

Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority Statement of Assurance 2013-14



“To provide a professional and well supported Fire and Rescue Service which reduces community risk in order to save lives, relieve suffering, protect property and the environment”





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1 Foreword

The delivery of public services is a matter of public interest, and how we perform is increasingly the subject of scrutiny. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service must be accountable for our performance and therefore open to evaluation by the community we serve. To enable this we are committed to making information about the Service transparent and easy to obtain, so that you can hold us to account.

This document sets out how you can find the information related to our Service and provides assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

With the content of this document and through the links to our website you will be able to find information relating to all aspects of the Fire and Rescue Service, our relationship with partners and how we work as part of the county council.

At the core of this document is the index of links that will take you to relevant documents where you can view information in detail. Several references are made to our Public Safety Plan (2011-2020), this document sets out the vision and priorities of the Service and is an excellent starting point in understanding the challenges we face and what we will do to meet them.

It is important that you help us to provide the best service that we can. We will continue to listen to what you think of your fire and rescue service and how we can improve, but we also want you to listen to us when we provide advice and information to increase your safety and that of those around you. We recognise that accidents happen, no matter how careful people are, but we are also sure that if we work together we can continue to reduce the occurrence of all types of accidents and incidents, limiting the impact when they do happen.

This is Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance and it is designed to reassure you that we have the appropriate arrangements in place to deliver our services safely and effectively. We are determined to deliver a quality fire and rescue service for the county, delivering beyond our statutory responsibilities. We are confident that we meet the required standards and believe that by working with the community we can continue to improve your safety.

Handwritten signature of Kay Hammond in black ink.

Kay Hammond

Associate Cabinet Member
for Fire and Police Services

Handwritten signature of Russell Pearson in black ink.

Russell Pearson

Chief Fire Officer



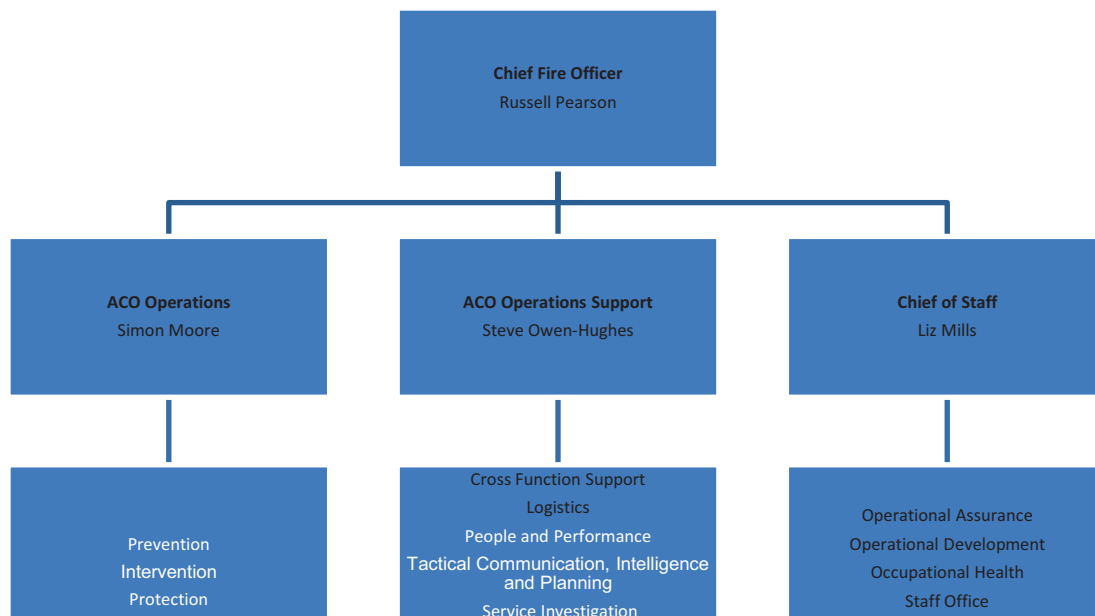
2 Overview of the Fire & Rescue Service

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service looks after a population of approximately 1,134,400 covering an area of 1,676 square kilometres that includes several large urban areas such as Guildford, Redhill and Woking, 103 kilometres of motorway, proximity to 2 major airports and over 200 identified sites that pose greater risk throughout the County.

