

Due to the current heightened security level at all our premises, Members are reminded to wear their identity badges whilst attending meetings. Any visitors must produce photographic identification at Reception.

## **FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY SUMMONS**

### **SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

You are required to attend a meeting of the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee to be held on:

**Monday, 18 September 2023 at 1030 hours**

**In person at South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters,  
Forest View Business Park, Llantrisant, CF72 8LX**

**or**

**Remotely via Microsoft Teams - <https://bit.ly/FAPM-18-09-23>**

**Please ensure you join the meeting 15 minutes prior to meeting time**

**Any issues please contact  
01443 232000 and ask for Member Services**

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.

3. Chairperson's Announcements

- |    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 4. | To receive the minutes of;   |   |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance, Audit &amp; Performance Management Committee held on 24 July 2023</li> </ul> | 5 |

#### **REPORTS FOR DECISION**

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| 5. | Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget Update Report | 11 |
| 6. | Revenue Monitoring Report 2023/24                               | 41 |
| 7. | Capital Monitoring Report 2023/24                               | 57 |
| 8. | 2022/2023 Annual Treasury Management Review                     | 69 |

#### **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

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| 9.  | Internal Audit Progress Report & Audit Action Update                                   | 79  |
| 10. | Performance Monitoring Report  | 153 |
| 11. | Health Check of Priority Actions and Q1 progress against the Statutory PI's            | 173 |
| 12. | Forward Work Programme for Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee 2023/2024 | 199 |
| 13. | To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent (Part 1 or 2)      | 205 |

Signature of Monitoring Officer:



## MEMBERSHIP

**Councillors:**

J	Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
P	Ford	Bridgend
C	Wright	Caerphilly
B	Proctor	Cardiff
D	Isaac	Merthyr Tydfil
M	Powell	Monmouthshire
M	Al Nuaimi	Newport
G	Williams	Rhondda Cynon Taf
S	Evans	Torfaen
I	Buckley	Vale of Glamorgan

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 24 JULY 2023 AT  
IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

**1. PRESENT:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Left</b>
S Evans (Chair)	Torfaen
I Buckley	Vale of Glamorgan
D Isaac	Merthyr Tydfil
C Wright	Caerphilly
M Powell	Monmouthshire
P Ford	Bridgend

**APOLOGIES:**

J Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
G Williams	Rhondda Cynon Taff

**ABSENT:**

M Al Nuaimi	Newport
B Proctor	Cardiff

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Director of Corporate Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, AM Dean Loader – Head of Service Delivery, Mrs L Mullan – Temp Head of Finance, Procurement & Property, Mr S Gourlay – TIAA Internal Auditor, Mr N Selwyn – Audit Wales Officer, Ms G Gillett – Audit Wales Officer, Mr C Rigby – Audit Wales Officer, Mr C Rees – Audit Wales Officer

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair declared a personal interest in items which related to planning applications for New Inn Fire Station.

**3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**3.1 Audit Wales**

The Chairman welcomed Ms Gillian Gillet, Mr Nick Selwyn, Mr Charles Rigby and Mr Carwyn Rees from Audit Wales who will be presenting their reports on the agenda. It is Mr Selwyn's last meeting as he is due to retire

at the end of the month, thanks were recorded to Mr Selwyn for the work he has done with the Service and Members wished him all the very best for a happy retirement.

### **3.2 New Inn Station**

The Chairman along with Councillors Best, Councillor Holmes and Councillor Isaac visited New Inn station with Officers on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> June. It was an informative visit where they toured the existing station and witnessed the pressing need for investment. New Inn Fire Station was officially opened in June 1954 and has had various property work undertaken since, although it is at the end of its useful life and a new fire station is required. Despite best efforts, the Service have been unable to find a suitable new site and have instead approved capital budget to demolish and construct on the existing site. They received an excellent presentation on the proposed design for the new net zero station which will be constructed in the next two years. They also had the opportunity to visit the temporary site where the station and personnel will be relocated to whilst construction takes place. Members look forward to seeing the progress of this site and we will receive regular updates at this committee through the capital monitoring reports. A link to the redevelopment plans website will be shared with Members shortly after this meeting.

## **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Finance, Audit & Performance Management meeting held on Monday 13 March 2023, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

## **5. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

### **5.1 REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT 2022/2023**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement & Property informed Members that subject to the external audit process the report outlined the revenue outturn position for the financial year end 2022/2023 and the resultant impact on reserves.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following a question and answer session on issues relating to a vacant post, Members agreed the outturn position and consequent transfer to usable reserves of the revenue surplus.

## **5.2 CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT 2022/2023**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement and Property informed Members that the presented report provided the capital outturn position for the year ended 31 March 2023, the financing arrangements and the budget slippage required to complete capital schemes in 2023/2024.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

The Service has spent £12,000 on concept of designs for Monmouth station, as this will be a co-location site once the final account is drawn up the other two partners Agencies will be charged appropriately. Structural engineers have looked at the viability for solar panels on the roofs at Barry and Headquarters. HQ may require a new roof within the next two years so this has been paused for now to look at costings. Members agreed to note the report and approved the budget slippage as detailed in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

## **6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **6.1 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT & AUDIT ACTION UPDATE**

The TIAA Internal Auditor presented a report which updated Members upon the progress being made against the Internal Audit Plan 2022/2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following a question and answer session, Members agreed to note the internal audit recommendations and work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/2023.

### **6.2 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement and Property presented the report providing an update on the Authority's Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for the quarter ending June 2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the content of the report.

### **6.3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – 1 APRIL 2022 – 31 MARCH 2023**

The Head of Service Delivery presented a report informing Members of the Business Plan Actions report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4 which was also presented at last weeks Fire Authority meeting.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

It was asked whether there was a link between the vacancy of the Anti-Social Behaviour post and the rise in false alarms, it was advised the higher numbers were due to deliberate grass fires and that Operational Crews continue to deliver education on this and there was no link. Members agreed to note the Business Plan Actions Report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4.

### **6.4 AUDIT WALES AUDIT PLAN 2023**

The Audit Wales Officer provided an update and overview to Members on the Audit plan for 2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the update.

### **6.5 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/2023**

The Temporary Head of Finance, Procurement and Property gave an update to the group on the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 which had been circulated to Members.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 and requested that their thanks be passed onto the team for all their work.

### **6.6 AUDIT WALES – FIRE FALSE ALARM REDUCTION**

Mr Nick Selwyn and Mr Charles Rigby presented the Audit Wales Report on Fire False Alarm Reduction that had been undertaken across all 3 FRS's in Wales for a consistent approach.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

This report was presented at Fire Authority last week and Members accepted all the recommendations and responses made. A further

update will be provided by the Unwanted Fire Signal Working Group in 6 months to the Scrutiny Committee.

## **7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Monitoring Officer provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024.

## **8. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)**

There were no further items of business to consider that the Chair deemed urgent.

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**AGENDA ITEM NO 5  
18 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE  
REPORT**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY TREASURER

REPORT PRESENTED BY CHRIS BARTON, TREASURER

**SUMMARY**

This report presents the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27 for approval. It includes budget projections based on the Authority's plans and strategies informed by the general financial and operational environment in which services are provided.

The Strategy indicates that the Authority's cost base will continue to increase over the currently approved budget in response to the general inflationary pressures in the UK economy. These cost pressures are compounded by unforeseen under-provision in the current financial year. This will present a challenge to the Fire Authority and potentially to our funding councils next year.

The Strategy is drawn up in the light of rapidly changing economic projections and few firm resource commitments beyond the current year. This background introduces significant financial risks to the Strategy. Whilst it is tempting to consider the information in this report a worst-case scenario, this is far from reality given the current volatility in the UK economy and public finances.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Members note the risks and uncertainties within the projections and approve the Strategy as the basis for financial planning over the Strategy period.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Authority operates a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which provides a backdrop to the planning of resource allocation and spending. This report updates the MTFS (Appendix 1) and associated planning assumptions and discusses the immediate challenges facing the Authority

both in terms of its currently approved budget and its budget setting for next financial year.

- 1.2 The Authority follows appropriate Codes of Practice in managing its finances including the maintenance of an MTFS underpinned by its Treasury Management Strategy. The Authority's latest external audit report confirms that its governance, reporting and financial management arrangements are appropriate and functioning well.
- 1.3 The Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee considers the MTFS each year throughout its budget planning cycle. Further work is planned to refine the detail of next year's budget proposals.
- 1.4 The uncertainty arising from the recent Covid19 pandemic and other factors such as Brexit have presented significant challenges to the Fire Authority and the wider public sector. These challenges have been successfully negotiated by the Service.
- 1.5 More recent challenges exist in terms of the current inflationary crisis throughout the UK and World economies. This continues to bear on all public sector organisations through higher costs of goods and services but mainly through higher wage demands. The Bank of England has continued to increase interest rates to stifle demand and thus reduce inflation.
- 1.6 As a public sector body with a substantial workforce, these inflationary cost pressures bear heavily on our budget. One of the key decisions for the Authority will be to accurately estimate pay inflation for next year and beyond.
- 1.7 Few firm forward financial plans have been released by central government whether nationally or regionally in the wake of the current cost of living crisis. Forward planning with any accurate assessment of external factors is therefore very challenging.
- 1.8 Welsh Government released its settlement for local government for 2023/24 earlier this year. Indications from Welsh Government are that the next budget round will be challenging and that no new resources are expected from Westminster.
- 1.9 The MTFS can only plan based on knowns or reasonably informed assessments and accordingly, no attempt has been made to forward project resources beyond simple benchmarks. In the same way, the cost base of the Authority is given context in the risk section of the MTFS.

