



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

# Statement of Assurance

2023-24



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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# Foreword

The Statement of Assurance is an annual report designed to provide assurance to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire that we are doing everything we can to respond to emergencies when our communities need us, in providing effective and efficient prevention and protection services.

The Statement follows national guidance set out in the 2018 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, which requires Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide assurance to our community and to Government on governance, financial and operational matters. It also needs to have due regard to the expectations set out in the National Framework and the Authority's own Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

The Statement covers the year up to 31 March 2024 and highlights some of the work we are doing to drive excellence across our whole Service, and signposts readers to other documents and reports where more detail can be found. It sits alongside our strategies, plans, policies and procedures including the CRMP, the Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan, the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Statement of Accounts. All documents can be viewed on the [Publications](#) page of the Service website.

As Chairman of the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer, we are confident that our governance, financial and operational assurance arrangements continue to be effective and appropriate in supporting our aim to deliver our services to the best of our abilities for the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

We trust that readers will also be assured that we have conducted our business in accordance with the law and proper standards and have used our public funding efficiently, effectively and economically.



**Councillor Kit Taylor**  
*Chairman of the Fire Authority*



**Jonathon Pryce**  
*Chief Fire Officer/  
Chief Executive*

# Our Service in 2023-24

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) provides prevention, protection and emergency response services across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The two counties cover a large, mostly rural area of around 1,500 square miles (3,920 square kilometres) and is home to 790,700 people, three-quarters of whom live in Worcestershire.

To cover this very large area, we organise our services around three Districts – North, South and West – which provides a balanced response to community risk.

