

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21

Introduction

[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. Good governance is key to the ethical stance of the organisation and the Authority is committed to applying the principles of good governance as set out in the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016'. 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. It also makes a commitment to keep under review its governance arrangements and address any key issues should they arise. 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 in England. Fire and rescue authorities 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 current [Fire and Rescue National Framework](#) was published on 1 June 2018.

The Annual Governance Statement and Operational Assurance Statement set out the results of the assessment for 2020/21 and 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 everyone that works for us abide by the [Code of Corporate Governance](#). Revised in July 2020, 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 2021 and have remained in operation up to the date of approval of the 2020/21 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 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. However, the whole corporate leadership team has collective responsibility for setting the strategic direction and managing the finances, albeit the Director of Finance and Corporate Services leads in coordinating and facilitating a culture of efficiency and value for money. The future strategic direction will be set out in an updated suite of six strategies, each covering specific areas of the organisation, and detailing what has been achieved and what we aim to achieve. These will be presented to the Authority in July 2021, but will be a core part of what is reported in the annual Customer Safety Plan.

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 employees • That we collaborate effectively where it improves services • That we demonstrate high standards of ethical behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Auditor’s Reports • 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. From 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 60 of this Statement. The 2020/21 review was undertaken between March and April 2021 and has been informed by the following:

- The views of the External Auditor, in the External Auditor's Findings Report 2019/20 and the Annual Letter, presented to the [October 2020](#) and [December 2020](#) Authority meetings respectively.
- The views of the Head of Internal Audit contained in the Internal Auditor's Annual Report 2019/20 and the Internal Audit 2019/20 mid-year progress report, presented to the [July 2020](#) and [December 2020](#) 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 and the [HMICFRS inspection of the Authority's response to covid-19](#).
- A review of our performance against our stated objectives and targets for 2020/21.
- The risk management process and a review and update of the Corporate Risk Register that is presented to the [July 2020](#) and [December 2020](#) Authority meetings. The Corporate Risk register is reviewed by the Authority annually.
- The effectiveness of any changes and improvements made to the governance framework during the last financial year.
- An assessment of our response to the coronavirus pandemic and its consequent effects upon the Authority's governance arrangements, including the [HMICFRS inspection of the Authority's response to covid-19](#).

The effects of the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact across the Authority, but the overall effect on governance arrangements has been limited. Initially this resulted in the cancellation of the April 2020 Authority meeting, albeit regular updates were provided to Members on a number of key issues throughout the pandemic. However, as the scale of the pandemic became evident it meant that the way planned future meetings were held had to be adapted and the holding of virtual meetings was enabled by the Coronavirus Act 2020. Authority meetings between July 2020 and April 2021 were held virtually. However, the High Court has now ruled that from May 2021 public meetings must return to a physical attendance and so the facility to hold

virtual public meetings is no longer available. Another impact has been the absence of a dedicated Independent Person since March 2020 due to the pandemic affecting recruitment. However, in order to mitigate this the Authority arranged access to Kent County Council's Independent Person.

To support our partner agencies and the people of Kent and Medway, the Service undertook a wide range of additional work across Kent and Medway, which involved both frontline and corporate colleagues. There was a temporary suspension of some non-emergency functions and secondary activities. Operational crewing was maintained, and due to the availability of on-call firefighters furloughed from their primary employment, fire engine availability increased. Additional work undertaken included the following activities: supporting SECamb (South East Coast Ambulance Service) with logistics and delivery of PPE to ambulance facilities across Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey; making our Fleet Technicians available to assist with ambulance breakdowns; operational crews responding to falls in the home; supporting SECamb with testing equipment and PPE; releasing KFRS staff to undertake more supportive work to SECamb colleagues, and acting as the procurement hub for the provision of covid PPE to all 45 fire and rescue services in England. In addition, the Service assisted Kent County Council 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. Fire prevention and fire protection activity continued through the pandemic, initially at a reduced level, however it was specifically targeted on those most at risk, and those at increased risk due to the pandemic. The Service 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 our ability to fulfil our statutory functions – a point that was highlighted and praised by HMICFRS in their covid inspection.

For the Authority's corporate teams, the most significant change was the move to home working from March 2020, ahead of the first lockdown being announced by government. The fact that this was able to take place so effectively and without disruption to the delivery of services by Authority, highlights the strength and resilience of the Authority's IT network and systems and the effective management of these by the Service's Business Change, Information and Technology team. As a result, corporate teams, and flexi-duty operational officers, were able to seamlessly transition to working from home without experiencing any major network issues, restrictions to IT functionality or interruptions to accessing and using the IT systems.

However, these changes to working practices were not just limited to corporate teams or flexi-duty officers. Operational firefighters based at fire stations also experienced a number of changes to their working practices, implemented in order to ensure their safety during the pandemic. These changes across the Authority's operational and corporate teams were made possible by the extensive policy work and amendments to various processes that were undertaken. This work provided the Authority with the appropriate underpinning policy framework. Examples included: developing and publishing a pack of coronavirus related policies; modifying colleagues' terms and conditions to recognise and support regular working from home; relaxing the normal rules on carrying over, rescheduling or delaying annual leave; and developing home study packs to support on-call staff to maintain their operational competencies and skills from home. As well as work to safeguard the physical health of staff, the Authority recognised the additional pressures imposed by the demands of the pandemic – particularly on operational firefighters – and so introduced an enhanced package of support for mental wellbeing across the whole organisation.

In summary, the Authority adapted effectively and efficiently to the considerable demands that were imposed upon it by the coronavirus pandemic – moreover it did so while maintaining its day-to-day service and fulfilling all of its statutory duties. Importantly, this fact was recognised by HMICFRS in their January 2021 report into the Authority’s response to the coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, the governance arrangements and systems of control employed by the Authority have been shown to be robust and effective, which have allowed it to adapt to the significant challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.

