2018/19 a three year training and exercise plan was developed to co-ordinate these Service-level exercises.</p>	<p>Exercise Programme Update. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Throughout 2019/20, the exercises undertaken included live exercises at a 'complex building' (in this case a large school), a regulated industrial site and a power station.</p> <p>In addition to the variety of live exercises that were undertaken, a number of table top exercises were held, including one of a fire in a high-rise and a test and review of organisational and corporate response to the scenarios presented within some of those exercises.</p> <p>A large-scale, unannounced exercise was held at Service headquarters in December 2018 and was based on a scenario of massive staffing disruption due to a flu pandemic.</p> <p>This allowed us to test our procedures and response to such an event, ensure a cohesive response whilst all the while being able to maintain our front line emergency response and Service critical back office functions.</p> <p>Exercise Programme. KMFRA, December 2018, (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>In response to the covid-19 pandemic, business continuity arrangements were put in place to ensure that KFRS Control functioned as usual and that there was interruptions to fire cover and operational response.</p>	
<p>2.4 Collaboration</p>	

<p>The Policing and Crime Act 2017 created a statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities, police forces, and ambulance trusts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep collaboration opportunities under review; • notify other emergency services of proposed collaborations that could be in the interests of their mutual efficiency or effectiveness; and • give effect to a proposed collaboration where the proposed parties agree that it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness and that it does not have an adverse effect on public safety. <p>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). Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with the National Resilience Lead Authority to ensure interoperability is maintained for National Resilience assets.</p>	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<p>We operate a shared 999 control room with Kent Police. Working in partnership with Kent Police, we implemented the UK's first inter-agency command and control solution, which has delivered significant benefits.</p>	<p>Collaboration Update. KMFRA Feb 2020 (Item No. C1)</p>
<p>Section 13 and 16 Agreements have been signed with all neighbouring fire and rescue authorities.</p>	
<p>We have recently set up a Collaboration team, managed by a Group Manager to increase efficiency and effectiveness of partnership working</p>	<p>Collaboration Update. KMFRA Feb 2020 (Item No. C1)</p>
<p>We undertake familiarization and training with neighbouring fire and rescue authorities.</p>	
<p>A revised 'Gaining Access' memorandum of understanding has been agreed between the Authority, Kent Police and SECAMB, whereby the equipment and skills of firefighters can be deployed to assist in gaining entry when other options have been attempted.</p>	
<p>The Authority is part of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) with Kent Police and SECAMB. The programme sets out a standard approach to multi-agency working.</p>	<p>In April 2018, a large-scale multi-agency JESIP exercise was undertaken at Bluewater shopping Centre.</p> <p>JESIP website</p>

<p>We are a key organisation within the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF). The KRF is a local resilience forum, one of a number across England, which has been set up to ensure that agencies and organisations plan and work together, to ensure a co-ordinated response to emergencies that could have a significant impact on communities in Kent.</p>	<p>Kent Resilience Forum</p>
<p>The Authority hosts and manages the Kent Resilience Team (KRT). Part of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF), the KRT is a multi-agency initiative to transform the delivery of emergency planning services in order to achieve better outcomes for the people of Kent. It does so by improving the effectiveness of the planning, response and recovery from emergencies.</p>	<p>The KRT Annual Report can be made available on request subject to any exclusions as necessary.</p>
<p>We support SECamb by responding to life-threatening medical emergencies when our crews or officers are available to do so.</p> <p>Such is the value of this work that, in 2019/2020 we attended 5,737 emergency medical response (EMR) incidents. This which equates to 27% of all the incidents that we attended.</p>	<p>Co-Responding to Medical Emergencies reviewed in 2017/18 Internal Audit and given Substantial assurance rating. KMFRA, June 2018 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Collaboration Update. KMFRA, December 2018 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>EMR update. KMFRA, December 2018 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>HMICFRS KFRS Inspection Report 2018/19 (Section: Responding to Fire and Other Emergencies)</p>
<p>We are members of the National Operational Guidance Implementation Forum.</p>	<p>National Operational Guidance Programme</p>
<p>Our Chief Executive is one of the Committee Chairs of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). The Chief Executive also runs the National Collaborative Procurement Board. Several members of staff are Subject Matter Experts for NFCC working groups.</p>	
<p>To ensure we develop better inter-agency working and to help save public money, we have proactively opened up our premises for use by other agencies, particularly SECamb and Kent Police.</p> <p>SECamb mobilise resources from a number of KFRS owned premises</p>	<p>The Authority has an open sharing agreement with Kent Police and SECamb to allow the use of any premises. Collaboration Update. KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: C1)</p>

	We have made best use of our space to facilitate the creation of and host two multi-agency teams: the Kent Resilience Team and the Kent Community Safety Team.
<p>The strength of our partnership working arrangements were evident in the range of actions that were undertaken to support partner agencies during the covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The agencies we worked during March 2020 included: Kent County Council, the Kent Resilience Forum, SECAMB and the fire and rescue services in the south east region.</p>	<p>The collaborative work that was undertaken in response to covid-19 included: supporting SECAMB with the logistics and delivery of PPE to ambulance facilities across Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey; making KFRS Fleet Technicians available to assist with ambulance breakdowns, responding to falls in the home; working with SECAMB and partner fire services to produce risk assessments, policy documents and a memorandum of understanding to provide KFRS firefighters as drivers for ambulances; supporting SECAMB with testing equipment and PPE; and releasing KFRS staff who work part-time for SECAMB to be able to undertake full-time SECAMB duties</p>