## Core Purpose

**Keeping people safe from fire and other risks – responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies**



**696 (764 roles)**  
Staff Members



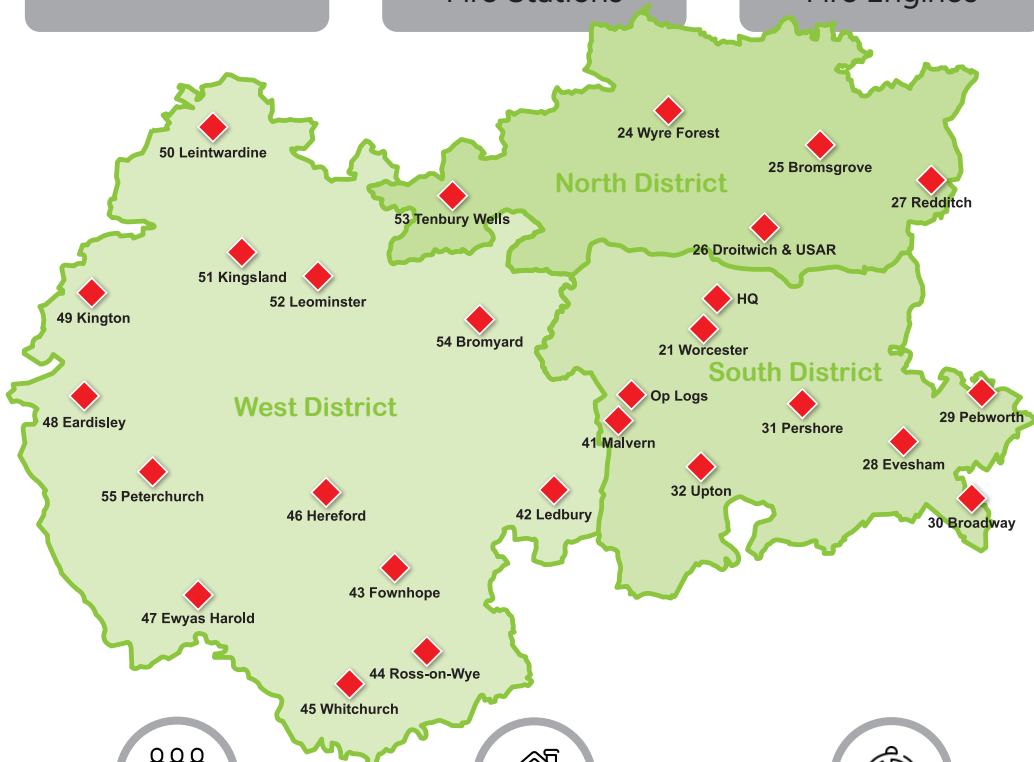
**25**  
Fire Stations



**41\*\*\***  
Fire Engines



**£40.3 Million**  
Budget



**4,737**  
Road length  
in Miles



**798,000\***  
Population



**342,800\***  
Households



**392,000**  
Area in Hectares



**42,260\*\***  
Businesses

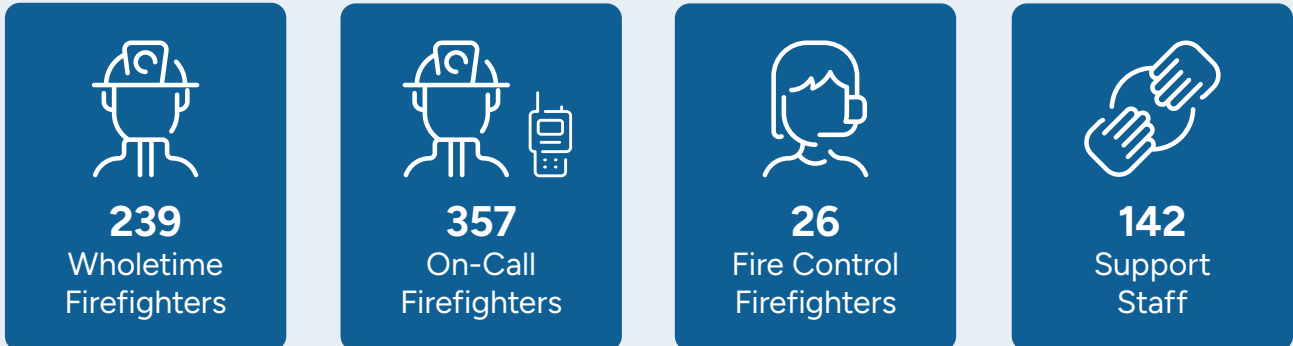
\*Census 2021

\*\*Office for National Statistics 2023-24

\*\*\*As at 31 March 2024

# Our People

## Staff Structure



The Service is led by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive with the support of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), made up of Directors and Assistant Directors. The Service employs 696 full-time and part-time members of staff, who work in 764 roles. Firefighters make up approximately 80% of the workforce, assisted by professional teams providing support and enabling services such as financial, human resources and legal services. The 26 Fire Control Firefighters are the frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. There are also 19 active volunteers supporting community safety activities.

## Gender Balance

This is an improvement from 19% female - 81% male ratio recorded in March 2023.



**20%**



**80%**

## Ethnic Minority Representation

Ethnic minority representation in the Service shows a 1% decrease from March 2023.



**10%**

Within the community\*



**5%**

Within the Service

## Staff Sickness

**9.21** days/shifts were lost per person in 2023- 24, a decrease of 28.9% compared with 2022-23.



\*Census 2021

# Our Purpose

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission represents our commitment to putting the community first, keeping people safe from fire and other risks and protecting the most vulnerable. They underpin everything we do, which benefits us as individuals, the whole Service and everyone in the communities we serve. You can find out more on our [Service website](#).

Purpose

## Why we are here

Keeping people safe from fire and other risks. Responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.

Vision

## What we want to do

Saving More Lives: Building on our successes to continue to make a difference, improve lives and help secure resilient communities.