Compliance with the principles of the Financial Management Code

Following issues over the past few years with financial management and corporate governance in some local authorities, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA, the professional institute for accountants working in the public services and other bodies where public money needs to be managed) reviewed its guidance and issued the ‘Financial Management Code’ (see [KMFRA, February 2021, Item No: B2](#)). This mandatory Code provides guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities. The intention is that by complying with the principles and standards within the Code, local authorities will be able to demonstrate their financial sustainability. The Code came into effect from 1 April 2020, with the initial 12 months operating as a ‘shadow year’. This was done in order to give local authorities time to prepare for the full implementation deadline of 31 March 2021. The new Financial Management Code is based on six core principles:

1. **Organisational leadership** – demonstrating a clear strategic direction based on a vision in which financial management is embedded into the organisational culture.
2. **Accountability** – based on medium-term financial planning that drives the annual budget process supported by effective risk management, quality supporting data and whole life costs.
3. Financial management is undertaken with **transparency** as its core using consistent, meaningful and understandable data, reported frequently with evidence of periodic officer action and elected member decision making.
4. Adherence to professional **standards** is promoted by the leadership team and is evidenced.
5. Sources of **assurance** are recognised as an effective tool mainstreamed into financial management, including political scrutiny and the results of external audit, internal audit and inspection
6. The long-term **sustainability** of local services is at the heart of all financial management processes and is evidenced by prudent use of public resources.

Following an initial self-assessment of the level of compliance with the Code by the Corporate Management Board in early 2020, the action plan developed at that time was reviewed again at Corporate Board in January 2021. Whilst many of the proposed actions had been progressed and embedded a few remained as work in progress. For example, the redesign and updating of the Corporate Strategies are near completion and as such will be presented to the Authority in July 2021 for their consideration. These will set out the medium term approach and deliverables for the Service and as such will be the basis of much of what is presented in the Medium Term Financial Plan. Established Strategy Boards will monitor their progress

and delivery. The creation of an Audit and Governance Committee has been agreed and its first meeting is planned for November 2021. This will add even more strength to the assurance processes already in place across this Authority, as good financial governance is a key requisite across this Authority.

The level of assurance for 2020/21

On the basis of our internal review of the operation of the Governance Framework (including the effects of the coronavirus pandemic) and our assessment against the provisions of the National Framework (Operational Assurance Statement) the level of assurance for the 2020/21 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 in the process of being updated.
- Any findings identified whilst being updated 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 on pages 10 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 framework is made up of six underlying frameworks within which The Authority's corporate policies sit. Collectively these ensure that the key principles of governance are delivered and the requirements set out in set out in the Code of Corporate Governance are met.

Financial Management Framework	Service Delivery Framework	Democratic Framework	Information Management Framework	Performance Management Framework	Human Resources Framework
Anti-Bribery Policy Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Anti-Money Laundering Policy Budget Manager and Officer Scheme of Delegation Charging Policy Charitable Donations and Grants Policy Disposals Policy Exchequer Framework Policy Financial Management Policy Financial Planning Policy Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice Modern Slavery Policy Premises Sharing Policy Procurement Policy Purchasing Card Policy Risk Financing and Insurance Policy Risk Management Policy Supplier References Policy	Automatic Fire Alarm Policy Contingencies Policy Driving at Work Policy Emergency Planning and Contingencies Policy Enforcement Policy Firefighter Access and Buildings Policy Flying the Flag Policy Incident Command and the Management of Operational Incidents - Policy Statement Licensing and Events Policy Risk Based Inspection Programme Policy Safeguarding Policy Smoke Alarm Policy	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	Data Protection and Information Security Policy Freedom of Information Policy Information Technology Policy Subject Access Request Policy Publication and Retention Scheme 2019 to 2023 Service-wide privacy notice Suite of privacy notices (33 in total)	Feedback and Allegations Policy Transparency Policy Policy Handling Policy Community Right to Challenge Policy	Accommodation Policy Annual Leave Policy Apprenticeship Scheme Bullying and Harassment Policy Capability Policy Code of Ethical Conduct Compulsory Transfer Policy Conditions of Service Grey Book Covid-19 Annual Leave Carry Over Policy Covid-19 Contact Tracing Policy Covid-19 Quarantine Policy Covid-19 Return to Work for Operational Staff Policy Covid-19 Safe Working and Employee Wellbeing Policy Covid-19 Testing Policy Day Duty System Disciplinary Policy Employment Checks Policy Family Related Policy Flexible Duty Systems – Level 2 and 3 Flexible Rostering Duty System – Shift, DC and CTERC Flexible Working Policy Grievance Policy Health and Wellbeing Policy

Our self-assessment for 2020/21

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 30 November 2020. 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 definitive information.

The start of work on the 2020/21 audit plan was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic and the departure in May 2020 of the previous Head of Internal Audit. This meant that work on the nine internal audits planned for 2020/21 did not commence until July 2020. However, despite the delayed start, seven of the audits were completed by the end of April 2021, with the other two being deferred until 2021/22. The average rating of the audits was 'substantial' with one given 'high'.

In order to improve standards of financial management and corporate governance among local authorities, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) reviewed its guidance and issued a new 'Financial Management Code'. The aim of this mandatory code is to support good practice in financial management and demonstrate financial sustainability. The Code came into effect from 1 April 2020 as a shadow year in order to give local authorities time to prepare, with full implementation by 31 March 2021. Following an initial self-assessment of the Authority's level of compliance with the Code, a plan was developed to ensure that the Authority was compliant by the March 2021 implementation date.

There has been a wide-ranging review of policies in the framework. A strong and well publicised financial management control framework exists with almost 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"> • Anti-Bribery Policy • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy • Anti-Money Laundering Policy • Budget Mgr and Officer Scheme of Delegation • Charging Policy • Charitable Donations and Grants Policy • Disposals Policy • Financial Management Policy • Financial Planning Policy • Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice • Modern Slavery Policy • Premises Sharing Policy • Procurement Policy • Purchasing Card Policy • Risk Financing and Insurance Policy • Risk Management Policy • Supplier References Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchequer Framework Policy • Budget Manager and Officers Scheme of Delegation 	<p>Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25</p> <p>Annual Accounts 2019/20</p> <p>Financial update for 2020/21, KMFRA December 2020</p> <p>Budget Outturn Report 2019/20 and Financial Update for 2020/21, KMFRA July 2020</p> <p>External Auditor's Findings Report 2019/20, KMFRA July 2020</p> <p>Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report, KMFRA December 2020</p> <p>Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20, KMFRA July 2020</p> <p>Financial Strategies</p> <p>Assets Strategy and Commercial and Procurement Strategy (within the Customer Safety Plan)</p> <p>Draft Financial Strategies for 2021/22, KMFRA December 2020</p> <p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan including Efficiency Statement, 2020-2024, KMFRA, July 2020</p>

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 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 following the review by Internal Audit in 2019. Within the policy framework the majority of documents have been updated and refreshed into the new format.

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). Although the Covid pandemic initially impacted the Service Assurance programme, this has been addressed by looking at new ways of training and exercising.