Section 3. National Resilience	
<p>3.1 Gap Analysis</p> <p>Fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience. Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process.</p>	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<p>As part of the development of the Safety and Wellbeing Plan, we conduct a comprehensive review of the risk profile across the county. This supporting information is published on our website.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2018</p> <p>Supporting Information to the Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2018</p>

<p>We are a key organisation within the Kent Resilience Forum. The KRF is a local resilience forum, one of a number across England, which has been set up to ensure that agencies and organisations plan and work together, to ensure a co-ordinated response to emergencies that could have a significant impact on communities in Kent.</p>	
<p>The National and Kent Community Risk Registers contain hazards and threats identified by government departments and local agencies. The KCRR is based on the national risk register and is a statutory requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.</p> <p>Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) partners are required to assess the risks in their area. KRF partners achieve this by working together to develop the 'Kent Community Risk Register'.</p> <p>The risk register is informed by national guidance and developed locally with partners and subject matter experts. The final register is endorsed by the strategic representatives of all KRF partners.</p>	<p>Kent Community Risk Register</p>
<p>The Authority works with partners in the South East and nationally on a number of projects to support national resilience.</p>	<p>Issues regarding this are reported to Members, but it should be recognised that due to the sensitive nature of this area, limited information is detailed in the public domain.</p>
<p>Bi-national exercises are undertaken with the Authority's counterparts in France, Belgium and Holland. The most recent of these was the annual joint UK-French exercise in the Channel Tunnel; BINAT 30. This took place between Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th January. It was a casualty-centred exercise that involved moving a large number of casualties from underground to reception centres in both the UK and France, dealing with casualties' welfare and injuries, and arrangements for repatriation of casualties. It also allowed for the testing of the recovery phase following an incident in the Channel Tunnel.</p> <p>Linking in with other agencies such as SECamb, the police, local authority emergency planning teams and the Kent Resilience Forum, BINAT 30 provided a real-time opportunity for responders from both the</p>	<p>An update on BINAT 30 will be made publically available later in the year.</p> <p>Update to KMFRA on previous BINAT exercise, KMFRA June 2018 (Item No: C1)</p>

<p>French and UK agencies to test their joint plans and procedures. This involved a considerable commitment from all of the agencies taking part.</p>	
<p>As part of the MIRG EU, the Authority has entered into an agreement with counterparts in France, Holland and Belgium for an agreed response and procedures to incidents in the English Channel.</p>	
<p>The Authority plans for and undertake regular operational exercises against the current risks and threats in Kent and Medway. These test the efficacy of our emergency planning and the use of joint emergency services interoperability principles (JESIP).</p> <p>In 2018/19 a three year training and exercise plan was developed. The scenarios and location of the service level exercises are determined by giving close consideration to risks in the National Risk Register, our multi-agency Kent Community Risk Register and the information the Authority holds relating to specific premises within its Premises Risk Management System.</p>	<p>Exercise Programme Update. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Throughout 2019/20, the exercises undertaken included live exercises at a ‘complex building’ (in this case a large school), a regulated industrial site and a power station.</p> <p>In addition to the variety of live exercises that were undertaken, a number of table top exercises were held, including one of a fire in a high-rise and a test and review of organisational and corporate response to the scenarios presented within some of those exercises.</p>
<p>3.2 National Co-ordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) The NCAF has been designed to provide robust and flexible response arrangements to major emergencies that can be adapted to the nature, scale and requirements of the incident. Fire and rescue authorities must proactively engage with, and support, the NCAF arrangements including the NFCC’s lead operational role.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>We are able to offer resources via the National Resilience Fire Control.</p>	<p>Greater Manchester moorland fire deployment, July 2018. When almost 6,000 acres of moorland caught alight in what became the largest wildfire Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service had ever dealt with, the Authority deployed its two all-terrain vehicles to assist with the incident. Operational Update. KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>Kent Fire and Rescue Service maintains a Critical incident Framework (CIF) that ensures we are able to respond to critical and major incidents, and continue to maintain essential services.</p> <p>The Framework ensures that KFRS has suitable management and coordination arrangements in place to respond to such incidents. These</p>	<p>The CIF and Major Incident Plan – reviewed and approved by the Authority’s Corporate Management Board in early 2019.</p>

<p>include arrangements for categorising and escalating incidents. Within this the links to local, regional and national coordination processes are set out.</p> <p>This includes identifying the need to report 'trigger' incidents into the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) Electronic Support System.</p>	
<p>The KFRS procedure for reporting 'trigger' incidents is managed through the KFRS Control Centre. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is held on the control system. This SOP lists the 'trigger' incident types that require reporting to NCAF. A prompt to consider activation of this SOP is also listed against the incident type within the mobilising system, ensuring that NCAF reporting is carried out at the point at which the incident type is defined and confirmed.</p>	<p>The reporting procedure and SOP held by KFRS Control.</p>
<p>The CIF arrangements are tested annually as part of the KFRS Strategic Exercise. This includes consideration of NCAF reporting. These exercises are subject to a full and robust debrief and operational assurance process.</p>	<p>A recent example of KFRS utilisation of the ESS for incident reporting involved an accident on the major road network within the Brexit-related "Operation Brock" infrastructure.</p>
<p>In March 2020, during the covid-19 pandemic, KFRS made its range of National Resilience Assets available if required.</p>	<p>Regular, daily, contact with the Home Office and the NFCC on the work being undertaken by KFRS in response to the covid-19 pandemic.</p>
<p>3.3 Response to Terrorist Attacks or MTFA Fire and rescue services must be able to respond to the threat of terrorism and be ready to respond to incidents within their areas and across England. Fire and rescue services should also be interoperable to provide operational support across the UK to terrorist events as required.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>We plan for and undertake regular operational exercises throughout the year. These test the efficacy of our emergency planning, the use of joint emergency services interoperability principles (JESIP).</p> <p>During 2019/20, we undertook a range of exercises to test our response to, and ensure we were prepared for, the key current risks and threats in Kent and Medway.</p>	<p>Exercise Programme Update. KMFERA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Operation Shakespeare, in 2018 a large multi-agency exercise was undertaken based on an armed terrorist scenario at Bluewater shopping centre. This plan tested the use of JESIP to ensure a successful outcome. KMFERA, June 2018 (Item No: C1).</p>