Mission

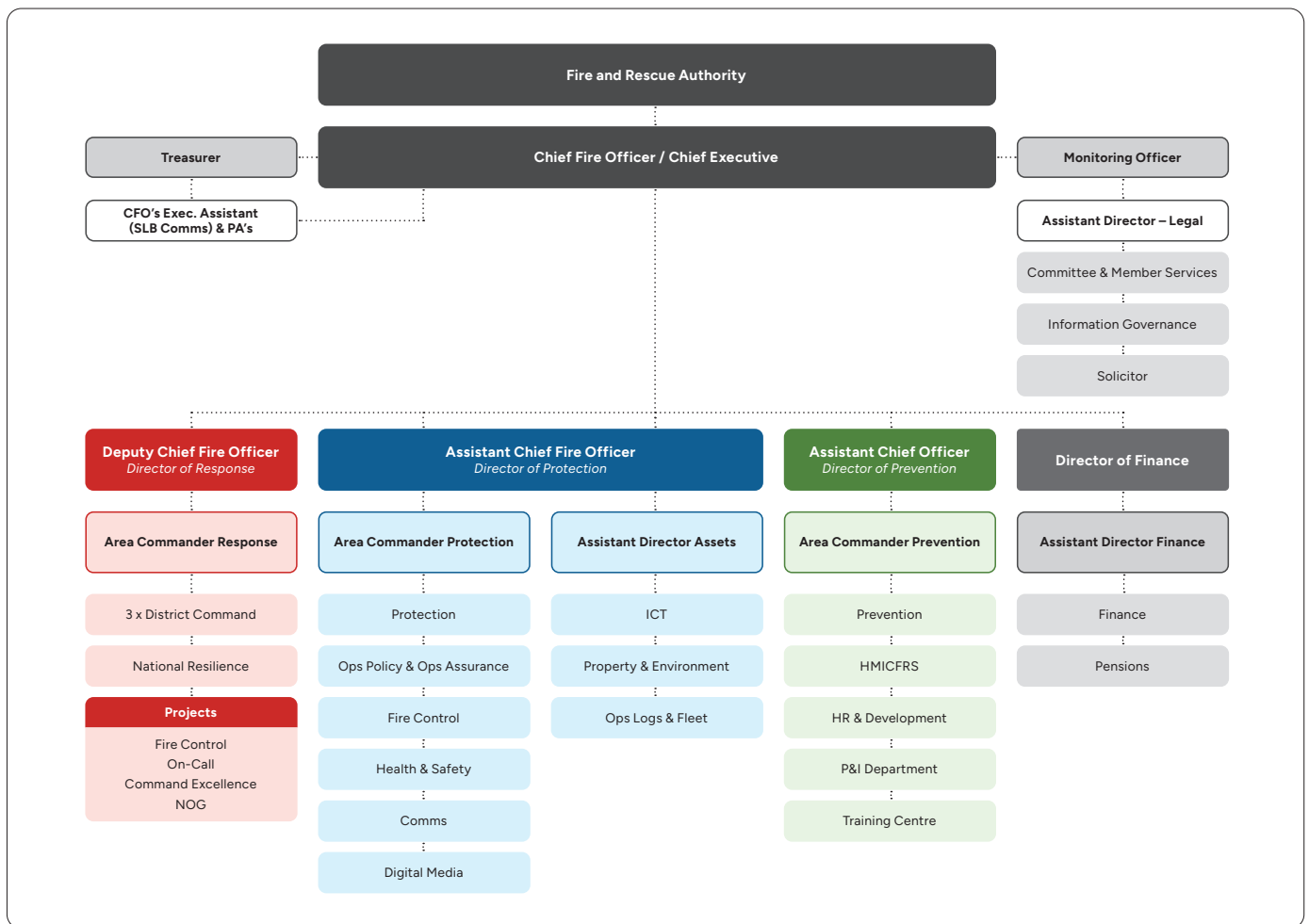
## What we do every day

As one professional team we will work hard every day to deliver high quality, sustainable services to our communities.



# Service Structure

Over the year, we made a number of small but significant adjustments to our structure. The revised structure reflects the important focus on our three primary functions: Response, Protection and Prevention. Each of these functions has a dedicated Director with a clear line of responsibility and accountability to lead and deliver their respective Core Strategies. The structure helps to embed the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services and also aligns with the way HMICFRS inspect and assess the Service. You can find more about each Department on the [Service website](#).