- 1.10 The MTFs attached at Appendix 1, identifies the operational context in which the financial management of the Authority takes place currently and sets out the challenges, risks and responses which are relevant in the short to medium term where this is possible.
- 1.11 There is an ongoing discussion with Welsh Government regarding the broadening of the role of firefighters but currently, no clear parameters exist to base assumptions on.

## **2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The MTFs has been constructed to provide a framework for financial planning and set the basis for annual budget setting. The MTFs considers resource availability and costs.

### **2.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT**

2.2.1 In recent years, the Welsh Government has started to increase resources within the local government settlement. Last year, Welsh Government gave Councils in South Wales an unprecedented 10% growth in resources and this trend continued with an increased settlement in 2023/24.

2.2.2 Welsh Government indicated in its settlement that resources in Wales could increase by 3.1% for 2024/25. This is generally regarded to be significantly less than the cost pressures faced by local government.

2.2.3 In previous years, the Fire Authority has been informed of the consistent pattern of increases in local taxation which assists in budget setting for Council Services which includes fire and rescue services. Council tax yield has typically increased by an average of between 4% and 5%. Councils continue the long-term trend of increases in Council Tax. Council Tax still accounts for around one quarter of their net revenue to fund services.

### **2.3 WELSH GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

2.3.1 The Authority relies on several streams of Welsh Government funding to support its budget. As in previous years, no forward commitment has been given to support these key income streams. Pension costs, national initiatives such as National Resilience and community safety activities all rely heavily on this cash and this lack of long-term commitment represents a risk. Including pensions and PFI grant, the funding amounts to around £20m per annum.

- 2.3.2 In the current year, Welsh Government terminated its support for FireLink (the Airwave emergency communications system) resulting in a withdrawal of £600k of funding citing the case that such costs were part of the operational service delivery of the Authority. They also transferred pensions (SCAPE) grant into the general local government settlement. There is a wider initiative underway within central government to reduce specific grants to reduce administration costs. Whether this will further impact grant funding for Fire in 2024/25 is not known.
- 2.3.3 In most years, Welsh Government provides a cash flat grant profile. This of course represents real terms cuts as costs increase. Likely pay inflation in 2024/25 will again erode the value of those grants which remain.
- 2.3.4 Recent announcements by the First Minister have indicated that there will be a very challenging financial environment in Wales next year with a quoted £900m shortfall in Welsh public finances.

## **2.4 BASE BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.4.1 There are two fundamental issues with the base budget going forward. Firstly, there is under-provision within the current year arising from unforeseen inflationary pressures. Secondly, there is continued inflationary pressure in 2024/25 on top of planned expenditure requirements contained within budget submissions for the coming financial year. Each of these factors is outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 2.4.2 The most significant part of the Authority's budget is employee costs representing around 75% of spend. The previous MTFS was drawn up based on long term average pay awards of 1.5% per annum however, this assumption was varied in the short term to reflect the extraordinary levels of inflation being witnessed in the UK economy. The Authority has faced a turbulent period in its budget setting resulting mainly from inflation. In setting the 2023/24 budget it was necessary to estimate pay awards for the 2022/23 year and the 2023/24 as pay negotiations were still ongoing.
- 2.4.3 Recent green book (support staff) pay settlements represented an increase of around 7%. Whilst inflation is now falling, trade unions have been pushing for continued pay awards at or near inflation rates to make up for the impact of the 'cost of living' crisis. The Authority's current year budget will be under significant additional pressure. The 2023/24 budget was based on a 3% provision and currently offers of around 7% are again being discussed. The

difference in likely pay inflation in the current year amounts to around £400k.

- 2.4.4 Grey book (uniformed staff) costs also increased substantially following acceptance of a two year pay award. Whilst this offers certainty for the current year, the 5% eventually paid exceeded the 3% provision resulting in increased costs of up to £900k.
- 2.4.5 On top of the potential under-provision of £1.3m, pay inflation for 2024/25 again must be estimated in this uncertain economic climate. 1.5% already seems too optimistic and a 3% provision has been modelled in the MTFS for the coming year. At full establishment and with no contributions from reserves, this amounts to around £2.8m. Whilst inflation rates have started to fall in the UK, the speed with which they will come down is uncertain and risk remains in these estimates.
- 2.4.6 In total therefore, the base pay budget would increase by some £4.1m or around 6% year on year. Pay inflation is assumed to fall back to 2% and 1.5% in future years.
- 2.4.7 Each year, the employee budget is built up based on the full establishment as approved by the Fire Authority. In approving the budget last year, staff savings were assumed from a combination of vacancy provisions and reserve funding. This will need to be reassessed and could be repeated in 2024/25 as part of a package of budget reductions.
- 2.4.8 Further pressures and complications exist in the employee budget due to a variety of legal actions ongoing regarding the Firefighters' Pension Fund. Successful national legal challenges resulted in firefighters being given the option to return to their legacy pension schemes resulting in potentially higher costs and / or compensation. Due to the complexity of the cases involved and the time taken to frame new legislation, it is difficult to accurately assess any impact on the Fire Authority. New legislation is anticipated in October 2023 which will start to bring clarity to the situation. This is however further compounded by a second buy back exercise for on-call firefighters and an ongoing pension scheme valuation which is attempting to assess the impact of the resolution of these cases.
- 2.4.9 The Premises budget is once again under pressure from inflationary increases mainly in energy costs. When setting the budget for the current year, estimates were made on unit costs for both gas and electricity however, these have been surpassed and have created a significant in year budget pressure of £800k. Contracts linked to RPI

are subject to significant increases from the prevailing inflationary conditions in the economy and the budget for Premises is modelled to increase by £900k or 18% next year.

- 2.4.10 ICT costs are increasing by RPI in licences and support fees (£300k). Essential operational equipment is included in next year's budget (£350k) however, in accordance with the budget plan last year, some of these costs could be funded from Reserves. Other supplies budgets reflect inflationary increases or reductions according to planned activities but where inflation is applied, we anticipate higher increases than normal resulting from current RPI levels. The Authority's insurance cover was re-tendered and costs came in lower than anticipated resulting in savings (£200k). Overall, Supplies costs are expected to increase by around £900k or 14% next year.
- 2.4.11 Transport costs continue to be targeted for reductions by reducing vehicle movements and reducing the use of fossil fuels across the fleet. The introduction of electric vehicles and cleaner diesel vehicles will underpin this trend however, fossil fuel costs are still increasing. There is an in-year budget pressure of £80k for fuel and overall, the budget is expected to increase by £110k or 7% next year.
- 2.4.12 Review of the current contracted services budget shows increases of £337k or 29%. This is a result of both RPI inflation and growth e.g. External Audit Fees.
- 2.4.13 Capital financing costs are historically assumed to increase annually at 4%pa reflecting the approved capital programme (with cost inflation built in). The overall exposure to these costs is monitored through the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy. Recent interest rate rises do not directly impact the Authority's budget as much of its debt is long term however, there is a general upward pressure on interest costs as maturing loans are replaced. There are opportunities to increase returns on invested cash, but this will depend on the Treasury Management policy from year to year. Generally, the avoidance of borrowing is still more cost effective than investing.
- 2.4.14 In setting the final budget, the Authority takes a prudent view of its capital programme completion rate which in the past has shown an aspirational trend. A reassessment of both the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and borrowing costs / income based on the

currently approved capital programme would result in an increase year on year of £563k or 11%.

## 2.5 BUDGET PROJECTIONS

2.5.1 The MTFs currently shows an increase in budget next year of 7.82%. This headline figure would prove extremely challenging for our funding partners given the wider pressures on Welsh public finances that have been signalled.

2.5.2 The Authority works with North Wales FRS and Mid & Wales FRS to arrive at broadly consistent planning assumptions. All three FRSs are also working with the WLGA to communicate to Welsh Government the scale of cost pressures across Wales for this and next year. Initial information shows a similar pattern of in year inflationary pressures and continued unavoidable growth in 2024/25.

2.5.3 This report is not asking for approval of next year's budget at this point. The December meeting of the Fire Authority will consider recommendations from the FAPM Committee and Scrutiny Committee and will consult with constituent councils prior to a probable decision in February 2024.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	Yes
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 The MTFs includes assumptions of savings derived from Carbon Reduction initiatives.

3.1.2 The MTFs includes budget projections that will form the basis of consultation with the ten constituent authorities.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No
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Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	No
National Policy	No

3.2.1 The MTFS includes detailed plans of the Authorities finances and is prepared in compliance with several regulatory Codes of Practice.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

3.3.1 The MTFS forms the basis of the revenue and capital budget planning for the coming financial year.

## 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The MTFS attached at Appendix 1 includes projections that result in annual increases in budget as follows. Members should note the significant health warnings regarding the projections in the MTFS at this time.