For 2020/21, fire activity increased approximately 10% compared to the previous year, this being attributed to a larger number of accidental rubbish and grassland fires over the summer period. As a result, performance against the fire indicators remains higher than target. Despite lockdown, general activity was as expected, the only substantial reduction being in the number of RTCs attended.

Partnership working continues to be a key feature of how the Authority operates and we continue to develop strong and lasting working relationships with Kent Police, SECamb, other fire and rescue services, local authorities, NHS clinical commissioning groups, and many other agencies. Covid-19 has highlighted the work carried out with other agencies, much of which has been detailed in the coronavirus section on pages 5 to 7. The hosting of the Kent Resilience Forum by the Authority and the associated input of our staff into the Forum's response and recovery groups for covid has been fundamental to the positive impact of the Forum on the Kent response to the pandemic.

Fire Control has implemented several important changes to its way of working this year. Along with a more customer focussed approach to call handling, a recruitment programme has increased the number of control operators on duty (meeting some of the outcomes of the Grenfell inquiry). In line with the transition to National Guidance by operational crews, Fire Control's processes and documentation have also been updated to reflect the national agenda. This is also reflected in control staff moving to the Station Based Programme in alignment with operational crews.

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 • FF Access and Buildings Policy • Risk Based Inspection Programme Policy • Smoke Alarm Policy • Licensing and Events Policy • Safeguarding Policy • Flying the Flag Policy • Automatic Fire Alarms Policy • Annual review of Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent (HSF 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident Command and the Management of Operational Incidents • Emergency Planning and Contingencies Policy • Automatic Fire Alarms Policy 	<p>Community Safety Strategy and Operational Response Strategy (within Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024)</p> <p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan including Efficiency Statement, 2020-2024, KMFRA, July 2020</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Corporate Strategies, KMFRA, December 2020</p> <p>Our Customer Promise</p> <p>Performance Management updates to KMFRA</p> <p>Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report, KMFRA December 2020 (covering Building Safety)</p> <p>Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20, KMFRA July 2020</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 Kent Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 was amended in 2020 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, updated and subsequently approved in July 2020 as part of both a general refresh and also to give consideration to the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code 2020 (see page 7 for information about this).

Covid-19 has had some impact, for example we have been without a dedicated Independent Person since March 2020 due to the pandemic affecting the recruitment process but we have had access to Kent County Council's Independent Person should we have required this. Authority meetings, since July last year have been held virtually (enabled by the Coronavirus Act 2020). However, the recent High Court ruling has set out the fact that public meetings must revert to a physical presence, so future Authority meetings will no longer be held virtually. All Authority meetings are open to the public (currently virtually) and publicised in advance; copies of reports and minutes recording decisions are published on our website. The Clerk to the Authority attends all Member meetings so is on hand to advise on protocol and procedures.

The contract for the Authority's Monitoring Officer expired on 31 March 2021. For many years this role had been undertaken by Kent County Council's Head of Legal, however from 1 April 2021, the contract has been awarded to Medway Council.

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.

To add increased assurance and review to the governance processes in place across the Authority, Members have agreed to establish an Audit and Governance Committee, with the first meeting being held in November 2021. This new committee will have oversight of issues such as risk management, internal and external audit, treasury issues and the final accounts process. Members have agreed the terms of reference for this committee and, through a joint collaboration exercise with the police, we are in the process of advertising for an independent person to chair it. It is envisaged that there will be three Authority meetings and three Audit and Governance meetings each year.

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 • Members' Code of Conduct • Code of Corporate Governance • Senior Officer Appointment and Conditions Committee – Terms of Reference • Terms of Reference for the new Audit and Governance Committee agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct 	<p>Authority Constitutional Documents</p> <p>Request for the PCC to become a Member of the Fire Authority, KMFRA February 2020</p> <p>Member Allowances Scheme 2021/22, KMFRA February 2021</p> <p>Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies for 2020/21, KMFRA July 2020</p> <p>Appointment of Monitoring Officer, KMFRA February 2021 (NB: with effect from April 2021)</p> <p>Agreement to creation of an Audit Committee, KMFRA February 2021</p>

4. Information Management Framework

Arguably the most striking thing about the move to home working during the pandemic was the strength and robustness of the Authority's IT network and infrastructure. Whilst the Authority had been able to support widespread homeworking for limited periods, principally due to poor weather preventing staff from getting to their offices prior to the pandemic, this had never been undertaken across such a large number of people for such a long period of time. However, from the outset of the move to homeworking in March 2020, virtually all of the Authority's approximately corporate teams were able to log on and work from home without experiencing any major network issues, restrictions to IT functionality or interruptions to connections to the system.

Against this impressive achievement, 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. The coronavirus-induced move to homeworking among all headquarters staff and non-operational teams based at fire stations, meant that this took on an added importance. 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.

Following the move to home working, the Authority undertook an audit and review of the limited number of staff and teams who needed to handle personal data in hard copy at home. For some this led to a change in working practices to electronic only, while those staff and teams who were determined to still have an identified need to handle hard copy personal data at home were issued with secure and lockable document storage. The last internal audit review of information governance within the Authority, recorded the assurance level 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. A follow up of this is to be undertaken later in 2021.

The Authority has an up-to-date suite of data protection related policies; these comprise the Data Protection and Information Security Policy, the Freedom of information Policy, and the Subject Access Request Policy. All of these are reviewed and refreshed as necessary. A global privacy statement is in place and 33 individual privacy notices have been published on our website. Furthermore, all staff have received training about GDPR and the principles of data protection, something that also forms part of the induction package for new employees when they join the Authority. A refreshed version of this training will be re-issued in 2021/22.

During 2020/21 there was a reduction in the number of Freedom of Information Act requests, which may be the result of the coronavirus pandemic. Nonetheless, of the 216 requests received over the period, despite the additional demands on staff time imposed by the pandemic, all FOI requests were responded to within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days. The average response time being just nine working days, which is 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 protection impact assessments are also undertaken where relevant 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 • Freedom of Information Policy • Information Technology Policy • Subject Access Request Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication and Retention Scheme 2019 to 2023 • Suite of privacy notices 	<p>External IT Security report*</p> <p>Freedom of Information Update, KMFRA February 2021</p> <p>Freedom of information and annual customer feedback update, KMFRA October 2020</p> <p>Update to Data Protection and Information Security Policy, KMFRA December 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 Safety Plan 2020-2024)</p> <p>*This report is excluded from release under Section 24 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</p>

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. Related policies have been updated to a new more accessible format, alongside being reviewed in the process.