<p>The issues raised in the recommendations of the Kerslake Report into the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena on May 2017, are supported by the Authority's plans and activities contained within the Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-22.</p>	<p>Operational Update. KMFRA, April 2018</p>
<p>Further commentary on this section is withheld due to the sensitivity of the area.</p>	
<p>3.4 National Resilience Assurance Fire and rescue authorities must continue to work collectively and with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board and the national resilience lead authority to provide assurance to government that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing national resilience capabilities are fit for purpose and robust; and • risks and plans are assessed and any gaps in capability that are needed to ensure national resilience are identified. <p>Fire and rescue authorities with MTFA teams must work with police forces and ambulance trusts to provide tri-service assurance of this capability.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>Kent leads on the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) Fire and Rescue Marine Response Group (FRMR) and the NFCC Operations Co-ordination Group.</p>	<p>Bi-national exercises are undertaken with the Authority's counterparts in France, Belgium and Holland. The most recent of these was BINAT 30, a joint UK-French exercise in the Channel</p>
<p>The Authority hosts and manages the Kent Resilience Team (KRT). The KRT is a multi-agency emergency planning team comprising staff from Kent County Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and Kent Police.</p> <p>Its purpose is to transform the delivery of emergency planning services in order to achieve better outcomes for the people of Kent. It does this by improving the effectiveness of the planning for, response to and recovery from emergencies and major incidents.</p>	<p>Kent Resilience Forum</p>
<p>Kent has a variety of National Resilience Assets that are exercised both locally and nationally. Assets include Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) and Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS).</p>	<p>National Resilience Exercising and Assurance programme (internal document)</p>
<p>All of those premises identified at the county and local level are included in the Authority's Premises Risk Management (PRM) system and have</p>	<p>Kent Community Risk Register</p>

been assessed to determine the potential level of risk they pose to the Authority and the community it serves.	
As part of the MIRG EU, the Authority has entered into an agreement with counterparts in France, Holland and Belgium for an agreed response and procedures to incidents in the English Channel.	
In March 2020, during the covid-19 pandemic, KFRS made its range of National Resilience Assets available if required.	Regular, daily, contact with the Home Office and the NFCC on the work being undertaken by KFRS in response to the covid-19 pandemic.

Section 4. Governance

4.1 Managing the Fire and Rescue Service/Chief Fire Officer

Each fire and rescue authority will appoint an individual – commonly known as a Chief Fire Officer – who has responsibility for managing the fire and rescue service. Each fire and rescue authority must hold this person to account for the exercise of their functions and the functions of persons under their direction and control.

How to we meet these requirements?

Our [constitutional and governance documents](#) set out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made, and the rules and procedures governing Authority meetings and decision-taking. These include the following:

- The Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997
- Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority Standing Orders
- Committee Terms of Reference
- Scheme of delegation of powers to the Chief Executive
- Code of Corporate Governance

The Authority's [Annual Governance Statement](#), incorporating the Operational Assurance Statement.

Where do we get assurance from?

Scrutiny provided by the [Members of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority](#).

[Approval by KMFRA of the Annual Governance Statement \(incorporating the Operational Assurance Statement\) 2018/19. KMFRA, June 2019](#)

[Previous Annual Governance Statements](#)

<p>Oversight and scrutiny provided by the KMFRA Members. Evidenced in the publication of all KMFRA meeting agendas, reports and minutes on our website.</p>	<p>Agenda and minutes for Authority and Committee meetings</p>
<p>Approval of request from the Kent PCC to be appointed as a member of the Authority.</p>	<p>Additional level of oversight and scrutiny provided by having the PCC sit on the Authority.</p> <p>Approval by KMFRA for the PCC to be appointed as an additional (26th) Member of the Authority. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>Request by the PCC to be appointed as an additional Member of the Authority as soon as legislation permitted. KMFRA, June 2017 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>4.2 Documents to be prepared Each FRA is expected to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), Annual statement of assurance, financial plans (a medium term financial strategy, an efficiency plan and a reserves strategy).</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>The first stage in developing the Authority's plans is to consider the long-term aim and objectives. Once these have been assessed and agreed by Members, proposals for changes are drawn up and consulted upon with staff, members of the public, businesses and community groups. This process is conducted alongside the development of the Safety and Wellbeing Plan (formerly referred to as the IRMP within Kent) which sets out proposed changes for consultation.</p> <p>Once agreed by Members, the outcomes of the Safety and Wellbeing Plan are then fed into the Customer and Corporate Plan. This incorporates the Medium Term Financial Plan and infrastructure programme. The Customer and Corporate Plan also provides details of the Authority's performance over the previous year, targets for the coming years and an improvement action plan explaining how we intend</p>	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Supporting Information to the Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2018</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>