Financial Year	Increase in Budget
24/25	7.8%
25/26	1.8%
26/27	1.4%

4.2 The MTFS will be revisited annually and updated as more information becomes available. Further reports on the detail of next year's budget will be presented to the FAPM Committee at future meetings.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Members note the risks and uncertainties within the projections and approve the Strategy as the basis for financial planning over the Strategy period.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chris Barton Treasurer
<b>Background Papers</b>	None

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Medium Term Financial Strategy 22/23 – 26/27

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# MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY, RESERVE STRATEGY AND REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE REPORT

## Appendix 1

### Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27

September 2023

#### About SWFRS

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is one of three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales and is one of the largest fire and rescue service areas within the UK.

#### Service and Incident Profile

The Service is coterminous with the ten unitary authorities in South and South East Wales, covering an area of 2,800 square kilometres of rural, coastal and urban areas. The Service serves a population of over 1.5 million.

The Service operates out of an HQ, Training Centre, joint control facility and 47 Fire Stations some of which are permanently crewed and others crewed by on-call firefighters. The Service has over 300 operational vehicles including fire appliances, off road vehicles, light vehicles and boats. The service takes around 35,000 emergency calls per year, responding to around 17,000 incidents of which a third are fires. Of these fires, around 70% are deliberate. Besides fires, the Service also responds to road traffic collisions, flooding and water rescues, animal rescues, medical emergencies and environmental incidents.

The Service proactively seeks to reduce risk mainly by prevention through annual early intervention, education and engagement activities. Approximately 20,000 home fire safety checks are undertaken and 50,000 children and young people are met face to face as part of educational and engagement events. As a result of this activity, the Service has been successful in significantly reducing the number of fires over recent years.

#### Strategic Plan

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's vision is set out in our strategic plan for 2020-30. This Medium-Term Financial Strategy underpins that vision.

The plan outlines the strategic direction and explains how the Service intends to meet its challenges to continue to deliver a high quality service that meets the needs of our communities. The long-term strategic Themes and shorter term Priority Actions within the Plan will enable South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to not only deliver a sustainable service but also support our partners in the wider public sector.

The Service's vision remains the key focus; "making South Wales safer by reducing risk." The Service recognises that safer communities can only be achieved by challenging and improving the way it works, through a safe and competent workforce and by effectively managing its resources.

At times of austerity, there is a temptation to concentrate on costs and reduced budgets with no regard to the quality of services delivered. However, the Service has made the decision to concentrate on how improvements can be made with the strongly held belief that efficiencies and savings will result. The key strategic themes are

<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<b>Proposed Objectives</b>
Keeping you Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the impact of false alarms on our resources</li> <li>• Reducing the number of fires in the home and understanding the behaviours and causes of them</li> <li>• Reducing the number of road traffic collisions</li> <li>• Reducing the number of deliberate fires</li> <li>• Improving safety in and around water</li> <li>• Improving fire safety in buildings in our communities</li> </ul>
Responding to your Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding effectively when you need us</li> <li>• Doing all we can to make sure that our on-call crews are available</li> <li>• Training our personnel to respond to current and future risks in our communities</li> </ul>
Valuing our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting a workforce that reflects and represents our communities.</li> <li>• Developing our people by identifying training and development opportunities</li> <li>• Supporting our people to feel well, healthy and happy at work</li> <li>• Delivering on the recommendations of the Investors in People report</li> <li>• Encouraging and supporting a bilingual culture across the Service</li> </ul>
Using Technology Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the most suitable technology and equipment to improve our services</li> <li>• Reviewing the standard and use of technology and equipment across the Service</li> </ul>
Working with our Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Public Service Boards to support our communities</li> <li>• Working with our partners to deliver our services where they are needed</li> <li>• Reviewing and evaluating our existing partnerships</li> </ul>
Involving and Communicating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving our communities and making sure they have their say in what we do</li> <li>• Helping keep our communities safe through safety education and attending community events</li> </ul>
Protecting and Enhancing our Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the usage of single use materials</li> <li>• Expanding the use of electric vehicles</li> <li>• Reducing our energy use and our carbon footprint</li> <li>• Considering how our activities impact on the environment</li> <li>• Reducing the amount of waste we produce</li> </ul>
Continuing to Work Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being clear and publicly accountable</li> <li>• Maximising value for money while improving our Service</li> <li>• Developing new ways of working</li> </ul>

This financial strategy sets out the approach and identifies how the Service intends to plan and manage its resources in the light of the Government's approach to public sector spending. It also focuses on how the Service will remain viable and respond to the various risks and pressures which it will face.

In the past two years, the nature of public services and public sector finance has undergone a paradigm shift resulting from the Covid19 pandemic. Whilst it is clear the Government has sought to utilise public sector spending and borrowing, to deal with the crisis and to ease the economic impact of it, there is no clear picture yet emerging of how this situation will translate into future spending and resourcing plans. The impact of global conflict has caused a significant change to the cost base of public sector organisations in the same manner it has for members of the communities we serve.

The emergent threat of climate change not only shapes the way in which the Service conducts its business but also the responses and challenges which the Service is likely to have to meet to protect the population of South Wales. Against this background of urgent change, the MTFS can at best only estimate the likely costs and resources available to fund services in Wales over the coming years. The MTFS will be revisited as and when significant Government announcements are made.

### Key Achievements

The Service has been successful in significantly reducing the number of fires and fire related deaths and injuries over recent years. For example, between 2011/2012 and 2016/2017, fires reduced by 33.82%. This has been achieved against a background of reducing resources whilst at the same time, maintaining fire cover and continuing the standards of service expected by the public of South Wales.

### Financial Context

Fire and Rescue is a devolved function and Welsh Government therefore have national oversight of the service. The South Wales Fire & Rescue Service is one of three Fire and Rescue Services operating in Wales. That said, both the national UK environment and devolved Welsh Government impact on the finances and operations of the Service.

### The UK Context

The Service's financial position is impacted by the wider global economy and environment and this strategic plan is written in this context. However, the Service cannot accurately predict or influence the factors at play at any precise time and therefore plans based on the best information available to it.

The International Monetary Fund had judged that the outlook for growth was improved in advanced economies however, uncertainty around the global outlook is heightened at present, associated with the ongoing war in Ukraine and political tensions in the rest of the world. UK Government policy on spending has been the key determinant which has set the scene for resources in the UK public sector.

The latest spending review of the UK Government set out parameters for public spending over the medium term, but these have all been surpassed by the response to the Covid pandemic and the inflationary pressures that followed the war in Ukraine. Whilst there have been some signals that austerity is easing, there is little optimism to believe that this is a move away from the overall downward pressure on spending especially given the massive increase in government borrowing in the last two years.

Significant uncertainty remains about the short and long-term financial effects of "Brexit" even though apparent deals have now been secured for the short to medium term.

The recent cost of living crisis has introduced another level of uncertainty over government finances with no clear picture yet about its resolution.

## Wales

Overall spending limits set in Westminster determine the Barnett Formula consequential for resources in Wales each year.

With no Comprehensive Spending Review having taken place in the last two years, there are no forward indicators for spending. Announcements of additional spending pre Covid19 resulted in a largely positive financial settlement for Wales but these increases are now being eroded by inflation. The budget agreed by Welsh Government impacts the funding of unitary authorities (which in turn meet the costs of Fire and Rescue Services) together with community safety and other sector specific initiatives which are directly funded through specific grants and contributions.

Welsh Government has now obtained the powers to vary income tax. This MTFS does not assume that these powers will be used to increase revenue and therefore funding. Announcements by Welsh Government in 2023 have signalled a significant shortfall in resources at an all Wales level.

## Unitary Authority Funding

Unitary authorities contribute to the Fire & Rescue Service budget and in consequence, their funding settlement is relevant to the Service. In recent years, the trend in reducing public expenditure has resulted in downward pressure in the un-hypothecated grant resources distributed to unitary authorities. This trend was reversed somewhat in the last few years and 2022/23 saw an unprecedented double digit increase in funding. Announcements regarding the overall Welsh budget were included in the current year settlement together with a return to some indicative budgets but with no guarantees.

## Current Cost & Budget Structure

The starting point for any Financial Strategy is to understand the cost base of the Service.