In July 2020, our updated Customer and Corporate Plan 2020-2024 was approved by KMFRA. The document has since been renamed the Customer Safety 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. Previously there was a set of eight underpinning strategies, but these are currently in the process of being redefined, and will reduce to six. The expectation is that they will be presented to the Authority for review and approval at the July 2021 meeting.

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. Complaints and other feedback are regularly reviewed and reported. A small number of complaints were received this year, six of which were founded. In contrast, 96 compliments were logged. All complaints are taken seriously and are fully investigated, and outcomes are shared with the complainants.

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"> • Policy Handling Policy • Transparency Policy • Feedback and Allegations Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Right to Challenge Service Order 	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update 2020/24, KMFRA October 2020</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan consultation update, KMFRA February 2020</p> <p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan (inc Performance and Data Strategy), 2020-2024, KMFRA July 2020</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Performance and Data Strategy, KMFRA December 2020</p> <p>Financial performance reports</p> <p>Procurement Reports</p> <p>Performance updates to each KMFRA meeting</p> <p>Annual Report on Customers' Feedback. KMFRA October 2020</p>

6. Human Resources Framework

We are committed to ensuring this is a place where everyone that works for us feels comfortable with their own identity and that they 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. The Authority has a comprehensive range of support for colleagues through the Employee Assistance Programme, this is supplemented by a network of Wellbeing Champions who provide a confidential service to support colleagues' physical and mental wellbeing. Everyone that works for us has completed mandatory online training in psychological support and wellbeing. The past year has seen the introduction of 24/7 Wellbeing Support Officers to provide out of hours support. In addition, we have put in place wellbeing support those colleagues who have regular exposure to emotionally demanding situations, examples include the Safe and Well Officers and the Designated Safeguarding Officers. We have also continued to roll out mental health first aid training and there are now 70 Mental Health First Aiders across the Service.

Conduct is taken very seriously and we have introduced a new Service-wide ethical code of conduct and an ethical code of conduct specifically for senior managers. This was also accompanied by the publication of a new 'Speak up' policy, which challenges negative perceptions of 'whistleblowing' and aims to give anyone with legitimate concerns an effective means to voice them.

In response to the demands of the coronavirus pandemic, we have carried out extensive policy work and adapted a number of processes and approaches to ensure colleagues are adequately supported with the new challenges this has presented. Examples include: developing and publishing a pack of coronavirus related policies; modifying colleagues' terms and conditions to recognise and support regular working from home; a relaxation of the normal rules on carrying over, rescheduling or delaying annual leave; reviewing compliance with Working Time Regulations; creating a covid risk score; developing a tailored return to work test for operational staff who had contracted covid-19; establishing our own contract tracing cell; introducing a health and safety DSE assessment tool and HSE stress indicator assessment; and developing home study packs to support on-call firefighters to maintain their competency from home.

Everyone that works for us is encouraged to maintain their professional competence and seek development opportunities. To support this, we secured access to 'LinkedIn Learning', which offers a comprehensive external online learning platform. The move away from the traditional annual appraisal, to an environment where everyone is given regular feedback and where appropriate performance coaching is supplemented by a talent benchmarking process for uniformed colleagues is now well-established. Following its inception in 2020, the new integrated approach to learning and testing for operational staff (referred to as 'ILAM'), continues to move the Authority towards 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 (year ending 31 March 2020) shows a mean pay gap of 5.1% in favour of women, which equates to £0.84 per hour more than the rate of pay received by males. This is an increase on the 3.9% (£0.62) for 2019 and is likely due to significant female representation at Corporate Management Board and senior management level. However, median male pay is 0.9% (£0.14) more than women and is representative of the fact that the workforce is predominately male. We are committed to addressing the attraction and retention of women, protecting career progression and inclusive recruitment. Our brand review will enhance our flexibility and we continue to raise awareness of inclusion and diversity. These, along with other steps including research, leadership framework, talent benchmarking and continuing policy review, show our commitment to reducing the gender pay gap.

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"> • Accommodation Policy • Annual Leave Policy • Bullying and Harassment Policy • Capability Policy • Code of Ethical Conduct • Compulsory Transfer Policy • Covid-19 Annual Leave Carry Over Policy • Covid-19 Contact Tracing Policy • Covid-19 Quarantine Policy • Covid-19 Return to Work for Operational Staff Policy • Covid-19 Safe Working and Employee Wellbeing Policy • Covid-19 Testing Policy • Day Duty System • Family Related Policy • Flexible Rostering Duty System – Shift, DC and CTERC • Health and Wellbeing Policy • Recruitment and Selection Policy • Structural Change Policy • Supporting Professional Development Policy • Working Time Policy and Guidance (previously named Working Time Regulations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overtime for Grey Book Staff Policy • Flexible Duty Systems – Level 2 & 3 • Industrial Relations – Uniformed Staff Policy • Covid-19 Safe Working and Employee Wellbeing Policy • Covid-19 Annual Leave Carry Over Policy • Covid-19 Testing Policy • Covid-19 Quarantine Policy • Pay and Other Payments for Service Support Staff Policy • Covid-19 Contact Tracing Policy • Employment Checks Policy • Flexible Rostering Duty System – Shift, DC and CTERC • Industrial Relations and Joint Consultation Policy for Service Support Staff • Pensions Policy • Flexible Working Policy • Special Leave Policy • Disciplinary Policy • Other (Secondary) Employment Policy • Grievance Policy • Social Media Policy • Supporting Attendance at Work Policy 	<p>Gender Pay Gap Report 2020</p> <p>Update for Authority on Gender Pay Gap Report 2020, KMFRA October 2020</p> <p>People Strategy (within Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the People Strategy, KMFRA December 2020</p> <p>Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024</p> <p>Customer Safety Plan update, KMFRA July 2020</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>

Operational Assurance Statement 2020/21

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. The term IRMP itself is likely to be replaced soon by Community Risk Management Plan.

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 Safety Plan 2020-2024.

Originally published in 2018, our Customer and Corporate Plan was refreshed in April 2019 and further refreshed in 2020, when it was renamed the Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024. References to this will be based on the title in use at the time of publication.

Where do we get assurance from?

[Update on the Operational Response strategy. KMFRA December 2020 \(Item No. B10\)](#)

[KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024. KMFRA December 2020 \(Item No: B10\)](#)

[Our Customer Promise](#)

[Performance Management updates to KMFRA](#)

[Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report \(including follow up progress summary of audit of Ops Assurance and Business Continuity Management\). KMFRA December 2020 \(Item No: C1\)](#)

<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 2021-2024 update</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan Update 2021. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p>
<p>All projects proposed in the Safety and Wellbeing Plan and subsequently approved by KMFRA are reflected in the Customer Safety Plan 2020-24.</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, July 2020 (Item No: B2)</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. It was fundamental to coordinating the response to both the coronavirus pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU.</p>	<p>Kent Resilience Forum</p>
<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 2020 (Item No: B2)</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.