<p>to achieve these targets. The information in the Customer and Corporate Plan is updated regularly through the course of the year.</p> <p>The Safety and Wellbeing Plan and Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-22 were approved by KMFRA in 2018. In April 2019, the draft Customer and Corporate Pan 2019-23 was approved by KMFRA. The majority of the content of the previous plan remains, however some amendments have been made to reflect the new activities that have begun since it was last published. Consequently, this edition is largely a refresh of the 2018-22 plan.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022 (including the eight supporting strategies). KMFRA, April 2018 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-22 (including the eight supporting strategies).</p>
<p>The Authority's Annual Governance Statement (incorporating the Operational Assurance Statement)</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the Annual Governance Statement (incorporating the Operational Assurance Statement) 2018/19. KMFRA, June 2019 (Item No: B5)</p> <p>Previous Annual Governance Statements</p>
<p>Medium Term Financial Plan (MTEP)</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of draft MTEP. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>Each year the Authority publishes an 'Efficiency Statement'. This presents a general overview of the national and local economic environment in which the Authority is operating and the effect of this upon the planning and delivery of services over the medium term. In doing so, the aim is to offer a degree of context about the way we undertake our financial planning, and also to provide an outline of the approaches used to operate as efficiently as possible.</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the Efficiency Statement 2019/20. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>Approval by KMFRA of the Efficiency Statement 2018/19. KMFRA, April 2018 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>The Reserves Strategy is one of the Authority's three key financial strategies alongside the Capital Strategy and draft Capital Programme, and the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2020/21. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>"In principle" agreement by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2019/20. KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B3)</p> <p>Approval by KMFRA of the Reserves Strategy 2019/20. KMFRA February 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>4.3 National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC)</p>	

<p>The NFCC is the first line of operational advice to central and local government during major incidents. This is outlined within the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), which fire and rescue services must proactively engage with. The NFCC has a role to drive continuous improvement and development throughout the sector. Fire and rescue services should consult the NFCC for advice and support when developing improvement plans, particularly in response to inspections. The expectation is that fire and rescue services in England engage with the NFCC and, in turn, that the NFCC works to support and represent every service.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>Through involvement in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Authority plays an active role in sector improvement at the national level.</p> <p>Our Chief Executive is one of the Committee Chairs of the NFCC. The Chief Executive is Chair of the NFCC People Coordination Committee, runs the National Collaborative Procurement Board, and is the Lead Officer for both NFCC Industrial Relations and NFCC Benchmarking.</p>	
<p>KFRS Inclusion Officer is also joint lead SME for NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p>	
<p>The Assistant Director, Customer Engagement & Safety sits on the NFCC Dementia group.</p>	

<h2>Section 5. Achieving value for money</h2>	
<p>5.1 Reserves</p> <p>Sections 31A, 32, 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires billing and precepting authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. Each fire and rescue authority should publish their reserves strategy on their website, either as part of their medium term financial plan or in a separate reserves strategy document. The information on each reserve should make clear how much of the funding falls into the following three categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes over the period of the current medium term financial plan. Funding for specific projects and programmes beyond the current planning period. As a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management (e.g. insurance). 	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>

<p>The Authority's Reserves Strategy. This is one of the Authority's three key financial strategies alongside the Capital Strategy and draft Capital Programme, and the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2020/21. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>"In principle" agreement by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2019/20. KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B3)</p> <p>Approval by KMFRA of the Reserves Strategy 2019/20. KMFRA February 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>Medium Term Financial Plan (MTEP)</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2020/21 and draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2020-24. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>The Authority's Financial Strategies</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the 10 Year Capital Expenditure Plan. KMFRA, February, 2020 (Appendix 4 to Item No: B2)</p>
<p>5.2 Commercial Transformation</p> <p>Each fire and rescue authority must demonstrate that it is achieving value for money for the goods and services it receives. Every fire and rescue authority should look at ways to improve its commercial practices including whether they can aggregate their procurement with other fire and rescue authorities and other local services (e.g. police) to achieve efficiencies.</p> <p>Fire and rescue authorities must demonstrate and support national and local commercial transformation programmes where appropriate. Each fire and rescue authority should be able to demonstrate full awareness of the objectives to standardise requirements, aggregate demand and manage suppliers of products and services within their commercial arrangements.</p> <p>Fire and rescue authorities must ensure that their commercial activities, be that the placement of new contracts or the use of existing contracts, is in line with their legal obligations, including but not limited to the Public Contracts Regulations, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and transparency commitments.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>We have developed a Commercial and Procurement Strategy, which sets out our approach to buy goods and services in such a way that we deliver value for money on every pound spent with our suppliers, whilst</p>	<p>Update on progress to deliver the Commercial and Procurement Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>