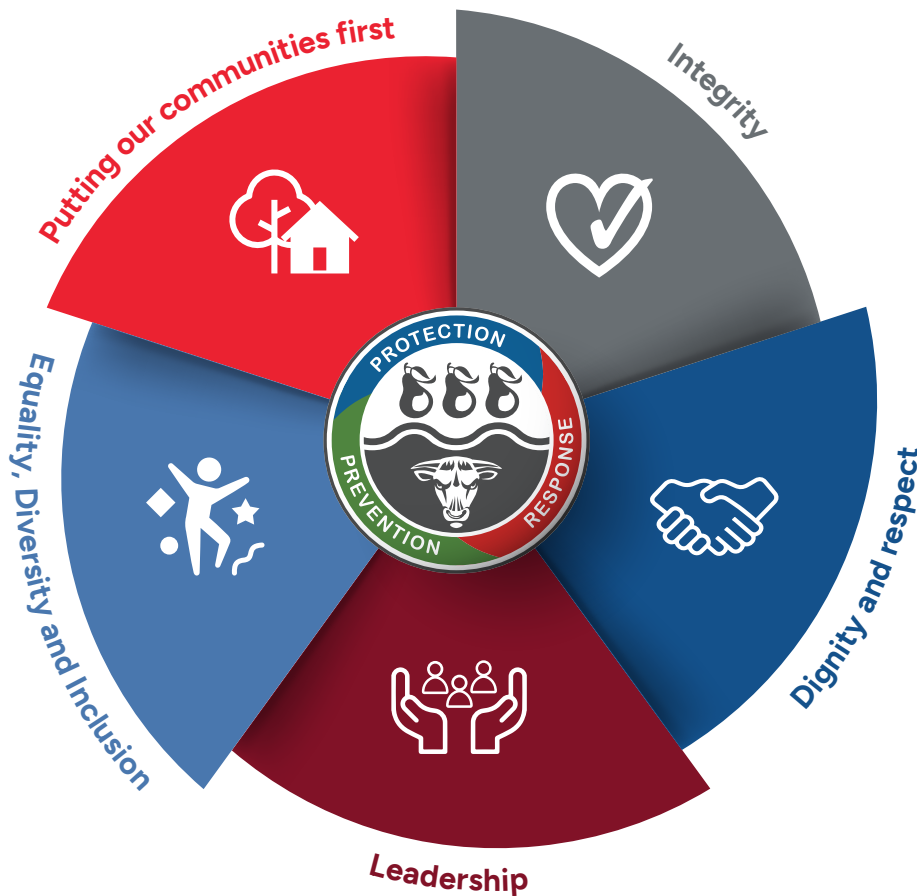
# Our Ethical Principles



NFCC  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council



Over the year, we have continued to embed the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England. Jointly developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Code consists of five clear ethics principles, which provide the basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. By adopting the Code as our guiding set of values, we are committed to championing ethical behaviours that help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.



## Putting our communities first



We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

## Integrity



We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

## Dignity and respect



We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

## Leadership



As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.



# Our Work in 2023-24

During 2023-24, our 24/7 emergency response service dealt with fires, road traffic collisions, flooding and many other emergencies. This year, we saw a 2% decrease in the overall number of incidents that we attended, falling from 8,137 in 2022-23 to 8,006 in 2023-24. This can largely be attributed to there not being a record-breaking summer heatwave in 2023 as there was in 2022 so there was a 26% decrease in the number of fires we attended, resulting from a 48% decrease in outdoor fires. A 27% increase in flooding incidents during the year was the principal reason for the number of Special Service incidents attended, rising by 7%. We also saw a 6% increase in False Alarm calls attended.

## Focus on Operational and Organisational Excellence

Our aim is to drive excellence in ourselves and in everything we do, so that we can deliver a highly professional service and maintain high standards.

Over the year, we continued to focus on driving excellence throughout the Service. We have featured this in our [Annual Service Review 2023-24](#), but some examples are also worth noting here:

### Response

- In responding to emergencies and other incidents, we aim to ensure that we are making the best use of our available resources and funding, to assure our communities that we are providing the most effective service possible across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Our Response Strategy's core foundations are availability, competence and intelligence, which means that we are focused on having the right assets available, at the right time with effective firefighters that have access to accurate, relevant and timely operational risk information.