Section 2. Delivery of functions

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.

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.

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. KMFR A February 2021 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan Update 2021-2024, KMFR A October 2020 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2024 update</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p> <p>KMFR A approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020. KMFR A 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 KMFR A are then fed into the Customer Safety Plan (renamed in July 2020 from the Customer and Corporate Plan). This is structured in a customer-facing way around five objectives: Responding to emergencies; Home safety; Road safety; Assisting businesses; Protecting the wider community. These five objectives are underpinned by eight corporate strategies that support its delivery.</p>	<p>Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024</p> <p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024. KMFR A July 2020 (Item No: B10)</p>

Progress to deliver the actions that underpin each of the eight supporting corporate strategies is reported to KMFRA.	Final update for Members on progress made to deliver the eight strategies in the Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024, as they approach being replaced. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2) 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 March 2021 (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 July 2020 (Item No: B2)
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 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 Safety Plan.</p> <p>We focus prevention and protection work on those at highest risk.</p>	<p>Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024</p> <p>Final update for Members on progress to deliver the Community Safety strategy in the Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024 (incorporating the eight supporting strategies including the Community Safety strategy). KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B10)</p> <p>HMICFRS KFRS 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 to help recruit and target those at most risk.</p>	<p>Prevention, Protection, Customer Engagement and Safety Update. KMFRA, April 2021 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Community and Business Fire Safety Update. KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>In late 2019, the Authority's Community Safety Team and Technical Fire Safety Team were reorganised and renamed the Customer Safety Team and Building Safety Team respectively. 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>Customer Engagement and Safety Update. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>The Authority established a Customer Experience and Behaviour Change Team has developed a framework and methodology for embedding behaviour change practices into the Authority's customer and business safety strategies. Also included in this is the ability to evaluate the programme of Safe and Well visits.</p>	<p>Customer Engagement and Safety Update. KMFRA February 2020 (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</p>	<p>Safeguarding updates to KMFRA:</p> <p>KMFRA approval for Modern Slavery Policy. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B3)</p> <p>Refreshed Safeguarding Policy. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Our Safeguarding commitment and Feedback and Allegations Policy</p>

<p>agencies where the safeguarding of the vulnerable person is outside the scope and capabilities of the Service.</p>	
<p>The Authority has moved to one single system to collect, store and share risk information – Microsoft Dynamics. This replaces the three separate Microsoft CRM systems that were previously in use; one each for Building Safety, Customer Safety and Operational Response. Information was not easily or routinely shared amongst these systems or teams and in some instances the same premises or site would be in all three systems.</p> <p>Dynamics has changed the way the Authority approaches risk information. With this new system a premises will only be added once, all activities are then processed from this one place. For example, if Building Safety issue a prohibition notice for a premises this is then made available to all staff including operational colleagues.</p> <p>Dynamics also stores plans, images and evacuation information, which the Risk Information team collect as part of their inspection, to support crews in planning for and responding to an incident.</p>	
<p>In 2020 the Authority established the Risk Information Team. This is a specialist team responsible for collating and assessing information from special risk sites and ensuring site specific risk information is consistent, accurate and available to crews.</p>	
<p>The risk assessment methodology for the Dynamics system has been developed in line with the risk assessment methodology for the Kent Community Risk Registers (KCRR). As such, the levels of risk can be directly compared, allowing joint priorities to be determined. The KCRR and Dynamics are used by the Operational Planning Team to produce a list of exercises that will need to be completed each year.</p>	<p>'Preparedness for a major incident' and 'Risk information' are two of the Internal Audit projects for 2019/20. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: C1)</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>Update on the programme of works the Authority established to coordinate all the activities including the response to the findings and recommendations from Phase I of the Grenfell Tower. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2)</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>In 2018, the Authority established the Fires in 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>Announcement of plans to launch a new high rise campaign which builds on the lessons from the Grenfell Inquiry and the Hackitt Review. KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Customer Engagement and Safety update. KMFRA February 2020 (Item No: C1)</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>KMFRA approve the new Risk-based Inspection Policy. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>We have worked closely with a number of local authority partners to develop the Better Business for All partnership and the Primary Authority Scheme.</p> <p>These initiatives bring businesses and regulators together in order to reduce the regulatory burden for businesses.</p>	
<p>Our Business Portal is a single location to provide businesses with the information they need to know to stay safe. This includes adapting the approach to building safety in response to the demands and restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic.</p>	
<p>The Authority is an active and leading member in the South East FRS Regional Business Continuity Group.</p>	
<p>2.3 Respond</p> <p>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 Safety Plan.</p>	<p>Final update on progress to deliver the Operational Response Strategy in the Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>

	<p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024 (incorporating the eight supporting strategies including the Operational Response Strategy). KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B10)</p>
<p>The service plays an active role in the National Operational Learning process and is committed to adopting National Operational Guidance.</p>	<p>Internal Audit of Operational Assurance carried out in 2020 looked at the implementation of National Operational Guidance in the Authority. KMFRA July 2020 (App 1 to Item No: B4)</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>In April 2021, a multi-agency exercise was undertaken at the Channel Tunnel to test the communications networks.</p> <p>The Authority has signed a new seven year contract with Eurotunnel to deliver First Line of Response functions. This represents the longest term contract the Authority have had in the 25 years of working with Eurotunnel.</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>The ability to undertake any further exercises during 2020/21 was curtailed by the coronavirus pandemic. However, this will reviewed for 2021/22.</p>
<p>The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic led to unprecedented uncertainty, requiring urgent business continuity arrangements to be implemented.</p> <p>The arrangements put in place following the declaration of a major incident in response to the coronavirus pandemic worked extremely well overall, due in large part to the Authority's tried and tested Business Continuity plan</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>Pandemic update. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Emergency Planning and Contingencies Policy. A copy of this is available on request.</p> <p>A Business Continuity exercise was held in October 2019 enabling an informed review of the Business Continuity plan. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Internal Audit Annual Report, containing summary of audit of Business Continuity Management. KMFRA, July 2020 (App 1 to Item No: B4)</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>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.</p> <p>As part of the planning and preparation for the UK's departure from the EU, an annual exercise was completed in July 2020 and as part of the Authority's continuous improvement, the new principles identified as part of the Integrated Learning and Assurance Model were applied.</p>	<p>Financial update. KMFRA, December 2020 (Item No: B3)</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>These exercises allow us to test our procedures and responses to a variety of events, and ensure a cohesive response whilst being able to maintain our front line emergency response and Service critical back office functions.</p>
<p>In response to the covid-19 pandemic, the multi-agency Strategic Coordination Group declared the coronavirus pandemic a major incident on 24 March 2020. At the meeting of the Authority held on 23 July 2020, Members were updated on the actions taken by the Authority during the early period of the pandemic.</p> <p>Business continuity arrangements were put in place to ensure that KFRS Control functioned as usual and that there were no interruptions to fire cover and operational response.</p>	<p>Pandemic update. KMFRA, October 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>