<p>complying with EU Directives and UK Government policy that govern public sector procurement.</p>	
<p>Our aim when procuring goods, services or works is to achieve value for money whilst having due regard to propriety and regularity. Contracts are not awarded solely on the basis of the lowest price, but on the basis of the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender'. In other words, on the basis of the best price and quality score achieved by a supplier under established scoring guidelines.</p>	<p>Progress on procurement projects is reported into the Corporate Development Steering Group and all relevant programme and project boards. This applies to both local and collaborative projects.</p>
<p>Under the National Fire Commercial Transformation Programme, all national collaboration projects must report into the Strategic Commercial Board. The Board is chaired by the Authority's Chief Executive and is made up of National Sponsors at Chief-level and Category Leads. The Board also has an independent assurance member from Police and representation from the Home Office Commercial Directorate, representing Police and Fire.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the updated Procurement Service Order. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No. B4)</p>
<p>We have led on the development of the collaborative framework for firefighters' Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This collaborative approach is more efficient and offers greater savings opportunities compared to the old approach. Currently 22 fire services are signed up to the New Collaborative PPE Project.</p>	<p>Commercial and Procurement Update. KMFRA, February 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Authority is leading on two other national projects: the National Firefighting Specific Training Framework and the National Specialist PPE Framework. The former will deliver a route to market for all FRSSs to procure their training service requirements to align with National Operational Guidance (NOG) training outcomes. The latter has already delivered protective equipment for multiple operational environments and, to underscore the depth of the collaboration, has been open to all emergency services to participate in. Moreover, our role in this work also illustrates the leading position KFRS plays in driving the value for money agenda at the national level.</p>	
<p>Our commitment to achieving value for money is articulated in the Efficiency Statement. This presents a general overview of the way we</p>	<p>Approval by KMFRA of the Efficiency Statement 2019/20. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>

<p>undertake our financial planning and provides an outline of the approaches used by us to operate as efficiently as possible.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Statement for 2020/21 will be taken to KMFRA during 2020.</p>
<p>5.3 Research and Development Fire and rescue authorities should engage with national research and development programmes, including those overseen by the NFCC, unless there is a good reason not to.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>We have a dedicated research and development resource in the Customer Experience and Behaviour Change Team who support the development and improvement of services within Community Safety and Building Safety.</p> <p>A key function is to ensure all of our prevention and protection interventions are underpinned by evidence through undertaking research and evaluation.</p>	<p>Our approach to research and development is set out in our Community Safety Strategy.</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Community Safety Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>The Customer Experience and Behaviour Change Team are currently supporting a number of corporate projects and initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Focus Development • Fire as a Health Asset • Primary Authority Scheme • Better Business for All • Review of Safe and Well 	<p>Publication of research undertaken by the Authority in peer reviewed scientific journals including Fire and Materials, Safety Science, and the International Journal of Emergency Services.</p>
<p>We are undertaking a greater level of research and using a social marketing approach to understand people’s behaviours and motivations to ensure we can be effective.</p> <p>We have introduced a new framework for evaluation and we are increasingly using the framework to inform future initiatives. We are also investigating how we can measure social return on investment to ensure our interventions are both efficient and effective.</p>	<p>KERS evaluation framework (Annex 2, Community Safety Strategy)</p>

We research behaviour in fires in the home to tailor our customer safety activities and improve the advice we give to people about staying safe.	The Authority's published findings of its human behaviour research
5.4 Trading Fire and rescue authorities have the power to trade and make a profit but they must ensure that their commercial activities are performed in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), the Local Government Order 2009 and the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970. Fire and rescue authorities must also ensure that such commercial activities are exercised through a company within the meaning of Part 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
The Authority does not have a trading arm and has no plans to engage in such activity.	N/A

Section 6. Workforce	
6.1 People Strategy Each fire and rescue authority should have in place a people strategy that has been designed in collaboration with the workforce.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
Our People Strategy (one of the eight supporting strategies of the Customer and Corporate Plan) sets out how we develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.	Update on progress to deliver the People Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2) KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)
6.2 Professional Standards To enhance professionalism of fire and rescue services, a coherent and comprehensive set of professional standards across all areas of fire and rescue services' work will be developed, drawing on existing standards where appropriate. The development of new standards will be on an ongoing basis.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?

<p>While the Fire Standards Board was established in 2019, at the time of writing this assurance statement, the Board are still working on developing an initial activity framework which aims to show the different activities of fire and rescue services that enable them to deliver their service to the public.</p> <p>From this framework, the Board aim to show the breadth and range of areas to which professional Standards will apply – the scope of professional Standards.</p> <p>Consequently, as that has yet to be published, it is not yet possible to write this section of the framework with reference to these requirements.</p> <p>However, within KFRS there already exists a well-established culture of professional standards, which is underpinned by and codified in a small number of key documents. The conduct of staff is taken very seriously and we have a Code of Conduct which clearly sets out the standards of ethical and professional behaviour we expect.</p> <p>We place the utmost importance on holding ourselves to high standards of behaviour and integrity as embodied in the seven (Nolan) principles of public life: 1. Selflessness; 2. Integrity; 3. Objectivity; 4. Accountability; 5. Openness; 6. Honesty; 7. Leadership.</p>	<p>KFRS Code of Conduct (a copy of this is available on request)</p> <p>All employees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the spirit as well as the detail of the code of conduct and to always maintain the highest standards of integrity when conducting the Authority’s business.</p>
<p>Our customer promise sets out what the public are entitled to expect from us, and what we expect from our staff. It is our commitment to provide the public with an assured level of service. We want to ensure that the public have trust and confidence in the services we provide.</p>	<p>Our Customer Promise</p>
<p>We want to ensure that KFRS remains a fulfilling, supportive and enjoyable place to work. To underpin this we also have an internal customer promise between colleagues.</p>	<p>“Our ‘Promise to Each Other’ as we share our working lives together” (a copy of this is available on request)</p>
<p>When undertaking the business of the Authority, all of the Authority's Members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members. The Authority adopted a new</p>	<p>Members' Code of Conduct</p> <p>Arrangements for Dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints</p>