As well as providing an emergency response service to the people of Surrey, we focus our efforts on education - raising awareness amongst the most vulnerable people in order to reduce suffering caused by fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies. We also work with partners in a number of areas.

Surrey's firefighters are trained to deal with a range of emergency situations, not just fires and road traffic collisions. These activities include working with other agencies to respond to widespread flooding and other water rescue incidents or dealing with emergencies that may involve hazardous or radioactive materials, for example. We also provide information and advice on community issues affecting public safety as well as enforcing fire safety legislation on buildings.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's Chief Officer Group consists of three senior managers with defined areas of responsibility, as indicated below, headed by the Chief Fire Officer.





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3 Information links and summaries

Surrey County Council is the Fire and Rescue Authority responsible for Surrey. Its duties and responsibilities are set out in legislation.

The Council has agreed a constitution which illustrates how it operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service has arrangements to provide public assurance in areas such as governance, financial management, risk management, transparency and accountability.

The Planning Framework

[Corporate Strategy](#)

The 'Confident in our Future' Corporate Strategy 2013-18 sets out our vision and objectives for the county over the next five years. It is a high-level document that tells our residents, Members, partners and staff about where we see the Council in five years time, what we want to have achieved by then and how we will get there.

[Directorate Strategy](#)

Each directorate has a strategy in place that describes how they will contribute to helping Surrey County Council become the most effective council in England. They set out the difference that the Directorate will make for Surrey by 2018 and the key priorities, objectives and targets that the directorate hopes to achieve over the course of the year.

[Service Plan](#)

This Plan sets out how we will help to deliver the Directorate strategy, what we will focus on and our priorities for the coming year.

[Public Safety Plan](#)

Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Public Safety Plan (PSP) is our long term, risk based business strategy which outlines our future aims and priorities. Complex, strategic change takes time, we have until 2020 to deliver the twelve specific outcomes described in the PSP. In the meantime, we have more detailed action plans to work towards.

[Station Plans](#)

These set the specific objectives and targets for the 25 individual Fire Stations within Surrey and contain some of the detail which will help deliver the Service strategies.

[Fire Legislation and Acts](#)

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is granted its powers under legislation which has replaced a number of acts of parliament dating back more than 60 years. Since 1961 a number of Fire Safety Acts and Regulations (Statutes) have been legislated which fire and rescue authorities have been given direct responsibility to enforce.



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[Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)

This Act came into effect on 1 October 2004. It clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:- promote fire safety, fight fires, protect people and property from fires, rescue people from road traffic incidents, deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding or terrorist attack and do other things to respond to the particular needs of their communities and the risks they face.

[Fire and Rescue Service \(Emergencies\)\(England\) Order 2007](#)

The Emergencies (England) Order 2007 outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities.

The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents, both within and outside the authority area, involving chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

The Order compliments the National Mutual Assistance Protocol, to which this Authority is a signatory. This requires fire authorities to make a reasonable response to requests for assistance in relation to any large-scale emergency outside of their area.

[The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is a statutory instrument, applicable only in England and Wales, which places the responsibility on individuals within an organisation to carry out risk assessments to identify, manage and reduce the risk of fire. It became law on 1 October 2006.

[Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

Fire and rescue authorities are 'category 1 responders' under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means we are subject to the full set of civil protection duties, including: assessing the risk of emergencies happening (ranging from widespread flooding to terrorist attacks) and using this to inform contingency planning, ensuring that emergency plans and business continuity management arrangements are in place.

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

The act is designed to reform and harmonise equality laws, to increase equality of opportunity and to have regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities. It is designed to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.



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Governance

Good corporate governance underpins confidence in public services and should be transparent to all stakeholders.

[Constitution of the Council](#)

Sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

[Code of Corporate Governance](#)

Sets out the mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing our corporate governance arrangements, enabling us to identify areas for improvement and take appropriate remedial action.