<p>In the inspection undertaken of fire and rescue services' response to the coronavirus pandemic, HMICFRS stated that the Authority adapted effectively and efficiently to the considerable demands that were imposed upon it by the coronavirus pandemic – moreover it did so while maintaining its day-to-day service and fulfilling all of its statutory duties.</p>	<p>HMICFRS inspection of the Authority's response to covid-19</p>
<p>2.4 Collaboration 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>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<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 February 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 and to maintain a collaboration tracker</p>	<p>Collaboration Update. KMFRA February 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</p>	

equipment and skills of firefighters can be deployed to assist in gaining entry when other options have been attempted.	
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.	
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.	The KRT Annual Report can be made available on request subject to any exclusions as necessary.
We support SECamb by responding to life-threatening medical emergencies when our crews or officers are available to do so.	
We are members of the National Operational Guidance Implementation Forum.	National Operational Guidance Programme
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.	
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. SECamb mobilise resources from a number of KFRS owned premises.	
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. 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.	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

<p>During the second national lockdown (05/11/2020 - 02/12/2020), all of the Authority's statutory duties were maintained.</p> <p>We continued to support our partners with deliveries of PPE for SECAMB and hot meals for customers of Age UK.</p> <p>We sourced 3.5 million items of consumable PPE for the sector nationally during the pandemic</p> <p>During the third national lockdown (06/01/2021 up to the time of writing), the Authority continued to provide a range of support for partners, in particular SECAMB. Firefighters driving ambulances and assisting in the opening of mass vaccination sites in Folkestone, Tonbridge and Gravesend.</p> <p>In February 2021, volunteers from among the Authority's staff (both operational and non-operational) assisted in Operation Barton, a four day surge testing and mass tracing event in Maidstone to identify cases of the South African covid-19 variant.</p>	<p>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> <p>Pandemic update. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Pandemic update. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: C1)</p>
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Section 3. National Resilience

3.1 Gap Analysis

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.

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>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2024 update</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan Update 2021. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA February 2021 (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>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA February 2019 (Item No: C1)</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>Kent Community Risk Register</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>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. However, the coronavirus pandemic prevented the annual joint UK-French exercise in the Channel Tunnel for 2021.</p> <p>Consequently, 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 2020. 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 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>The Channel Tunnel Bi-national emergency plan was updated in Sept 2019</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>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 risk management system.</p>	<p>Financial update. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B3)</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)</p> <p>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>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 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 CIF and Major Incident Plan – reviewed and approved by the Authority's Corporate Management Board in early 2019.</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</p>	<p>The reporting procedure and SOP held by KFRS Control.</p>

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.	
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.	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.
Throughout 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.
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.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
Although exercises were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, under normal circumstances, the Authority plans and undertakes regular operational exercises throughout the year. These test the efficacy of our emergency planning, the use of joint emergency services interoperability principles (JESIP).	Exercise Programme Update. KMFRA February 2019 (Item No: C1)
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. For example, we have amended talkgroups on airwaves radios in line with the recommendations of the report.	
Further commentary on this section is withheld due to the sensitivity of the area.	
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing national resilience capabilities are fit for purpose and robust; and 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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>	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<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>These will be resumed once the coronavirus pandemic allows.</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), Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS), High Volume Pump (HVP), Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) and various Tactical Advisors (Waste Fires, USAR, DIM)</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 recently introduced CRM system known as 'Dynamics' Each premises is assessed by the Risk Information Team (RIT) to determine the potential level of risk it poses to the Authority and the community it serves. Information can then be shared across teams in the Service.</p>	<p>Kent Community Risk Register</p>
<p>As part of the FRMR, 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>Regular exercising of response.</p>

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.
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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?	Where do we get assurance from?
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Scrutiny provided by the Members of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority.</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) 2019/20. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B6)</p> <p>Previous Annual Governance Statements</p>
<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 Safety Plan. This incorporates the Medium Term Financial Plan and infrastructure programme. The Customer Safety 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 to achieve these targets. The information in the Customer Safety Plan is updated regularly through the course of the year.</p>	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update 2021/24</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: C1)</p> <p>Safety and Wellbeing Plan Update 2021-2024. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2020. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: B4)</p> <p>Supporting Information to the Safety and Wellbeing Plan</p> <p>Customer Safety Plan 2020-2024</p> <p>KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B10)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the strategies of the Customer Safety Plan. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2)</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) 2019/20. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B6)</p>

	Previous Annual Governance Statements Corporate governance page on Authority's website
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Approval by KMFRA of draft MTFP 2021-25. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B1)
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.	Approval by KMFRA of the Efficiency Statement 2020/21. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B10)
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.	Approval by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2021/22. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B1)
4.3 National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) 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.	
How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
Through widespread involvement in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Authority plays an active role in sector improvement at the national level. Our Chief Executive is one of the Committee Chairs of the NFCC . The Chief Executive is Chair of the NFCC People Coordination Committee and runs the National Collaborative Procurement Board. She also is part of the Covid Committee and is a member of the CRP Board – as is the Assistant Director, Corporate Services.	

The incoming Director of Operations is taking up a role as Co-lead Officer on the NFCC Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change work stream, which is part of the NFCC Sector Resources and Improvement Committee. The outgoing Director of Operations chairs the PPE Group of the NFCC Clothing Committee.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services plays a significant role in the Fire Finance network and with the Assistant Director, Corporate Services is reviewing Scheme of Delegations arrangements.

The AD, Operational Resilience and Development is the South East Regional Lead for the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP). He is also Chair of the South of England Emergency Services Board.

The Assistant Director, Customer Engagement and Safety sits on the NFCC Dementia group and is also a member of the Prevention Standards Group (along with the AM Building Safety) and also the Prevention Standards Review Panel. He also deputises for the chair of the NFCC Road Safety Group.