## Revenue Budget

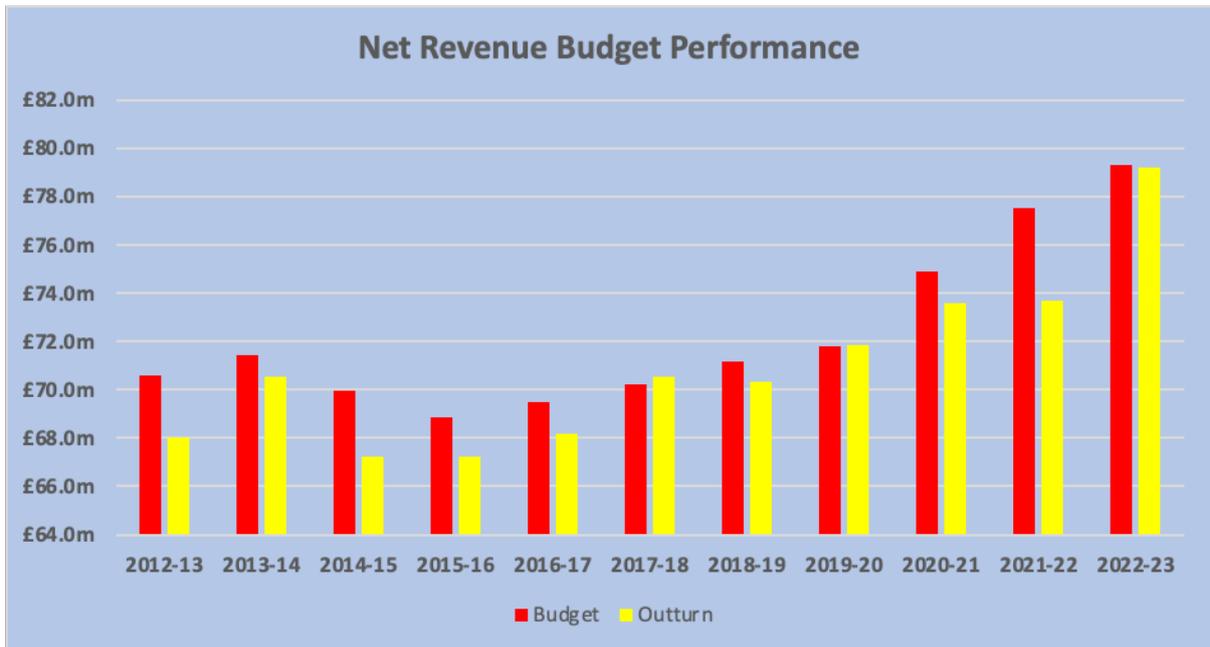
The Service's net annual revenue budget in 2023/24 is around £89.4m, the equivalent of £58 for each resident of South Wales. It equates to around 0.5% of the total public service spending in Wales each year.

The table below shows the breakdown of the annual budget in 2023/24

	<b>£000</b>
Employees	55,927
Indirect Employee costs	12,777
Premises	6,337
Training	1,776
Supplies & Services	5,755
Transport	1,619
Contracted Services	1,152
Capital Financing	5.069

<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>90,412</b>
Income	-1,037
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>89,375</b>

The following chart shows the movement in the net revenue budget since 2008/09 together with the actual spend for each year.

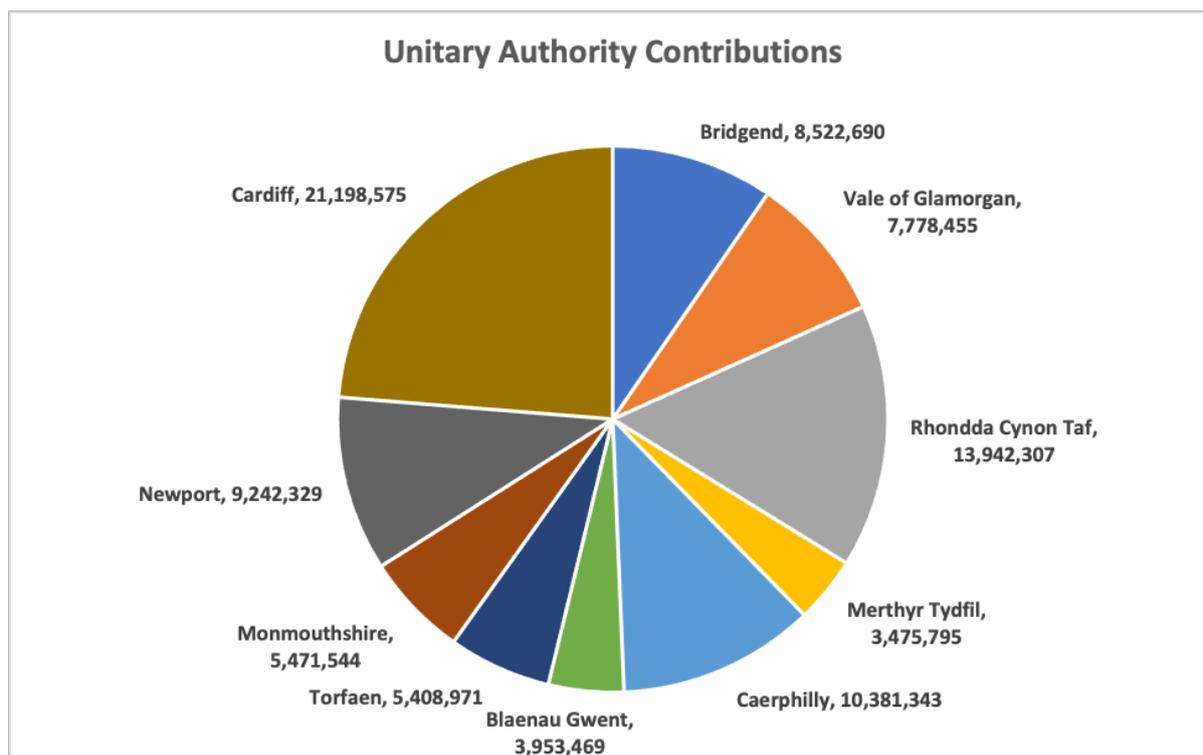


The Service has proactively managed to stay within its budgets and has a history of good financial management despite numerous challenges to its operations including a sustained period of industrial action. Surpluses generated from the revenue budget are utilised to invest in Service Improvement, asset renewal and efficiency projects which in turn keeps the requirement for annual funding at a lower level than would otherwise be the case.

An analysis of the outturn consistently reveals that staffing budgets are well managed with underspending particularly in the on-call firefighter category. This partly stems from an ongoing struggle to recruit, train and retain enough staff whilst at the same time losing experienced firefighters to retirement and other full-time employment.

### SWFRS Revenue funding

By virtue of the 1995 Fire Combination Orders, Fire and Rescue Services in Wales are funded from contributions made by constituent councils within their area. The Fire and Rescue Service determines its budget requirement and notifies each constituent council of its contribution which are proportionately split based on population. The current distribution of funding in South Wales is show below.



The Welsh Government recently undertook a review into the governance and funding of fire authorities in Wales. To date this review has not resulted in any significant proposals to change the structure, composition or funding of fire authorities. Should any legislative change be forthcoming, it could significantly impact this MTFS as drafted.

During 2019, HM Treasury amended the SCAPE rate used to underpin public sector Pension Fund Valuations. As a result of this exercise, a significant increase in employer's pension contributions occurred. In Wales, specific grant funding of over £3m was provided to the Authority to meet these costs. With the current shift in UK economic activity, there is a further prospect of rate changes with similar consequential financial impacts. The Scape Grant funding was transferred to the local government settlement in 2023/24 which has cut the direct link between the incidence of costs and the grant. It is assumed that any further Scape funding would now follow a similar path via the constituent councils' Revenue Support Grant.

The Fire Fighter' Pension Fund (FFPS) continues to be a national issue with several recent court cases lost by the Government likely to increase costs in the medium to long term. The resolution to these cases and the future shape of the FFPS is an ongoing process.

## Forecast Cost Changes

There are several known factors which impact the cost base of the Authority. The main categories are outlined below.

### Inflation

The financial strategy includes inflation where this is a contractual obligation but assumes that other spending is cash limited. The exceptions include items where

prices are generally more volatile than CPI such as vehicle fuel, energy costs and insurance premiums where specific allowances are made. Total non-pay inflation of around £0.5m per annum is assumed in a 'normal' year however, the current RPI rate on specific items such as energy, fuel and external supplier contracts will continue to remain volatile. This said, the MTFs assumes falls from the highs currently being experienced.

## Pay

The Authority is part of the collective bargaining arrangements for 'grey book' (fire fighters) and 'green book' (non-uniformed) employees and therefore implements respective national pay awards as part of its pay policy arrangements. The Authority abides by the statutory Minimum and Living Wage legislation. The cost of pay inflation (including related pension overheads) is usually assumed to be around £1.2m per annum. This is currently assessed with reference to long term pay settlements of around 1.5% per annum.