[Audit and Governance Committee](#)

The remit of this Committee includes responsibility for corporate governance, risk management, the statement of accounts as well as internal and external audits.

[Annual Governance Report](#)

An annual report that sets out the outcome of the external audit of our financial statements and securing value for money.

[Cabinet Member for Community Services](#)

Leads on the preparation of council policies and budgets.

[Associate Member for Fire and Police Services](#)

Leads on the preparation of council policies and budgets.

[Fire and Rescue Advisory Group](#)

Acts as an advisory group to the Associate Member for Fire and Police Services but does not have decision making powers.



Risk management, contingency planning and business continuity

[Surrey's Local Resilience Forum](#)

The Surrey Local Resilience Forum (LRF) brings together all agencies with a significant role to play in responding to and recovery from the effect of emergencies, and was formed to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Local Resilience Forum aims to plan and prepare for local incidents and large scale emergencies.

[Surrey Community Risk Register](#)

The Surrey Community Risk Register has been created to provide public information about the hazards that exist within the county and the control measures that are in place to mitigate their impact. The Register has been published in response to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and further information can be accessed through the UK Resilience web site on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-the-uks-ability-to-absorb-respond-to-and-recover-from-emergencies>

[Emergency Management & Business Continuity Policy](#)

This ensures that Surrey County Council has a planning process in place that encompasses anticipation, assessment, prevention and preparation to deal with rapid increased demands for services caused by emergencies.

[SFRS Contingency Planning](#)

SFRS has specific arrangements for contingency planning and has a contract in place with a private provider to supply trained staff in the event of workforce capacity issues.

[SFRS Business Continuity Policy](#)

SFRS has specific arrangements for business continuity that can be accredited to British Standards Institution ISO22301 – reviewed annually.

[Risk Management Strategy](#)

Arrangements for effectively managing risks. Corporate, directorate and SFRS risk registers identify potential risks and the actions to mitigate.

Please contact Surrey Fire and Rescue Service regarding access to risk registers.

[Community Risk Profile](#)

Sets out our understanding and analysis of risks in relation to SFRS activity, enabling us to plan our response to predicted level and type of incident (this link opens a document).

[Health and Safety](#)

The Health and Safety team ensure the Service takes due care for the health, safety and welfare of employees, service users and other persons who may be affected by its operations.



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[The Fairness and Respect Strategy](#)

The refreshed Fairness and Respect Strategy 2013-18 presents our objectives which show how we promote equality, tackle discrimination and meet our legal obligations as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. It sets out our priorities to 2018 and shows our commitment to deliver them in partnership with the organisations and public bodies best placed to improve services for Surrey residents and local communities.

Prevention

The prevention team is committed to:

- Reducing the likelihood of fires and road traffic collisions from occurring
- Minimising the loss of life and injury arising from fires and road traffic collisions
- Targeting our resources to people and communities most at risk
- Working with partners.

Protection

The protection team is committed to:

- Reducing the likelihood of fires and the preventable loss of life and injury occurring in non-domestic premises
- Reducing the adverse physical, environmental and financial effects from fires in non-domestic premises
- Reducing the occurrence of unwanted fire signals (automatic fire alarms)
- Enforcement of relevant fire protection legislation.

Working in Partnership

[Memoranda of Understanding](#)

The agreements between Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and various external bodies.

[Section 13 and 16 Agreements](#)

Within the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 there are requirements to have arrangements in place for mutual assistance with other (usually neighbouring) fire authorities and for the discharge of some other functions (section 6 to 9 and 11).

[Equality Impact Assessments](#)

This section contains a comprehensive list of Surrey Fire and Rescues Equality Impact Assessments.



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Reviewing Progress

By reviewing our progress and seeking feedback from the public and our peers we can ensure the quality of our services.

[Consultation](#)

Surrey County Council carefully considers what residents say when we consult you and use this, along with other information, to inform decisions.

[After the Incident: domestic survey & After the Incident: non-domestic survey](#)

Feedback may be requested after an incident. This shows the feedback received by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

[Residents survey](#)

The county council and Surrey Police jointly commission this survey to regularly check public satisfaction with public services, gather views on local issues affecting quality of life and track change over time.