The Assistant Director HR is part of the NFCC Recruitment working group.

The Area Manager Response is the NFCC lead officer for alternative fuels.

The Head of Procurement is the project lead for the National Collaborative Procurement Board and manages the National Procurement Hub.

The Head of IT chairs the NFCC IT Managers Group and is the ESN Fire User Group rep.

The Education Manager supports the Children and Young People Group, looking at the products from an educational perspective.

KFRS Inclusion Officer is technical lead for NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Section 5. Achieving value for money

5.1 Reserves

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:

- a. Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes over the period of the current medium term financial plan.
- b. Funding for specific projects and programmes beyond the current planning period.
- c. As a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management (e.g. insurance).

How to we meet these requirements?

[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.

[Medium Term Financial Plan \(MTFP\)](#)

[The Authority's Financial Strategies](#)

Where do we get assurance from?

[Approval by KMFRA of the updated Reserves Strategy 2021/22. KMFRA February 2021 \(Item No: B1\)](#)

[Approval by KMFRA of draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2021/22 and draft MTFP 2021-25. KMFRA February 2021 \(Item No: B1\)](#)

[Approval by KMFRA of the 10 Year Capital Expenditure Plan for 2021/22 to 2030/31. KMFRA February 2021 \(App 4 to Item No: B1\)](#)

5.2 Commercial Transformation

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.

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.

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.

How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
<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 complying with EU Directives and UK Government policy that govern public sector procurement.</p>	<p>Refreshed Customer Safety Plan, 2020-2024. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B10)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Commercial and Procurement Strategy. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Update on progress to deliver the Commercial and Procurement Strategy, KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B2)</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 Portfolio Board 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 amended Procurement Policy. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>Category management is now embedded within the organisation, with a focus on Facilities Management and Construction, Information Communications Technology, Ops Equipment, and Fleet and Professional Services. This approach has enabled a cross-functional approach with the respective business areas which has ensured that synergies across the organisation are considered for all procurement decisions, thereby giving greater transparency on aggregated spend. We are also able to work closely with our Police partners in Kent, to look at synergies across the categories and join up wherever feasible to do so. Since 2018/19, the team has facilitated the business to deliver procurement savings of £1.5m, tracked and recorded against the Cabinet</p>	

<p>Office savings methodology, which is endorsed by the Home Office for police and fire.</p> <p>With a lead role on commercial reform as the National Procurement Hub, we are representing UKFRS on the consultation for legislation changes, including Modern Slavery, National Security Investments Bill and the Brexit Green Paper.</p> <p>Much has been delivered for the Sector for clothing and PPE. The category has grown significantly, and as such, with over £18m annual spend, now has a dedicated Category Lead. Covid-19 has confirmed the importance of the National Procurement Hub and, since the first lockdown, the hub has coordinated over 3.5 million units of consumable covid PPE to the sector and local resilience forums across the UK. In addition, nationally, we now have over 33,000 wearers of structural PPE, manufactured to increased quality and protective requirements, and so far saving the UK fire and rescue services over £145k. By the end of July 2021, we shall also have over 13,500 wearers of national workwear, following the successful launch of the new agreement, which is tracking at approximately 20% less than previous spend levels. Finally, we are now live with a procurement for a national arrangement for specialist PPE, with an estimated spend of £98m over an eight year period.</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>All public agencies with a gross revenue budget of greater than £38m are required to publish an annual Transparency in Supply Chains Statement.</p> <p>In response, the Authority has published a Modern Slavery Policy. This sets out the Authority's zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery, human trafficking and all forms of servitude and forced and compulsory labour in all our own business and relationships, and in any of our supply chains.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for Modern Slavery Policy. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B3)</p>

<p>A statement on the performance of the Authority in meeting the policy will be brought annually to Members.</p>	
<p>Our commitment to achieving value for money is articulated in the Efficiency Statement. This presents a general overview of the way we undertake our financial planning and provides an outline of the approaches used by us to operate as efficiently as possible.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for the Efficiency Statement for 2020/21. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B10)</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 2020 (Item No: B2)</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</p>	<p>KFRS evaluation framework (Annex 2, Community Safety Strategy)</p>

investigating how we can measure social return on investment to ensure our interventions are both efficient and effective.	
<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. This also supports operational training and emergency call management.</p> <p>The Authority sponsored world-leading doctoral research on human behaviour in dwelling fires (Towards and Comprehensive Understanding of Human Behaviour in Dwelling Fires).</p>	<p>The Authority's published findings of its human behaviour research</p> <p>British Library EThOS e-theses online service</p>
<p>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.</p>	
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.	KMFRA approval for the 'Charing Policy'. KMFRA, July 2020 (Item No: B2)

<p>Section 6. Workforce</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
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.	KMFRA approval for the refreshed Customer Safety Plan including People Strategy, 2020-2024. KMFRA, July 2020 (Item No: B10)
<p>6.2 Professional Standards</p>	

<p>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.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>At the time of writing the Fire Standards Board have published the following four standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Driver Training Fire Standard • Operational Response (Preparedness, Competence and Learning) Fire Standard • Code of Ethics Fire Standard • Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard <p>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>During the consultation period, the Authority has been an active participant and engaged with and responded to each of the consultations on the proposed fire standards.</p> <p>As and when consultation opens on additional standards, the Authority will continue to engage actively with the process.</p> <p>Following the publication of the first four standards, the Authority undertook a high level gap analysis of its position against each of the published fire standards.</p> <p>This identified that the Authority was compliant with the majority of the key areas of each of the four standards.</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 Customer Experience and Behaviour Change Update. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: C1)</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</p>	<p>Members' Code of Conduct</p>

<p>Authority's Code of Conduct for Members. The Authority adopted a new Code of Conduct with effect from 1 July 2012 together with detailed Arrangements for Dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints.</p> <p>The Members' Code of Conduct is set to be reviewed in 2021/22.</p>	<p>Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints</p> <p>No complaints alleging that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct have been made to the Authority during the past year.</p> <p>Annual Report on Members' Standards and Allowances. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>Feedback is collected from our customers and reported to KMFRA. The feedback shows that levels of complaints are extremely low.</p>	<p>Freedom of Information and Annual Customer Feedback Update, KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>
<p>6.3 Fitness Principles</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>The Authority's sets out the fitness standards required and the process by which this is monitored and tested for operational personnel.</p>	<p>A copy of the Health and Wellbeing Guidance is available on request.</p> <p>All operational staff are subject to testing annually and support given to anyone falling below the required fitness level.</p>
<p>The Wellbeing Zone provides a wide range of resources for colleagues.</p>	<p>Monitoring of occupational health activity.</p>
<p>The Capability Regulations provide for a process of adjustment and redeployment where an individual cannot maintain or regain the required fitness level.</p>	<p>A copy of the Capability Regulations are available on request. A number of colleagues have already been redeployed under this policy.</p>
<p>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 is provided on all stations.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>The Authority has signed up to the Government's Workplace Wellbeing Charter.</p> <p>Great importance is placed on supporting colleagues with their physical and mental wellbeing and we have developed a culture which actively</p>