- We adopted the Attendance Performance Measure (APM) during 2023, which provides an evidence base to measure how quickly and effectively we are arriving on scene. Consolidating the data collected over the first year and continually monitoring this information will inform areas of best practice and allow opportunities to improve where attendance falls outside the expected response times. Early arrival at incidents minimizes the impact on our communities, businesses and the environment and also allows us to deal with incidents through a safer and more effective use of firefighting and rescue tactics.

### Protection

- Departmental Fire Safety Inspectors who are Level 4 qualified, inspected over 1,151 complex premises in 2023-24 (exceeding the target of 1,000) to ensure fire safety compliance. In addition, operational managers are trained to Level 3 Fire Safety Certificate standard to enable them to inspect less complex premises. In 2023-24 an additional 355 Fire Safety inspections were carried out by operational crews. Ambitious incremental targets have been set over a three-year period increasing this further from 350 in 2023-24 to 1,000 in 2026-27.

### Prevention

- We have continued to develop all areas of our Prevention services, including the launch of the new delivery model for the Service's road safety educational package 'Your Impact'. This road safety scheme is aimed at reducing death and serious injury among road users in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- The number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) has continued to increase and 7,660 visits were completed with 93% of

these completed in the homes of those individuals who had a vulnerability or risk factors identified. This is an increase of 1,141 visits from the previous year.

- In line with the NFCC Person-Centred Framework, during the year, the Service also introduced a HFSV Evaluation process, the aim of this being to identify if individuals have changed their behavior as a result of the advice given during a HFSV.

## Workforce

- Everything we do is underpinned by the national Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. This ensures that the services we deliver are inclusive, professional and maintain the trust and confidence placed in us by our communities.
- Our Culture and Ethics Steering Group, made up of a cross-section of staff, continues to support the Service on its cultural journey. The group has developed an Ethical Dilemma Workshop toolkit to promote the Code and to help create a space where teams can discuss how they put the principles of the Code into practice.
- As a Service, we support our workforce to be empowered to do what's right, make responsible decisions and create a safe environment to speak up. We have



refreshed our Code of Conduct to clearly set out our professional standards to support a positive working culture and continuously improve the quality of our service to the public.

- Feedback from staff on the externally provided Service-wide inclusion training programme has been extremely positive. The face-to-face input provides an opportunity to actively seek out and consider different views and perspectives, fully embracing difference so we can strive to continue to be an inclusive, safe place to work where all staff feel valued, supported and able to thrive.

## Value for Money

- Planning applications for a new Hereford Fire Station have been granted as well as the new Strategic Training Facility at Leominster. Redditch is into the final stages of the build phase and Broadway Station is now operational after an official opening in the summer of 2024.
- In line with the Environmental Sustainability Plan a waste recycling provision has been rolled out to every Service location. Electrical charging points have been introduced at multiple locations to support the first nine electric vehicles which are now being used by support staff in our Protection and Prevention teams. We will continue to develop the infrastructure to enable the procurement of additional electric vehicles in line with the fleet replacement programme.
- To support the integration of multiple digital solutions that have been embedded within the Service, tablet technology has been provided to all operational staff to improve productivity, efficiency and the delivery of the three core strategies (Prevention, Protection, Response).

# Governance Assurance

Making sure our governance arrangements are delivering our services effectively and efficiently



The Service's governing body is Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority. It is made up of 25 local councillors, 6 from Herefordshire Council and 19 from Worcestershire County Council. The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner may also attend in a non-voting capacity.

## The Authority:

- Makes sure the Service carries out its duties in relation to fire prevention, fire safety, firefighting and rescues, including road traffic collisions and other emergencies such as flooding, as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Makes sure due regard is given to the terms and requirements set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, as updated in 2018
- Sets the budget and approves the Service's overall direction
- Appoints the Chief Fire Officer and makes sure the Service has the right people, equipment and training to deliver their services effectively and efficiently in the best interests of the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The Authority normally meets four times a year and is supported by three main committees. Most meetings are held in public.

Full details of the Authority, committees, meetings, reports and decisions can be found on [Fire Authority](#) page of the Service website.

