SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES DECISIONS

DATE: **15 SEPTEMBER 2020**

LEAD OFFICER: **STEVE OWEN-HUGHES, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND EMERGENCIES**

SUBJECT: **SURREY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

There is a requirement in the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England that fire and rescue authorities publish an annual Statement of Assurance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The Cabinet Member approves the annual Surrey Fire & Rescue Service Statement of Assurance for publication.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The requirement for an annual Statement of Assurance is set out in the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

DETAILS:

Statement of Assurance

1. As set out in the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, fire and rescue authorities must provide an annual assurance of financial, governance and operational matters, to ensure the appropriate arrangements are in place. There must also be due regard shown to the expectations set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plan and the requirements included in the Framework.

2. Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority is accountable for the performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. To enable this, there is a commitment to making information about Surrey Fire and Rescue Service transparent and easy to obtain and therefore the aim of the document is to provide an easy and accessible way for communities, government, local authorities and partners to make a valid assessment of their local fire and rescue authority's performance.

3. The Statement of Assurance sets out how to find information relating to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and provides assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. The document also outlines how to find out more about our relationship with partners and how the Service works as

part of Surrey County Council. Information can be viewed in detail via a number of links to relevant documents.

4. The document references the Making Surrey Safer plan 2020 – 2023 which is the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), a framework which sets out the vision and priorities of the Service.

CONSULTATION:

5. The Statement of Assurance has been shared with the Cabinet Member for Communities

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

6. Without a published Statement of Assurance, the fire and rescue authority would not meet the requirement set out in the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. There may be a risk that Surrey Fire and Rescue Service would not be seen to be transparent and that information would not be accessible.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

7. The Statement of Assurance does not have any direct financial implications; however, it outlines the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and provides financial assurance.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

8. The Statement of Assurance sets out the governance and operational arrangements within which Surrey Fire and Rescue Service operates. The section 151 officer confirms that the Statement of Assurance is a true reflection of these arrangements, and that there are no direct business issues, risks or financial implications associated with the publication of this statement.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

9. The publication of an annual Statement of Assurance is requirement of the updated Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (May 2018).

10. The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the Statement on behalf of the Council; the fire authority for its area under Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Equalities and Diversity

11. There are no equality implications associated with the content of this report. One of the principal aims of the Statement of Assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, public sector authorities and partners may make a valid assessment of our performance. The information presented in the report will be reviewed continuously to ensure that it reflects and adheres to any changes or developments in equalities legislation.

12. The Statement of Assurance is an overall assurance document and as such provides links to a comprehensive list of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's equality impact assessments and to the Community Risk Profile. It also links to our Equality Impact Assessments, outlining Surrey County Council's objectives in promoting equality, tackling discrimination and meeting its legal obligations.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

13. The Statement of Assurance will be made available on Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's webpages.

14. The Statement of Assurance will continue to be refreshed and kept up to date to maintain the transparency of data.

Contact Officer:
Sarah Kershaw
Chief of Staff
020 854 17102

Consulted:
Cabinet Member for Communities

Annexes:
Annex A – Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance

Sources/background papers:
- Guidance on statements of assurance for fire and rescue authorities in England (DCLG, May 2013)

This page is intentionally left blank