<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>challenges the stigma around mental health and the associated barriers to seeking help and support for mental well-being.</p> <p>In 2018, we introduced the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP helpline is available 24 hours a day, throughout the year and offers access to trained counsellors will offer help and support in a professional, friendly and non-judgmental manner.</p> <p>This is supplemented by a network of Wellbeing Champions. 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 have completed mandatory online training in psychological support and wellbeing and managers have received a mental health first aid training course.</p> <p>The past year has seen the introduction of 24/7 Wellbeing Support Officers to provide out of hours support to all staff.</p> <p>In addition, we have put in place wellbeing support for front facing staff who have regular exposure to emotionally demanding situations, examples include the Safe and Well Officers and the Designated Safeguarding Officers. We have also continued to roll out mental health first aid training, so that there are now 70 Mental Health First Aiders within the Service.</p> <p>KFRS also hosts resilience and wellbeing conferences 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>
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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.

How to we meet these requirements?	Where do we get assurance from?
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<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>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>Section of Pay Policy Statement covering the re-engagement of former employees. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B3)</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>

<h2>Section 7. Inspection, intervention and accountability</h2>	
<p>7.1 Inspection</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>In January 2021 HMICFRS published the results of its inspection of the Authority’s response to the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>HMICFRS praised the Authority’s ability to meet the significant demands placed on it by the pandemic whilst maintaining its statutory duties and acting as the national lead for PPE distribution.</p> <p>Consequently, the arrangements and systems of control employed by the Authority have been shown to be robust and effective, which have allowed it to adapt to the significant challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.</p>	<p>HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection: Kent Fire and Rescue Service</p>

<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>	
<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>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>HMICFRS inspection report of KFRS, which rated the Authority as 'Good' across all three pillars (published 20/06/2019)</p> <p>In the HMICFRS press release following their inspection of KFRS, HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services Zoë Billingham stated:</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</p>	<p>KFRS HMICFRS Action Plan. KMFRA October 2019 (Item No: C1)</p>

<p>there is no requirement placed on the Authority to do this, the action plan has been implemented and is currently underway.</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>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>The Authority is not in this position, therefore this section is not relevant in this context.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<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. 	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>

<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 	<p>KMFRA approval for the suite of governance documents.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 Approval by KMFRA of draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2021/22 and draft MTFP 2021-25. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: B1) 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) Approval by KMFRA of the 10 Year Capital Expenditure Plan for 2021/22 to 2030/31. KMFRA February 2021 (Appendix 4 to Item No: B1) Financial update for 2020/21. KMFRA December 2020 (Item No: B3) Budget Outturn Report 2019/20 and Financial Update for 2020/21. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B3) External Auditor's Findings Report 2019/20. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B7) Internal Audit Mid-Year Progress Report (including audit of Financial Strategies). KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: C1)</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>Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2024 update Safety and Wellbeing Plan update. Outcomes of consultation. KMFRA February 2021 (Item No: C1)</p>

	KMFRA approval of draft Safety and Wellbeing Plan Update 2021. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: B4)
<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 has adopted and the means by which these principles are adhered to and evidenced.</p> <p>The Authority's Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed, updated and subsequently approved in July 2020 as part of both a general refresh and also to give consideration to the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code 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>KMFRA approval for the revised Code of Corporate Governance. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p> <p>Code of Corporate Governance. Approved by KMFRA General Purposes Committee. KMFRA November 2016 (Item No: B3)</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. It is aligned to the national ethical framework for fire and rescue authorities.</p>	<p>Members' Code of Conduct</p> <p>KFRS Code of Conduct for employees (a copy of this is available on request)</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 Policy</p> <p>Freedom of information and annual customer feedback update. KMFRA October 2020 (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 auditor's audit findings report for 2019/20. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B7)</p>
<p>7.4 Transparency 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 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.</p>	
<p>How to we meet these requirements?</p>	<p>Where do we get assurance from?</p>
<p>The Authority has a Transparency Policy</p>	<p>Update for KMFRA on amendment to Transparency Policy. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>We have a Publication and Retention Scheme, which is available to the public.</p>	<p>KMFRA approval for revisions to Publication and Retention Scheme. KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B4)</p>
<p>The Authority has a Data Protection and Information Security Policy</p>	<p>Update to Data Protection and Information Security Policy. KMFRA December 2019 (Item No: B4)</p>
<p>The Authority's Freedom of Information Policy, Subject Access Request Policy and associated guidance are published on the website.</p>	<p>Update for KMFRA on amendment to the Freedom of Information Policy. KMFRA July 2020 (Item No: B2)</p>
<p>Following the enactment of the GDPR in May 2018, (supplemented by the Data Protection Act 2018), an overall organisation-wide privacy statement was published. This is supported by a full set of privacy notices (currently 33 in total).</p>	<p>Privacy section of our website</p>
<p>We meet the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, plus the majority of the criteria recommended for publication.</p>	<p>Transparency reports of all transactions over £250 are regularly published on the website. The Authority's contracts register is published on the website</p>

	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 2021 (Item No: C1) Freedom of Information and Annual Customer Feedback Update. KMFRA October 2020 (Item No: C1)
We have a Community Right to Challenge Policy which forms part of the government's Open Public Services agenda.	Update for KMFRA on the Community Right to Challenge policy. KMFRA April 2019 (Item No: B4)

Joint Statement by the Chair of the Authority and the 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.

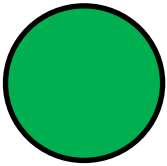
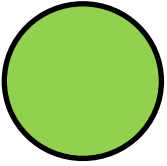
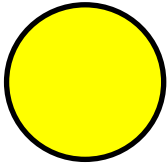
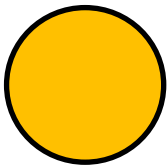
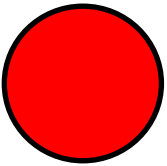
Nick Chard

Chair, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority

Date: 2021

Ann Millington

Chief Executive, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority

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>