Code of Conduct with effect from 1 July 2012 together with detailed Arrangements for Dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints. The Members' Code of Conduct is set to be reviewed in 2020/21.	No complaints alleging that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct have been made to the Authority during the past year. Annual Report on Members' Standards and Allowances, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)
Feedback is collected from our customers and reported to KMFRA. The feedback shows that levels of complaints are extremely low.	Freedom of Information and Annual Customer Feedback Update, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)
6.3 Fitness Principles Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment. Each fire and rescue authority must comply with the fitness principles set out at Annex C.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
The Authority's sets out the fitness standards required and the process by which this is monitored and tested for operational personnel.	A copy of the Health and Wellbeing Guidance is available on request. All operational staff are subject to testing annually and support given to anyone falling below the required fitness level.
The Wellbeing Zone provides a wide range of resources for colleagues.	Monitoring of occupational health activity.
The Capability Regulations provide for a process of adjustment and redeployment where an individual cannot maintain or regain the required fitness level.	A copy of the Capability Regulations are available on request. A number of colleagues have already been redeployed under this policy.
We have a number of Physical Training Instructors on the establishment, coordinated by a full time fitness advisor. The working day is structured to allow one hour per day fitness training for all operational personnel. Gyms or fitness equipment are provided on all stations.	
In addition to physical health, the Authority has a strong focus on actively supporting the mental well-being of staff. KFRS takes the issue of mental health very seriously; particularly as, in the course of their work, firefighters can be exposed to potentially distressing scenes.	The Authority has signed up to the Government's Workplace Wellbeing Charter . In 2018, we introduced the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP helpline is available 24 hours a day, throughout the year and offers

<p>We have in place all the appropriate support arrangements, and referral systems into our occupational health provider if anyone (irrespective of whether operational staff or corporate staff) is displaying signs of any form of mental health issue.</p>	<p>access to trained counsellors will offer help and support in a professional, friendly and non-judgmental manner.</p> <p>We have over 40 'Wellbeing Champions' within the Service. These are staff volunteers who provide a confidential service to support the physical and mental wellbeing of colleagues by discussing options and signposting to available resources.</p> <p>All staff across the Service have completed mandatory online training in psychological support and wellbeing since 2017 and we are currently delivering a two day mental health first aid training course to all managers. We have trained 43 'Mental Health First Aiders', which include staff in a variety of roles across the Service and further courses are planned with and booked throughout 2020.</p> <p>Furthermore all staff will be offered half day mental health awareness training through 2020/21.</p> <p>KFRS also hosts an annual resilience and wellbeing conference to raise awareness of mental health issues. Previous years have covered resilience at work, managing stress, suicide prevention awareness (including commitment to the stop suicide pledge), alcohol and suicide, self-harm and PTSD.</p>
<p>6.4 Re-engagement of Senior Officers Fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety. Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>The Authority responded to the Government's consultation on the draft Fire and Rescue National Framework and stated its commitment to not re-appointing principal fire officers after retirement to their previous or a similar post.</p>	<p>Acceptance by KMFRA of the commitment to this aspect of the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework. KMFRA, February 2018 (Item No: B5)</p> <p>KMFRA oversight of senior appointments through the Senior officer Appointment and Conditions Committee.</p>

<p>When an employee retires from the Authority, they may choose to set themselves up as a consultant. On occasions there has been a need to reengage that individual for their specific expertise and skills.</p> <p>If this option is taken up, then a taxation test called IR35 needs to be applied. If the consultant meets the thresholds for IR35 to apply, meaning that the consultant is effectively an employee, it is officers' recommendation that abatement rules should also then be applied.</p>	<p>Approval that abatement will be applied where ex-employees return to the Authority as consultants and the "IR35" rule applies. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B5)</p>
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Section 7. Inspection, intervention and accountability

7.1 Inspection
 All fire and rescue authorities must cooperate with the inspectorate and its inspectors to enable them to deliver their statutory function. This includes providing relevant data and information to inform inspections. The Home Office and HMICFRS will work together to align data and information collections where possible to avoid duplication. Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and – if recommendations are made – prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned.