As a result of significant increases in RPI, the annual increase in budgeted employee costs has been larger in recent years. Inflationary pressure could be as high as £4.1m in 24/25 resulting from under-provision in the current year. The MTFs Assumes that pay inflation will return to normal levels in the medium term. The wider role of firefighters is still subject to ongoing discussion with representative bodies and the outcome of this activity could impact pay levels. The MTFs assumes that such costs agreed on a national basis would be accompanied with funding from Welsh Government. This situation will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

## Pensions

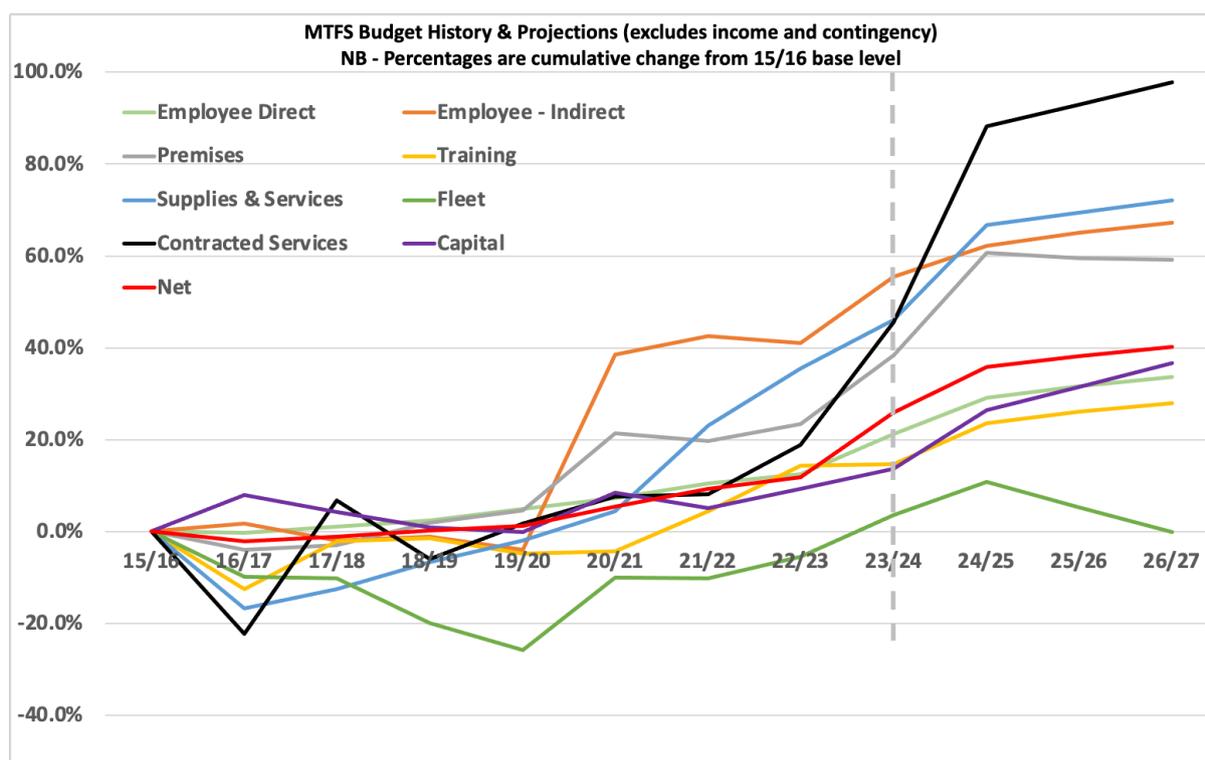
The Authority operates two pension schemes for the benefit of its employees and makes employer contributions to each. Uniformed staff are eligible to join the national Fire Fighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS) and non-uniformed employees are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The schemes are administered by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on behalf of the Authority. Employees are automatically enrolled in the relevant scheme unless they opt out.

Regular actuarial valuations are carried out to determine employer contribution rates to the Schemes. The LGPS is a funded scheme unlike the FFPS which is unfunded and underwritten by Welsh Government.

- The LGPS employers' pension contribution rate is currently 15.2% of gross pensionable pay.
- The FFPS employers' pension contribution rates vary as there are three schemes in operation. Rates are currently between 26.6% and 29.3% of gross pensionable pay. The strategy assumes that Welsh Government will continue to fund any scheme deficit over and above the employee and employer contributions and that it will continue to fund SCAPE costs arising from national Government changes.

The cost of the FFPS is in a state of flux currently with the government having lost legal cases around the tapering transitions from the 1992 to the 2015 scheme. A solution is now emerging following Government proposals, but it is unclear what the impact on the Service's base budget will be into the future.

The MTFs demonstrates the volatility of different elements of the budget in response to inflation and Service changes.



## Service Demand

The strategy recognises that there is an increasing population trend in South Wales particularly within the urban areas of Cardiff and Newport. Pressures on the Authority's services will increase because of this and other factors.

According to Welsh Government statistical modelling, the population of South Wales has grown by around 6.5% in 10 years and growth forecasts are assumed to continue at a steady rate. This rate includes disproportionate increases in certain at-risk groups such as the elderly. As demographics change, the need for fire cover and other rescue services change.

An average growth in population of around 0.66% per annum is not reflected in an annual need to increase expenditure. However, the Authority's cost base may eventually need a step change in response to overall demand. Such changes are traditionally dealt with through ongoing reviews of fire cover and other necessary service provision.

Demographic trends towards and ageing population with more people living alone and with life limiting health conditions are likely to increase demand on services. Environmental and legislative changes also drive the demand for services in areas such as flooding, wild fires, road traffic collisions and bariatric rescue. The Authority's partnership arrangements also result in an increased number of service calls such as co-responding to medical emergencies. The current climate of terror related incidents also demands a significant training and response capability in the fire service. These specific areas are considered in terms of budget provision as and when spending

pressures crystallise. The recent heightened concerns around climate change are likely to accelerate the need for investment in specific service areas.

### Capital Financing Costs (Debt repayments and interest)

The strategy includes an increase in the Authority's estimated capital financing costs of around £1m reflecting the approved capital programme. The capital financing budget remains around 6% of the net revenue budget representing a 'normal' range for a Service of this type. This programme together with the Treasury Management Strategy of the Authority determines the principal debt repayments and interest costs which will fall on the revenue budget. The programme includes a range of investments aimed at maintaining, renewing and supplementing the Authority's assets to achieve its strategic objectives. Affordability is a key component of the capital programme.

The Authority does not receive separate funding for capital borrowing costs and as such, all borrowing costs must be met from its core revenue budget.

### Specific Projects

The nature of the Fire & Rescue Service entails participation in collaborative regional and national initiatives, some of which are sponsored by central government. Changes to the costs and funding within these projects can impact the budget of the Authority. One project is currently being monitored in this regard.

- Emergency Services Mobile Communications Platform (ESMCP) is a project aimed at rolling out a new Emergency Service Network (ESN) across the UK. Last year Welsh Government cut all funding related to the cost of the existing network in Wales. This equated to around £0.6m per annum in South Wales. The project aims to not only modernise and improve the network but also to reduce ongoing costs. Until the future cost of the ESN is known for certain, the financial impact of the project is uncertain. Further delays in the delivery of this project will be monitored in terms of their financial impact. The MTFs correctly projected the removal of the grant aid albeit not as quickly as it happened. Delays in this project are resulting in increased costs of the existing FireLink solution and accordingly, provision is included to meet these costs.

## Forecast Funding Changes

Both national and local changes to funding can affect the Service's income streams.

### National Funding Changes

The Government's policy direction pre-Covid has shown a long-term trend of reduction in public spending but there was a reverse in this trend in the last three budget years. That said, the scale of the recent increase is small in the context of the major economic challenge arising from Covid19.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has resulted in a further level of uncertainty and the resulting cost of living crisis will impact government spending plans.

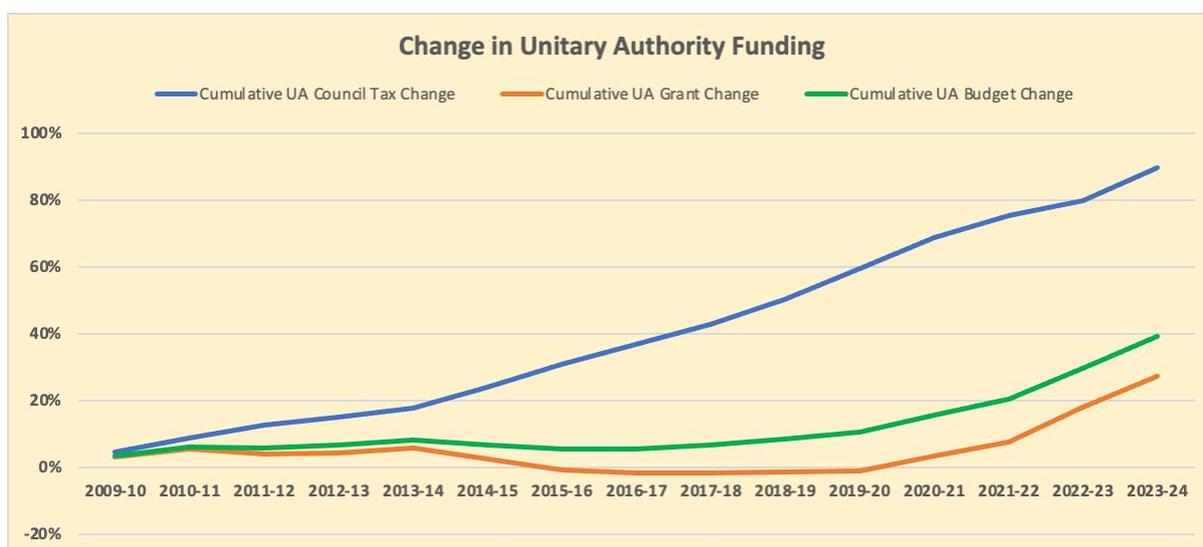
It is almost impossible to make meaningful assumptions beyond the steady state position given the unprecedented level of change in the country's financial position. In one scenario, continued reinvestment to drive economic development and to meet public service demands could be forecast, in another, an even more prolonged period

of public sector austerity to reduce the hitherto unseen levels of government borrowing.

### Welsh Local Authority Settlement Funding Assessment

The outcome of the budget decisions of Welsh Government in terms of health, social care and education will be major determining factors given the relative size of those budgets. In the last two years, Welsh Government was able to divert resources to local authorities for the first time in a decade.