The Authority has a responsibility to ensure its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. This is supported by a [Code of Corporate Governance](#) setting out how good governance will be promoted.

The main elements of the governance framework are:

- [Constitution](#) – defines the roles and responsibilities of the Authority, Committees, Members and Officers;
- [Audit and Standards Committee](#) – reviews arrangements for identifying and managing the Authority's business risks and the approval of policies;
- **Monitoring Officer** – provides advice on the scope of powers and responsibilities of the Authority, and has a statutory duty to ensure lawfulness and fairness of decision making;
- **Director of Finance (Treasurer)** – ensures the sound administration of the financial affairs of the Authority as required by the statutory duties under the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Account and Audit (England) Regulations 2015;
- **Code of Conduct** – including the Ten General Principles of Public Life.

Each year, the Authority prepares an Annual Governance Statement setting out how it meets its responsibilities. The [2023-24 Annual Governance Statement](#) provides assurance in relation to seven Core Principles:

- A.** Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law;
- B.** Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
- C.** Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits;
- D.** Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
- E.** Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
- F.** Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
- G.** Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The Annual Governance Statement is prepared in accordance with the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016' published by CIPFA/SOLACE. As part of this, the Audit & Standards Committee considers reviews of corporate governance arrangements to ensure that the Authority's governance arrangements are working correctly and are relevant to the current environment.

No significant governance issues have been identified at this time and the Annual Governance Statement was signed off by the Chairman of the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive on 23 April 2023.

## **Audit**

During the year, the Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service (WAISS) carried out a number of audits in relation to Corporate Governance and System/Management Arrangements. These audits help to ensure our systems and controls are adequate, effective and functioning correctly.

The audits examined the Training Centre Droitwich, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Estates, ICT, Stores & Equipment and Fleet. These audits found no limited or below assurance areas and no high priority recommendations were made. The [Internal Audit Annual Report 2023-24](#) is available on the Service website for further information.

## **Information Governance**

The Service collects and maintains information and data to enable us to carry out our statutory duties. The Information Governance service within the Legal Services team ensures information is kept secure and is used fairly and properly. The [Your Right to Know](#) page of the Service website provides more information, including links to the Freedom of Information and Data Protection acts.

# Financial Assurance

Ensuring our financial arrangements are in order and providing good value for money



The Fire Authority is responsible for ensuring public money is properly accounted for and used efficiently and effectively. To ensure that sound financial management policies are in place, the Authority adheres to and implements the provisions of the Financial Regulations.

The Regulations cover all aspects of financial management and planning, the management of risks and resources, financial systems and processes, arrangements for joint working and delegation limits.

Assurance is provided through an Annual Statement of Accounts. The Statement is designed to provide a true and fair view of the financial position, including a statement of income and expenditure. In preparing the Statement, the Treasurer follows the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.

It was intended that the Authority's draft unaudited 2023-24 Statement of Accounts would be available on our website by 31 May 2024. However, due to the late completion of the audit of the [Statement of Accounts 2022-23](#) and information still being outstanding from external organisations, it has not been possible to achieve this date. The audit has now been completed by Grant Thornton UK LLP (external auditors) and confirmation has been given that the accounting treatment adopted by the Authority is correct. However, a national issue surrounding accounting for pensions has emerged, which could impact on the figures in the financial statements.

As soon as all relevant information is available to the Authority, the accounts will be completed and a revised target date for the Authority's draft, unaudited 2023-24 Statement of Accounts will be available on the Service's [Finance](#) webpage.

## Audit

The Fire Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources is subject to internal and external audit by Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service and Grant Thornton UK LLP respectively.

Our Internal Auditor worked with the external auditor to help to avoid duplication of effort, provide adequate coverage for the 2023/24 financial year so that an internal audit opinion can be reached and support external audit by carrying out reviews in support of the accounts opinion work. The internal audit covered the core financial areas of Accountancy and Finance Systems: Main Ledger (including budgetary control and bank receipts), Creditors (accounts payable), Debtors (accounts receivable) and Payroll and Pensions. All areas examined provided assurance, including full assurance for three core financial areas, and there were no limited or below assurance areas reported.