How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
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<p>In 2019 the Authority received its first inspection by HMICFRS. At the start of this in January 2019, the Chief Executive provided representatives of HMICFRS with a strategic briefing, highlighting the work the Authority has progressed over the last ten years, and the plans for the future.</p> <p>This was followed up by HMICFRS with an intensive programme of visits and interviews between 14 and 18 January involving ten inspectors, and overall around 15% of the total workforce being visited in some capacity across the whole of the process.</p>	
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<p>On 20/06/2019 HMICFRS published the results of its first inspection of the Authority. This rated KFRS as 'Good' across the three inspection pillars of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People.</p>	<p>HMICFRS inspection report of KFRS, which rated the Authority as 'Good' across all three pillars (published 20/06/2020)</p> <p>In the HMICFRS press release following their inspection of KFRS, HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services Zoë Billingham stated:</p>
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<p>Of the 45 FRAs which were inspected in 2018/19, the Authority is one of only 16 to have been awarded 'good' in all three pillars.</p> <p>The Inspectorate identified several areas where the Authority was showing notably good practice. Particular highlights that were identified in the report include the Authority's ability to respond to incidents effectively and to spend public money appropriately and responsibly.</p> <p>The report also found that the Authority offers 'excellent wellbeing support' for staff, noting a culture of 'trust and empowerment'.</p>	<p><i>"I am pleased that we have rated Kent Fire and Rescue Service as 'good' across all three areas of our inspection, in terms of its efficiency, effectiveness and the way it looks after its staff. This is a modern and innovative fire service that is prepared to find new ways of doing things.</i></p> <p><i>Many other fire and rescue services could learn from the example it sets. The service performs well in one of its primary duties: responding to fires and other emergencies. We found good collaboration with other local emergency services, including the ambulance service and the police, which improves the service given to the people of Kent."</i></p>
<p>The Inspectorate did not identify any 'causes of concern' (the most serious level) and identified just eight areas for improvement (the least serious level). The breakdown of these eight areas of improvement across the three pillars is as follows: six in the Effectiveness pillar; and one each in the Efficiency and People pillars.</p>	
<p>Following the inspection by HMICFRS, the Authority prepared an action plan that addresses each of the eight areas for improvement. Although there is no requirement placed on the Authority to do this, the action plan has been implemented and is currently underway.</p>	<p>KFRS HMICFRS Action Plan. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>On 14/01/2020, HMICFRS published their first annual report of their assessment of the state of the fire and rescue sector in England, based on the inspections of the 45 fire and rescue services carried out between June 2018 and August 2019.</p> <p>The Authority received two direct mentions in the report. The first is a positive mention of the process of staff engagement. The second praises the Authority for mainstreaming inclusion into everyday business.</p>	<p>State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2019, HMICFRS</p> <p>Summary of HMICFRS 'State of the Fire and Rescue Service' report, KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>As part of its commitment to the inspection process, the Authority responded to the HMICFRS consultation on the Proposed Fire and Rescue Services Inspection Programme and Framework 2020/21 (issued 24/10/2019).</p>	<p>Authority's response to the Proposed Fire and Rescue Services Inspection Programme and Framework 2020/21, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>

<p>7.2 Intervention Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 gives powers to the Secretary of State to intervene should a fire and rescue authority fail, or be likely to fail, to act in accordance with this Framework.</p>	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
The Authority is not in this position, therefore this section is not relevant in this context.	N/A
<p>7.3 Accountability Fire and rescue authorities are expected to have governance and accountability arrangements in place covering issues such as financial management and transparency, complaints and discipline arrangements, and compliance with the seven principles of public life.</p> <p>In demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be transparent and accountable to their communities for their decisions and actions; • provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement; and • have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard communities expect for an important public safety service. 	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<p>Our governance documents set out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made, and the rules and procedures governing Authority meetings and decision-taking. This contains the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 • Standing orders • Committee Terms of Reference • Members' code of conduct • Scheme of delegation of powers to the Chief Executive • Convention on Member and officer relations • Corporate governance 	KMFRA approval for the suite of governance documents.
We publish a full range of financial information about the Authority . This includes, but is not limited to, the statement of accounts, medium term financial plan, monthly spend reports and 10 year capital strategy.	Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 Approval by KMFRA of the 10 Year Capital Expenditure Plan. KMFRA, February, 2020 (Appendix 4 to Item No: B2)

	<p>Financial update for 2019/20. KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B3)</p> <p>Budget Outturn Report 2018/19 and Financial Update for 2019/20. KMFRA June 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Financial update for 2018/19. KMFRA April 2019 (Item No: B5)</p> <p>External Auditor's Findings Report 2018/19. KMFRA June 2019 (Item No: B6)</p> <p>Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report (including audit of Financial Strategies). KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>In 2019 the Customer and Corporate Plan was updated and refreshed, and re-titled the Customer and Corporate Plan 2019-23. The plan itself is structured in a customer-facing way around safety at home, safety on the roads, community resilience, business safety and operations and underpinning the plan is a set of eight strategies.</p>	<p>Refreshed Customer and Corporate Plan, 2019-2023. KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B1)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the eight strategies underpinning the Customer and Corporate Plan Strategy. KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>KMFRA approval for the Customer and Corporate Plan 2018-2022 and the eight strategies that support its delivery. KMFRA, April 2018 (Item No: B1)</p>
<p>The Authority publishes a Safety and Wellbeing Plan in order to consult on the services required to meet future needs. The priorities within this are developed following an assessment of risks across the county.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA, February 2019 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Supporting Information to the Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2018</p>
<p>Following the publication of updated guidance by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), the Authority published a revised Code of Corporate Governance in November 2016. The Code sets out the seven key principles of good governance which the Authority</p>	<p>Code of Corporate Governance. Approved by KMFRA General Purposes Committee, November 2016 (Item No: B3)</p>