[Family Group 4](#)

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is a member of a benchmarking group. Every quarter, each member authority submits data on service performance. This is then fed back in the form of a benchmarking report which enables us to see how we are performing compared to the other authorities.

[Service Delivery Report](#)

Performance is actively managed to ensure continuous improvement. The Service Delivery Report incorporates performance information on a number of key areas eg: Home Fire Safety Visits, and key performance indicators.

[Station Audit](#)

The station audit is one of the ways in which we can highlight areas of operational best practice and learning by introducing a standard and consistent approach to measuring performance. The outcomes are used to implement corrective action, to show evidence of improvement and to reduce/limit operational risk. For further information please contact Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

[Internal audit of fire stations](#)

Internal audits are an independent check of our services by SCC colleagues. An audit of Fire Stations was undertaken as part of the Council's Internal Audit Plan 2012/13. This was reported to Audit and Governance Committee September 2012.

[Accessing Information](#)

Find out about how to access information held by Surrey County Council, including the Fire and Rescue Service.



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[Freedom of Information](#)

Freedom of Information is aimed at modernising government and ensuring decision-making is more open and accountable.

[SFRS Freedom of Information requests](#)

Information is collected on the Freedom of Information request received by the service. It is a useful way of seeing if there are any themes or trends in the type of requests that are being made. This can be helpful in identifying information that may be made more open and transparent to the public.

[Comments, complaints and compliments](#)

Receiving feedback is welcome and helps to improve our service. Surrey County Council has a process in place designed to help you to make a comment on our service or register a compliment or complaint.

Information is collected on complaints and compliments so that improvements can be made. It is a useful way of seeing if there are any themes or trends in what people are telling us. This can then be used to make improvements.



4 Priorities, Vision and Working with Partners

Our mission is to provide a professional and well supported fire and rescue service which reduces community risk in order to save lives, relieve suffering, protect property and the environment.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's main aim is to make Surrey safer. Working with others, we want to make Surrey a safer place to live, work, travel and do business.

Our vision for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is:

- a high performing, low cost and valued organisation that contributes to making Surrey a safer place.
- an employer of choice, providing career opportunities with a motivated workforce who are competent and confident, healthy and safe, and who are representative of their community.
- managing our resources based on risk analysis, matching resources to demand and providing a balanced level of emergency response across Surrey.
- ensuring that we are sufficiently resilient to be able to provide an emergency response under all foreseeable circumstances.

For more information see our [Public Safety Plan](#)



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5 Responding to Incidents

Response Standards

To provide Surrey communities with the best possible service we have set standards to achieve for emergency response. This helps us to determine how many fire engines we need and where they are best located. It also allows us to measure our performance so that we can be accountable to you. We will focus on the emergencies where lives and property are most at risk; we feel these critical incidents are primarily building fires and vehicle collisions.



We aim to have one fire engine at critical incidents within **10 minutes** and a second one (where required) within **15 minutes** on **80%** of occasions.

For all other emergencies, we aim to have one fire engine on scene within **16 minutes** on **95%** of occasions.

For non-emergency incidents, we will attend when resources allow and will redeploy fire engines to emergency incidents where appropriate.

Incidents

As well as measuring our response times, we also measure and manage multiple performance indicators that provide key business intelligence and help us to target our prevention and protection activities.

In 2012/13

- We carried out over 3400 Home Fire Safety Visits, of which 75% were to households with vulnerable people
- We attended over 2000 fire incidents
- There were just over 500 incidents of arson with a further 111 deliberate fires set in vehicles
- 90% of accidental dwelling fires were confined to the room of origin
- The Service responded to 169 malicious false alarms
- Six people died and a further 97 were injured as a result of fires in Surrey.



6 Financial Performance and Governance

Where our money comes from and how much we spend

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is part of Surrey County Council and therefore receives its funding as part of the Council’s budget planning process.