The Authority is satisfied that its financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement of the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. In addition, the key financial systems are continually reviewed by the Internal Auditor. There were no major weaknesses identified in the 2023-24 financial year.

## **Budget**

Each year, the Authority approves a Medium-Term Financial Plan, which sets out the resources needed to deliver our services and agrees annual budgets. Budget Monitoring reports have been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee throughout the year and have shown that the Authority's finances continue to be well controlled. The increased cost of pay settlements in 2023/24 is likely to lead to budget pressures in the medium term.

However, these are well understood and a report with options for future efficiencies will be brought forward for consideration at a future date.

The budget for 2023-24 was £40.3 million and a summary of how it was spent is included in the [Annual Service Review 2023-24](#). The annual cost to the average Council Tax Band D household was £94.40 or less than 26 pence per day. Full details of the budget and [Council Tax](#) are available on the Service website.

## **Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2023-24**

Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework, each stand-alone Fire Authority was required to publish and submit to the Home Office an Efficiency and Productivity Plan. As part of the joint Home Office/Local Government Association/NFCC submission to the last Comprehensive Spending Review, the fire and rescue sector committed to providing 2% efficiencies in non-pay budgets and a 3% increase in Wholetime Firefighter productivity.

The Efficiency and Productivity Plan sets out the ongoing financial challenge currently faced by the Authority and illustrates the recent transformation savings that have been delivered by the Service. Key areas covered in the Plan include the Budget & Medium-Term Financial Plan, Reserves, Precept, Collaboration, Asset Management & Investment in Technology, Resourcing, Efficiency and Productivity. [The Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2023-24](#) is available on the Service website.

## **Transparency**

In addition to ensuring prudent financial management, the Authority is committed to promoting openness and accountability in local decision making, public spending and democratic processes. As part of this, it has adopted a [Transparency Code of Practice](#), which includes details of payments for goods and services to external bodies and suppliers above £250, details of salaries, allowances and expenses paid to staff and Members.

# Operational Assurance

Organising our services to make sure risks are well understood and we have the right resources in place to tackle them effectively and safely.



Within the statutory responsibilities set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and other strategic legislation and guidance, we organise our services to make sure our Firefighters and communities are kept as safe as possible.

We aim to provide the best training and equipment for our Firefighters to do their jobs safely and ensure they have the best incident command and operational leadership available. We continually assess the level of risk across the two counties and use this to help organise how we target our prevention and protection services.

Our overall plans are set out in the [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25](#) (CRMP) and our Core Strategies; [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#). Together, they represent our four-year strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe. Supporting them are a host of enabling strategies and plans, including the [People Strategy](#) and the annual Medium-Term Finance Plan. The strategies and plans are available on the Service website, and the following diagram highlights the main areas of focus for our work.



In the [Annual Service Plan 2023-24](#), we set out a number of objectives we wanted to achieve over the year. The objectives were designed to provide a priority focus on what we were going to do in 2023-24 towards delivering our Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 and our Response, Protection and Prevention Core Strategies.

The [Annual Service Review 2023-24](#) sets out how we achieved these objectives, which covered a wide range of operational and organisational priority actions for the year.

### **Operational Audits**

The Service continued its programme of Operational Assurance audits throughout the year. These audits help to ensure that all operational staff maintain their skills, knowledge and competence in carrying out their critical roles. It covers the three main areas of assurance: preparedness, response and learning.

There are procedures in place to ensure that the maintenance of up-to-date Competence Training Records (CTR) including the completion of safety critical training courses. Key areas covered during the year were Practical Skills audits ensuring both technical knowledge and practical awareness of guidance and operating procedures in areas such as using breathing apparatus, fire behaviour, trauma, high-rise incidents, water rescue, ladders and pumping procedures.

There is also an ongoing programme of Station Assurance audits. These audits cover a wide range of areas: CTR, fire control, health & safety, information governance, intel, operational logistics and fleet, operational policy, personnel management, prevention, protection and station records. They also ensure the completion of Active Incident Monitoring and development plans. Districts also carry out station exercises, often with neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services, in

areas such as Incident Command and Road Traffic Collision incidents.