Aside from external funding from Welsh Government, Unitary authorities also have revenue raising powers through council tax which they can use to fund local services. The Office of Budget Responsibility forecasts 4% increase in council tax revenues which mirrors the increases seen over the austerity period in South Wales. The chart below shows the historical changes in unitary authority funding within South Wales. This increase was lower in 22/23 mainly due to the unprecedented increase in levels of council grant announced by Welsh Government. Increases are likely to return to their previous stable level.



Beyond 2023/24 projections are solely based on indicative Welsh Government budget announcements.

### Grants and other Funding Streams

As Welsh Government departments have seen their own budgets cut, there has been a regular trend of reductions or withdrawals of specific grant funding streams. The Service has seen these cuts already in the Community Safety initiatives it operates.

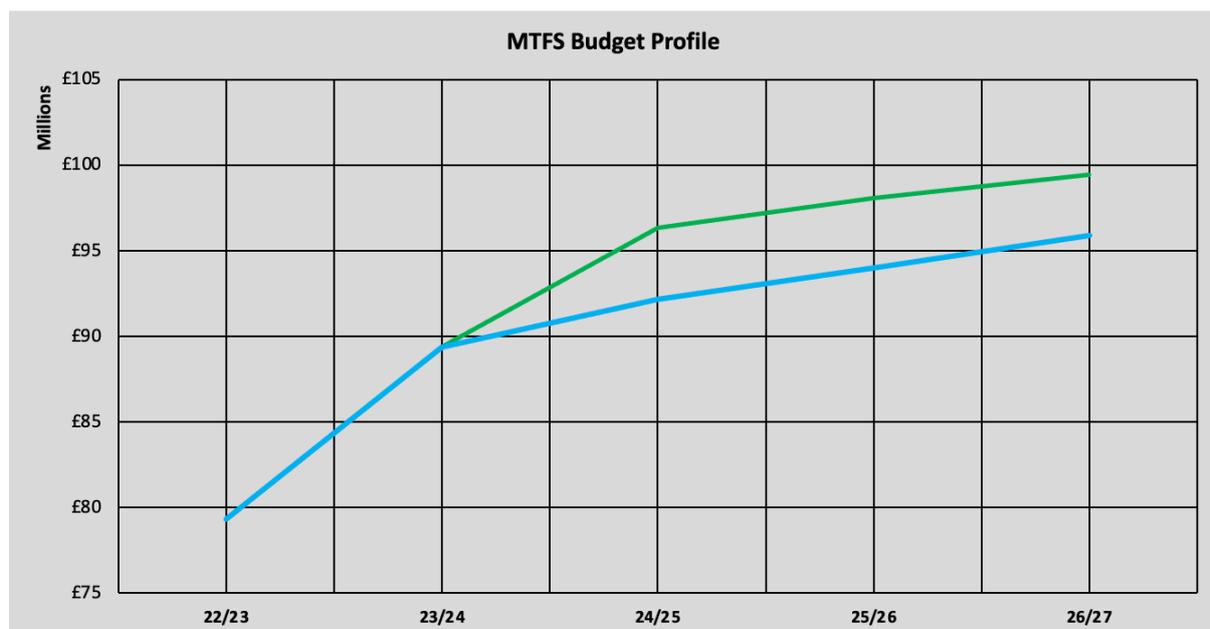
Given the trend and commentary to date on grant funding, it is reasonable to assume that these funding sources may be further withdrawn over the medium to longer term however, in advance of any announcements, it would be wrong to assume such reductions yet. The table below outlines the revenue grants and contributions currently in payment together with the basis of forecasts.

Grants are currently received as follows:

Grant	2023/24 £'000	Received from	Forecast Basis
COMMUNITY SAFETY	324	Various	Continue - cash flat profile
NATIONAL RESILIENCE/USAR/MTA	1,353	WG	Continue - cash flat profile
PENSION TOP UP GRANT	17,165	WG	Continue – excess funding required met in full by WG
PFI	926	WG	Pre-defined grant profile
<b>TOTAL FUNDING 23/24</b>	<b>19,768</b>		

## Projected Spend v Resources Assumptions

The graph below sets out the Service's estimated budget profile. It includes for illustration purposes, projections of resource availability at the Welsh Government indicative levels or +2% where there are none.



If local government resources were restricted to the levels of the Welsh Government announcement, the worst-case position would be a shortfall in funding of around £3.6m per annum by the end of the plan term. The most obvious factor in this projection is the necessity for central government to solve the funding problem arising from the 'cost of living' crisis now driving local authority spending. This assumes of course that the Service would only request funding in accordance with the assessed worst case local authority settlement. In practice, the Service must request the resources it requires to fund its operations regardless of settlements. That said, the Service has always striven to take account of the climate of public sector budgets in which it operates and to reduce the burden on its constituent councils wherever possible.

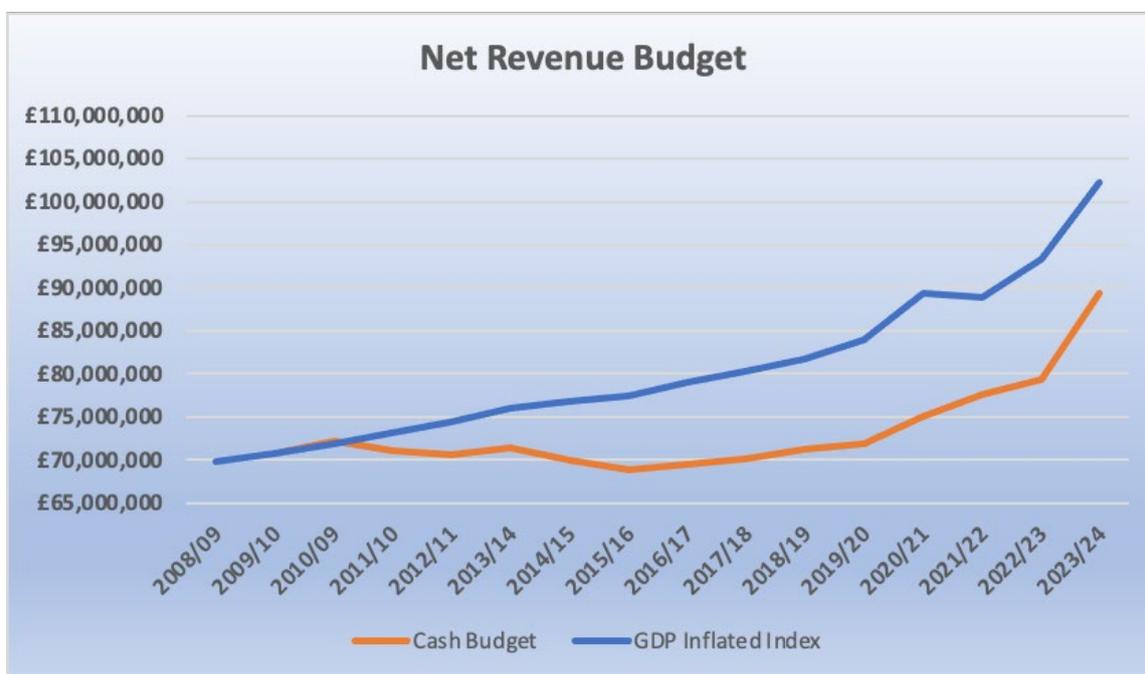
Welsh Government funding of the ongoing costs of firefighter pensions and the currently grant funded initiatives is critical to financial position of the Fire Authority.

## Medium Term Financial Plan

To address the budget gap identified, the Service intends to manage down risk, unnecessary response, inflationary and other budget pressures whilst maximising income and making business processes as efficient as possible. Some of this work is part of an ongoing business delivery model whilst some of it depends on specific project work targeted at efficiency and savings.

### Finance and Efficiencies

Since the commencement of the current economic downturn in 2008/09, the Authority has delivered approximately £13m real terms budget reduction. The chart below shows the trend in the revenue budget. It represents an estimated real terms reduction of around 14% in 15 years.



The Authority has taken several approaches in relation to savings and efficiency over this period including reviews of fire cover, the Shaping Our Future Programme and various efficiency projects focussed on reducing expenditure and increasing income. If there is a continued downward pressure on expenditure, it will become increasingly difficult to identify further financial savings without significant changes in what services the Authority provides and how it delivers them.

This could have implications for the public, businesses, operational partners and employees. To deliver the Authority's plan to reduce risk, services that are no longer affordable or less impactful may be delivered differently or, in some cases, stopped. Such changes would not be considered or implemented without Fire Authority approval following consultation and engagement.

### Fire Cover Reviews

The Service continues to review fire cover across the whole South Wales Area. The most recent whole authority review resulted in the closure of several retained stations and a reduction in crewing at other sites. As part of that review, several identified station amalgamations and moves are still being held in abeyance. Availability of potential sites has created a delivery problem, but these options remain open. The next planned move is to relocate and replace the New Inn station in Torfaen.