The Fire Service’s total net controllable expenditure for the 2012/13 financial year was almost £35 million, as follows:

Surrey Fire and Rescue Outturn for 2012-13

	Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Controllable Costs			
Full-time firefighters	23,337	22,991	-346
Control Staff	1,024	1,165	141
Retained Firefighters	1,127	1,290	163
Other Staff	2,809	2,808	-1
Employee Costs	28,297	28,254	-43
Contribution to Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Fund	923	923	0
Equipment	90	56	-34
Catering	59	79	20
Clothing	355	397	42
Training	525	492	-33
Comms & IT	674	672	-2
Other supplies & services	166	262	96
Supplies & Services	2,792	2,881	89
Travel Expenses	137	152	15
Vehicle Running Costs	408	416	8
Vehicle Repairs & Maintenance	304	247	-57
Other Transport Costs	8	62	54
Transport	857	877	20



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Contingency Crewing	233	233	0
Retirement Pensions	12,103	12,116	13
Pension Lump Sums	1,731	1,744	13
Other Direct Service	149	65	-84
Direct Service	14,216	14,158	-58
Fire Pension Top-Up Grant	-7,599	-7,599	0
Other Government Grants	-573	-573	0
Other Income	-3,020	-3,002	18
Income	-11,192	-11,174	18
Net Controllable Expenditure	34,970	34,996	26
Corporate Costs			
Property		2,858	
Depreciation		1,696	
IMT		571	
Insurance		372	
Other Corporate Costs & Accounting Adjustments		505	
Total Overall Cost		40,998	

During 2006-07 Surrey County Council centralised the management and accounting for some types of expenditure. This included property, IT, training along with some other back office functions. This results in expenditure in those areas being incurred centrally then recharged to service heads as a corporate cost. The budget figures are not apportioned out to front line services as these costs are not reflected within the controllable outturn.



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Capital Spending

During the 2012-13 financial year we:

- purchased vehicles at a cost of £0.9 million
- undertook equipment and IT projects totalling £1 million
- carried out building works totalling £1.4 million

Financial governance

Each year the county council publishes sets of accounts for public consumption. These documents include the financial performance of the fire service over a given financial year which always runs from April 1 to March 31. Recent versions of these documents are available on our website (<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/your-council/council-tax-and-finance/statement-of-accounts>).

External audit

The county council has external auditors appointed by central government to assess its financial standing.

The Authority's appointed auditor, Grant Thornton, undertakes an annual audit of the financial standing of the County Council. They are required, under the Code of Audit Practice, to highlight all issues of significance arising from an audit, in the form of an annual audit opinion. Recent audit opinions can be found on our website ([link](#)).

Internal audit

The county council has an in-house internal auditor function to ensure their internal systems of control are appropriate. Reports and recommendations arising from these audits are taken to the Audit & Governance Committee and are referred to Cabinet when necessary.

Financial Transparency

The Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government Eric Pickles, has called upon local authorities - which includes fire and rescue services - to provide greater financial transparency by publishing financial information with effect from January 2011. The Service publishes monthly spend reports on our website ([link](#)). Here you can view purchases with a value of over £500.

How our financial performance compares nationally

All public bodies now have to make difficult decisions about priorities, and find more efficient and innovative ways of delivering their responsibilities.

The Audit Commission's **Value For Money** (VFM) profile toolkit provides a key reference source for auditors when they carry out local VFM audit work (each Service appoints an independent auditor to complete this work). For 2012/13, the VFM profiles provide a detailed data profile.



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Useful links

Further information about our financial management can be found by following the links below.

[Medium Term Financial Plan](#)

A comprehensive review of the council's financial position for the current year, and an overview of prospects for the next four years.

[Pay](#)

This section covers a range of documents relating to the transparency relating to pay. Included are the Pay Policy Statement, Reward Policy, Equal Pay Statement and details of council posts paid over £58,200



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"I certify that the Statement of Assurance gives a true and fair view of the financial, governance and operational arrangements that Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority had in place for 2013/14. I am satisfied that, in all significant respects, Surrey fire and rescue authority ensured that its business was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively."

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Helyn Clack'.

Helyn Clack

Cabinet Member for Community Services

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