Further operational learning is gained through post-incident debriefs, maintaining knowledge of National Operational Guidance (NOG) and learning from safety events and exercises through National Operational Learning (NOL) and Joint Organisational Learning (JOL). These often cover major operations with Ambulance, Police, other Fire and Rescue Services and other partners in a range of exercises such as counter terrorism, rail incidents, high-rise incidents and carbon monoxide incidents.

Findings continue to be very positive in relation to practical and technical abilities and in competencies demonstrated and any outstanding actions required are noted and followed up.

### **Risk Management Framework**

The Service's Risk Management Framework is designed to ensure that the Authority identifies strategic risks and applies the most appropriate and cost-effective control mechanisms to manage those risks wherever possible. It also provides a robust audit trail showing how the Service has considered and mitigated those risks, should an issue be subject to scrutiny.

The Service maintains a Strategic Risk Register (SRR) as an overarching document highlighting the highest impact risks to the Service. Risks are continually monitored and reviewed by departments in their departmental risk registers. Most identified risks can be eliminated or reduced through control measures, but higher or more prevalent risks may be elevated to the SRR.

Where appropriate, the SRR may also incorporate wider risks identified at a national level through the UK's National Security and Risk Assessment and at a regional level through the Community Risk Register prepared by the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum, of which the Service is a member.



# Directory of Assurance Documents

## Governance

- [Annual Governance Statement 2023-24](#)

Other key governance documents can be found by following the links on the [Transparency Code of Practice](#) page of the Service website.

Key legislation includes:

- [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
- [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)
- [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018](#)
- [Local Government Act 1999](#)
- [Localism Act 2011](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1988](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022](#)
- [Building Safety Act 2022](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)

## Finance

- [Annual Statement of Accounts 2022-23](#)
- [Link to previous Statements of Account](#)
- [Budget and Precept 2024-25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan, Precept Appendices 1-9, Appendix 8 Statement of Prudential Indicators](#)
- Internal Audit Annual Report 2023-24 - to be published when available.
- [Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2023-24](#)

Other key finance documents can be found by following links on the [Your Right To Know page](#) of the Service website.

Other legislation and guidance includes:

- [Local Government Finance Act 1988](#)
- [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#)
- [Local Government Transparency Code 2015](#)
- [Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#)
- [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#)
- [Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountability \(CIPFA\) Codes of Practice](#)

## Operations

The Fire Authority publishes reports on all its services, including the overall strategy, operational performance, policies and financial plans. Key documents can be found on the [Publications page](#) of the Service website and through the [Publication Scheme](#).

Links include:

- [Annual Service Review 2023-24](#) and the [Annual Service Plan 2024-25](#)
- [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Cultural Audit 2023](#)
- [Cultural Statement of Intent 2024](#)

The Service website also provides a wide range of information about the Fire Authority and the services delivered by the Fire and Rescue Service. The [Home page](#) will take you to all the links including essential Safety and Advice information and guidance, News and Events and recruitment opportunities through our Join Us page.

# Contact us

We always welcome any views or comments on our reports and plans, so if you want to contact us about any issues, please visit our website at [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk) where you will find full contact details along with links to further information about our services and activities.

If you have any general enquiries, please call 0345 122 4454 or email us at [info@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:info@hwfire.org.uk).

You can also follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook @hwfire

Alternatively, you can write to us at:  
Hereford & Worcester FRS Headquarters  
Hindlip Park  
Worcester  
WR3 8SP

**If you would like this information in an alternative language or format such as large print or audio, please contact us on 0345 122 4454**

## Your right to know: Access to information

A great deal of information on the Service is available in the public domain through our Publications Scheme and Transparency links on the Service website. If you need assistance, Service staff will help you to obtain the information you want, unless disclosure would be against the law.

You have a right to request information under the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#), which gives you a general right of access to recorded information held by the Service. The Act is designed to ensure greater accountability, as well as to promote a more open culture. If you want to know what personal information is held about you, you can make a request under the [Data Protection Act 1998](#). To find out more, please click on the [Access to Information](#) link.



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