<p>has adopted and the means by which these principles are adhered to and evidenced.</p> <p>The 2016 Code of Corporate Governance was refreshed in early 2020 and will be published in the first half of 2020.</p> <p>The Authority's Code of Corporate Governance is based upon the 'CIPFA Principles for Good Governance in the Public Sector'. This adopts the structure of the seven CIPFA and links them to the work of the Authority.</p>	
<p>We place the utmost importance on holding ourselves to high standards of behaviour and integrity as embodied in the seven (Nolan) principles of public life: 1. Selflessness; 2. Integrity; 3. Objectivity; 4. Accountability; 5. Openness; 6. Honesty; 7. Leadership.</p>	<p>Members' Code of Conduct</p> <p>KFRS Code of Conduct for employees (a copy of this is available on request)</p>
<p>We have a Community Right to Challenge Policy.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the Community Right to Challenge policy, KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B4)</p>
<p>All KMFRA meeting agendas, reports and minutes are published on the Authority's website.</p>	<p>Oversight and approval from the Members of the Authority.</p>
<p>Information about how to offer feedback and make complaints is published on the website.</p> <p>We also regularly review and report on complaints and other feedback received.</p>	<p>Feedback and Allegations Service Order</p> <p>Freedom of Information and Annual Customer Feedback Update, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Authority is statutorily obliged to have an annual financial audit conducted by an external audit firm. The results of which are presented to KMFRA and published on the website.</p>	<p>External auditors' audit findings report for 2018/19, KMFRA, June 2019 (Item No: B6)</p>
<p>7.4 Transparency</p> <p>Each fire and rescue authority must comply with their statutory transparency requirements. The nature of the requirements is dependent on the legal basis of the authority; for example, combined fire and rescue authorities would be subject to the Local Authority Transparency Code 2015 while PCC</p>	

FRAs must comply with requirements under section 11 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. All fire and rescue authorities should therefore publish certain information, including: senior salaries; register of interests; staffing; income and expenditure; property; rights and liabilities; and decisions of significant public interest. Fire and rescue authorities must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on their performance.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
The Authority has a Transparency Policy	KMFRA approval for the reviewed Transparency Policy, KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B4)
We have a Publication and Retention Scheme , which is available to the public.	KMFRA approval for revisions to Publication and Retention Scheme, KMFRA, December 2019 (Item No: B4) KMFRA approval for revisions to Publication and Retention Scheme, KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B4)
The Authority has a Data Protection and Information Security Policy	Update to Data Protection and Information Security Policy, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B4) Data Protection and Information Security Policy Framework, KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: B4)
The Authority's Freedom of Information Policy, Subject Access Request Policy and associated guidance are published on the website.	Freedom of Information Policy, KMFRA, October 2018 (Item No: B5) Subject Access Request Policy, KMFRA October 2018 (Item No: B4) Freedom of Information Update, KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1)
Following the enactment of the Data Protection Act 2018, an overall organisation-wide privacy statement has been published. This is supported by a full set of privacy notices (currently 32 in total).	Privacy section of our website
We meet the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 , plus the majority of the criteria recommended for publication.	Transparency reports of all transactions over £250 are regularly published on the website. The Authority's contracts register is published on the website

	The Authority publishes on its website all required elements of the Government's transparency agenda.
The Authority meets the requirements of the 'Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017'	Publication of trade union facility time information on the website
We publish a register of all property and land currently owned by the Authority .	
We publish a list of all fire stations in Kent and Medway .	
We publish a list of our vehicle fleet .	
We publish information on senior officers' pay .	
We report our customers' feedback and freedom of information requests to Members. We are compliant with the additional requirements of the 2018 revised Code of Practice for Freedom on Information requests.	Freedom of Information Update, KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1) Freedom of Information and Annual Customer Feedback Update, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)
We have a Community Right to Challenge Policy which forms part of the government's Open Public Services agenda.	Community Right to Challenge policy, KMFRA, April 2019 (Item No: B4)

Joint Statement by the Chairman of the Authority and Chief Executive

We acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring the proper governance of the Authority's affairs and will ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to ensuring that key controls and processes are implemented, maintained and monitored for effectiveness. We confirm that this Statement represents an honest and full assessment of the levels of assurance we have obtained following the assessment process as described above.

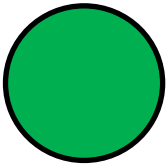
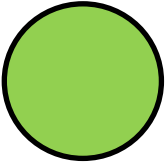
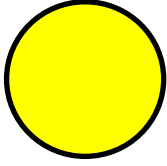
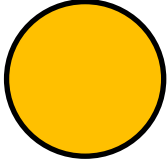
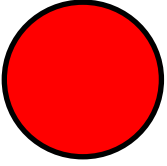
Nick Chard

Chairman, Kent Fire and Rescue Authority

Date: 23 July 2020

Ann Millington

Chief Executive

Assurance level	Definition of assurance levels
High 	<p>Internal control, Governance and the management of risk are at a high standard. The arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal controls are extremely well designed and applied effectively. Processes are robust and well-established. There is a sound system of control operating effectively and consistently applied to achieve service/system objectives. There are examples of best practice. No significant weaknesses have been identified.</p>
Substantial 	<p>Internal Control, Governance and management of risk are sound overall. The arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal controls are largely suitably designed and applied effectively. Whilst there is a largely sound system of controls there are few matters requiring attention. These do not have a significant impact on residual risk exposure but need to be addressed within a reasonable timescale.</p>
Adequate 	<p>Internal control, Governance and management of risk is adequate overall however, there were areas of concern identified where elements of residual risk or weakness with some of the controls may put some of the system objectives at risk. There are some significant matters that require management attention with moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.</p>
Limited 	<p>Internal Control, Governance and the management of risk are inadequate and result in an unacceptable level of residual risk. Effective controls are not in place to meet all the system/service objectives and/or controls are not being consistently applied. Certain weaknesses require immediate management attention as there is a high risk that objectives will not be achieved.</p>
No Assurance 	<p>Internal Control, Governance and management of risk is poor. For many risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Due to the absence of effective controls and procedures no reliance can be placed on their operation. Immediate action is required to address the whole control framework before serious issues are realised in this area with high impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.</p>