### Shaping our Future Programme

The Authority devoted resources to reviewing parts of the organisation to identify improvements and efficiencies. Whilst not formally operating under this name in future, the programme continues to look at operational and back-office business processes. As part of this coming budget cycle, consideration of areas for investment and savings within the structure of the Authority's staffing is being undertaken. These will be the subject of reports to the Fire Authority for consideration once developed.

### Sustainability & Carbon Reduction

The Authority has recognised the need to respond to Climate Change both in service provision but also to minimise its own impact on the environment and climate. The formalisation of a strategy to address these issues has been completed and action plans and projects are now being developed and implemented. The aim is to reduce the Service's carbon footprint whilst at the same time delivering economic benefits through cost savings. The MTFs includes assumptions of financial savings generated by this activity particularly in energy costs, transport and supplies.

### Accounting Measures

The Authority, through its Finance, Asset & Performance Management Committee, has reviewed its budget for opportunities to create savings / budget reductions. This has included contingencies, inflation allowances, vacancy provisions, method of manpower budgeting and treasury management practice. The Authority will continue to monitor these aspects of the budget to identify further opportunities to drive down the underlying resource requirement where this is prudent and sustainable.

### Reserves Policy

Under the 2003 Local Government Act, the Treasurer is required to make a statement to the Authority on the adequacy of reserves as part of the annual budget setting process. It is good practice for the Authority to have a reserves policy which is reviewed regularly. The Authority follows this practice, ensuring that liabilities and risks are adequately managed from a financial perspective.

### General Reserves

General reserves are maintained to ensure financial stability in the longer term thus allowing the Authority time to plan, mitigate and deal with future financial challenges. The reserve policy includes an assessment of financial risks and a quantification of those risks where this is possible. The overall value of general reserves held reflects the value of assessed risks, the overall quantum of the budget and previous experience of variations resulting from volatility in specific areas.

Due to the ongoing austerity measures facing the public sector in the UK, the financial risks in the overall budget remain high and the Authority is maintaining general reserves at a healthy level to reflect this. Fire Services in the UK remain under threat of industrial action which represents a further risk to continued service provision.

The financial strategy is predicated on no planned use of general reserves to fund ongoing revenue spending. The Authority regards this as an unsustainable financial planning parameter and is in accordance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

### Earmarked Reserves

The Authority creates, maintains and utilises earmarked reserves to fund specific projects and liabilities as they are developed or identified. An overall change management reserve is maintained to fund projects aimed at increasing efficiency and improving or changing services. The Authority has little recourse to capital funds aside from borrowing and as such these earmarked reserves are also used to assist in meeting the financial demands arising from larger projects.

The use of reserves to balance the budget is only sustainable in the short term and the MTFs should not rely on continued use of reserves as a funding solution.

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Balance at 31/03/23 £000</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
General Reserves	3,000	General financial resilience
Change Management Reserve	3,094	To fund projects aimed at efficiency, service improvement and change
Cultural Review	340	To meet the costs of the ongoing culture review
Carbon Reduction	3,000	To meet project costs
Equality Diversity & Inclusion	2,000	To meet project costs
Equipment Renewals	2,000	To meet equipment renewal costs
PFI Equalisation Reserve	3,192	To balance out timing difference in grants and costs of the PFI Training Centre project at Cardiff Gate
Managed Under Spend Reserve	141	To meet costs of ongoing projects falling into the next financial year
Joint Control Lease Reserve	200	To finance the contribution to the Joint Control Facility in Bridgend
<b>Total Revenue Reserves</b>	<b>16,967</b>	

### Treasury Management Strategy

The objective of the Authority's treasury management is to ensure that the Authority's cash, borrowing and investments are appropriately and efficiently managed within agreed financial and legislative parameters.

The Authority is required to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Codes covering such activities. In accordance with the Code, the Authority procures and retains the services of an external Treasury Management Advisor.

Reports on the Authority's Strategy and agreed parameters are approved prior to the commencement of each financial year. A half year progress report is made during the year and an annual report is received at the completion of each year end outlining performance and compliance.

Temporary borrowing is undertaken to fund short term cash flow deficits with long term borrowing being used to fund the Authority's capital requirements. Given the recent history of low interest rates, the Authority continues to pursue a policy of utilising internal cash balances (Internal borrowing) to minimise external interest costs. Forecasts for the UK and World economy are kept under review to determine if this strategy should change in response to potential interest rate rises.

The Authority's Capital Financing Requirement is the measure of its need to borrow to fund its capital requirements. This is forecast at £46.5m at March 2023 with external borrowing being estimated at £30.4. The difference of £16m represents internal borrowing and the exposure of the Authority to increasing interest rates should it need to borrow externally. This exposure is forecast to remain constant to March 2025.

Exposure to increasing interest rates is mitigated by having a portfolio of external loans at fixed rates maturing over a range of short, medium and long dates. The profile of the Authority's debt maturity provides certainty over borrowing costs with around 38% maturing after 10 years or more.

Investment activity is minimised by the current borrowing strategy. However, when cash flow dictates, short term cash investments are made to approved counterparties to generate income.

Further detail on the relevant forecasts can be found in the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

## Asset Management Plan

The Authority operates within fire and rescue stations, offices, workshops, training facilities and control room accommodation. At these sites, to assist us in delivering our service to the public, we also hold many assets, ranging from our fleet of emergency response and support vehicles, operational plant and equipment, ICT equipment and other minor assets (such as office and station furniture, specialist clothing etc.).

For us to properly manage these assets it is necessary for the Service to have an Asset Management Strategy. This ensures that our assets are still fit for purpose and relevant for evolving service needs and changing legislative requirements. In addition, as a large public sector owner of assets there is an overarching requirement for us to ensure value for money in the management and maintenance of these assets. To this end, our Asset Management Strategy determines the high-level priorities where financial resources are to be targeted to meet service requirements.

Our Asset Management Strategy is supported by several management plans which provide the detail upon how our assets will be managed. These include:

- Land & Buildings
- Fleet
- Plant & Equipment
- ICT
- Minor Assets
- Procurement

These Operational Equipment Plans are an essential tool in how we manage our operational equipment assets. Regular reviews of our equipment are essential to ensure that it is still fit for purpose and suitable for our evolving service needs and changing legislative requirements.

As part of the public sector there is a responsibility for us to ensure value for money is obtained when we procure and maintain operational equipment. We also have a duty to ensure the health and safety of operational personnel using the equipment and that the equipment we provide is fit for purpose.

## Capital Programme

Capital investment in assets is required to maintain an effective operational response and accordingly a planned capital programme exists. The Fire Authority has little recourse to capital funding other than from self-financed borrowing and capital receipts from the disposal of surplus assets and accordingly, the financing costs of the programme fall on the revenue budget. Affordability is therefore key in making decisions about the level of investment that can be undertaken.

The programme contains elements to fund new or replacement assets as well as repairs and preventative maintenance for existing assets. The programme broadly covers the following categories of investment:

Property	Site acquisitions, new build, refurbishment and planned maintenance
Vehicles	Operational appliances and light vehicles
Equipment	Operational equipment including PPE
ICT	Hardware and software

## Collaboration

Collaborative working with partner agencies is seen as a priority. This includes other emergency services, local authorities and the third sector in Wales but also other service providers on a national level. This collaboration delivers efficiency but also resilience which is especially important in a world subject to emerging global threats such as climate change and terrorism.

The service continues to seek other collaborative opportunities to improve outcomes for the population of South Wales but also to make efficiency savings.

### National Issues Committee and Welsh Government (NIC)

All three Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales have one common objective which is a safer Wales. The NIC was formed to actively promote and enable collaboration between the Services but also across the wider Welsh public sector. It also aims to achieve objectives detailed in Welsh Government strategic policies and programmes.

The aim of the NIC is to deliver measurable improvements, including greater efficiency and a more citizen focused service. There are currently eleven work streams:

- Business continuity
- Control
- Community risk reduction
- Common & specialist services
- Fleet & transport
- Health & safety
- Human resources
- ICT (shared services)
- Operations
- Procurement
- Training & development

### Partnership with other 'blue light' services

There are obvious synergies between the work of the Service and that of other 'blue light' services across South Wales. Emergency services are often attending the same incidents in the same localities and can in certain circumstances provide resources to assist one another. These resources include employees, property and other assets.

Co-location of services within properties has begun to achieve cost efficiencies. A good operational example is Abertillery Fire Station which is now a tripartite facility housing police, fire and ambulance personnel.

The service is currently engaged with Mid and West Wales in delivering a joint control facility within the South Wales Police HQ. This facility was developed with a business plan to save around £1m per annum in running costs.

Recently the Service has been trialling an emergency medical response service. Fire service personnel and assets are now responding to certain categories of medical emergencies alongside paramedics and ambulances.

### Partnership with local authorities and the third sector

The Service often comes face to face with the same service users of local authorities and the active third sector operating in the area. This provides opportunities to join up service provision when interfacing with service users and members of the public in many communities.

Prevention activities are key in reducing risks for everybody within the Service Area and activities are now focussed on providing information and advice and sharing information across a wide range of operational front-line services.

## Workforce Strategy

The Authority employs around 1,800 staff as both operational firefighters and a range of professional and supporting roles. The nature of the Service means that 75% of expenditure is on staff or staff related budgets and there is a high expenditure on training and related matters.

The Service is part of collective bargaining agreements with both uniformed (grey book) and non-uniformed (green book) Trade Unions. Staff communication and engagement is high on the priorities of the Service to ensure staff fully understand the plans, rationale and motives of the Service.

Given the high percentage of staff costs, efficiencies or budget cuts inevitably impact on staffing levels. The Service tries to avoid redundancies wherever possible by using retirement and natural staff turnover to reduce numbers if required.

The Service has recently implemented its new Job Evaluation Scheme for Green Book staff which provides a sound basis for future assessments of salary levels.

The Service has obtained Investors in People (IIP) accreditation and has also achieved a new award focusing on staff wellbeing. The Service has received a Gold People Award and a Silver Wellbeing Award for its supportive culture, passion to improve and develop, focus on wellbeing and a commitment to protecting the communities of South Wales.

## Risk Management

The Fire & Rescue Service National Framework for Wales and the Wales Programme for Improvement Framework requires the Service to consider risk management whilst discharging its statutory duties and consider the risks facing the organisation when making strategic decisions.

### Risk Management Framework

A risk is an event that has the potential to help or hinder the achievement of a strategic objective or the delivery of core business. All risks are rated as manageable (low), material (medium) or significant (high).

Directors, department heads and team leaders are responsible for identifying risks during the business planning process and taking the appropriate actions to manage or mitigate risk within their areas. Only risks that impact upon the achievement of a strategic objective or delivery of core business are monitored via the Corporate Risk Register. The Senior Management Team formally reviews the Corporate Risk Register on a regular basis and endorses the inclusion of any new or emerging risks identified.

## Financial Risks

The Service's current and future financial position and adequacy of resources are subject to regular review.

Budget monitoring is regularly undertaken with resources prioritised on key risk areas. Monitoring operates on a devolved and centralised model with budget holders across the Service at various levels of the organisation. The Service's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations set out procedures, roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability.

Key specific financial risks within the Strategy and Plan include:

- The national economy and public finances
- The level of interest rates and the cost of borrowing
- Variations in Inflation assumptions - 1% of pay equals £0.6m and 1% of price equals £0.2m
- Failure to deliver or late delivery of budget savings
- Project delays
- Withdrawal of key funding streams by Government
- The cost of pensions

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 6  
18 SEPTEMBER 2023**FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

**REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2023/24****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT &amp; PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN

**SUMMARY**

The Revenue Monitoring Report provides details of the annual revenue budget and associated information for the year ending 31 March 2024.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee note and agree the report content.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The revenue budget for the year, 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 was approved by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and this report presents an update and the changes in spending and income since then.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 details the original budget, a revised budget to reflect authorised virements, transactions to date i.e., Actuals, the forecast 31 March position and variance analysis, i.e., the over or under spend. The revenue monitoring report has been presented inclusive of grant transactions for a full financial picture.
- 1.3 The reserve statement at Appendix 2 presents the forecast, year-end position, and the impact on useable reserves for scrutiny and financial planning purposes.
- 1.4 Appendices 3 and 4 detail grant funded initiatives and the impact on revenue budgets.

**2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 Forecast expenditure exceeds available funding, and this has resulted in a projected budget overspend of £1.667 million of which £225k is to be transferred from reserve funding. This overspend comprises of a £485k overspend on employee budgets and an additional £1.182 million against all other spending. Included within these figures is a £124k overspend on grant funded initiatives which is detailed in appendices 3 and 4.
- 2.2 The following narrative highlights the most significant changes.

### **2.2.1 EMPLOYEE COSTS - £485k overspend**

Employee costs are forecast to be £358k more than budgeted and this is driven by the pay award for grey book staff being confirmed at 5% after budget setting, while being budgeted for 3%. Members are reminded that pay awards for green book staff are not yet agreed and any changes in the actual awards from the budgeted 3%, will impact forecasts further.

Ill health pension costs are currently forecast to be £121k more than budgeted due to an increase on the actual number of ill health retirements since budget setting. It is worth noting that any additional ill health retirements this year will impact on the position further.

### **2.2.2 PREMISE COSTS - £914k overspend**

The increase in energy costs due to inflation since budget setting has led to combined gas and electricity costs forecast to be an additional £810k.

Increasing Airwave costs result in a forecast over spend of £138k and reflects the uplift of 13.5% to be applied in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) published by the Office for National Statistics.

These increases are partially offset by a reduction for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) of £61k than budgeted.

### **2.2.3 TRAINING COSTS - £30k underspend**

This underspend is due to an identification of budget set aside for the purchase of supplies and services, rather than course costs within the Training Centre.

### **2.2.4 SUPPLIES AND SERVICES - £101k overspend**

There are several over and under spends in this area as it contains a myriad of individual budget headings.

An overall overspend against external funding of £124k is included within the forecasts of this report, of which £119k relates to a projected overspend on Home Fire Safety equipment. Information

on this can be found in greater detail in the supporting appendices while the overspend will be reviewed throughout the year for the potential to be offset/covered with any underspending from our Welsh, fire counterparts.

Operational equipment costs are forecast to overspend with £97k to be met from carry forward reserves set aside in 22/23 due to supplier delays for the purchase of flash hoods.

Equipment purchases to support courses are forecast to increase and is an identification of budget requirement that was set within course training costs.

IT costs are forecast to increase, and this includes £92k of IT equipment related purchases for the implementation of the streaming solution to support the Local Government Election Bill, which is to be met from reserves.

The budget setting process included a potential increase to annual insurance premiums. This increase has not occurred and therefore costs have reduced by £260k and is offsetting the additional charges in this area.

#### **2.2.5 TRANSPORT - £35k overspend**

The most significant driver of this overspend is an increase in fuel costs since budget setting with the additional £70k forecast being in line with the outturn position for 2022/23.

Offsetting the additional fuel costs is a reduction in officer lease car costs than budgeted due to leases expiring and not being renewed. In addition, pool car costs are forecast to decrease due to vehicle extensions taken out in 22/23 and forecast to expire 23/24.

#### **2.2.6 CONTRACTED SERVICES - £142k overspend**

The most significant driver of this overspend is £108k additional consultancy costs, with £60k additional legal consultancy forecast due to the increase in the number of cases anticipated than budgeted. A further £36k is forecast in relation to associated costs for the Cultural Review process which is set to be met from reserves.

External audit costs are to increase by 15.6%, as set out by Audit Wales, and this is reflected by an additional £34k in charges.

#### **2.2.7 CAPITAL COSTS - £215k overspend**

There has been an increase in anticipated capital costs since budget setting because of an increase in capital projects which is detailed in the capital monitoring report. This has a specific effect of increasing the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) which is a charge to the revenue budget that replicates the repayment of borrowing on the balance sheet.

### 2.2.8 INCOME - £195k additional

Bank Interest rates have increased since the time of budget setting and as interest rates have increased so has our income on deposits. In consequence, additional income is anticipated equating to £117k.

Additional £63k course income is expected however this is offset by corresponding course costs included within expenditure.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

An overall projected overspend on the revenue budget equating to £1.667 million, with £225k to be transferred from reserve funding which has been set aside for agreed identified spend.

### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No
Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	Yes
Service Policy	No
National Policy	No

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No

Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

#### 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The overall net revenue expenditure for year is forecast at £93.5 million and this includes the costs of running grant funded initiatives. Local Authority funding for the year and grants, equate to £89.3 million and £2.5 million respectively, resulting in a £1.667 million overspend. £225k has been set aside from reserves funding to support agreed identified spend and is detailed in appendix 2. There are number of variables that can affect this position and updates will be reported to members throughout the monitoring period.

#### 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee note and agree the report content.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Mullan Temp Head of Finance, Property & Procurement	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
Capital Monitoring Report	2023/24	Temp Head of Finance, Property & Procurement

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Revenue Monitoring 2023/24 (18.09.2023)
Appendix 2	Reserve Statement 2023/24 (18.09.2023)
Appendix 3	Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 (18.09.2023)
Appendix 4	Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 – Table (18.09.2023)

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**REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24**  
**Appendix 2**  
**Reserve Statement 2023/24 (18.09.2023)**

Reserve	Purpose and Control	Balance at year start	Transfers in and (out)	Balance at year end	Variations arising between budgeted and actual levels of reserves
<b>General</b>	To cover general financial risks including council funding, grants, inflation and interest.	-3,000,000	0	-3,000,000	
<b>Managed under spends</b>	To meet costs associated with rolling programmes of expenditure incomplete at year end. Controlled via routine budget monitoring procedures.	-141,021	97,375	-43,646	Spending against carry forward requests within revenue
<b>Change Management</b>	Costs of change arising from 'Shaping our 'Future' programme, investment in change projects to improve service and / or reduce spend.	-3,094,370	-97,375 -91,634 -36,227 1,567,176	-1,752,430	Carry forward reserves transferred from Managed Under Spends Equipment renewals spending transferred from reserve Cultural Review spending transferred from reserve Revenue overspend and transfer of annual joint control lease costs
<b>Cultural Review</b>	To meet costs across the service as part of the Independent Cultural Review process.	-340,000	36,227	-303,773	Cultural Review spending within revenue
<b>Carbon Reduction</b>	Costs to achieve aims set out in the Carbon Delivery Plan 2020-2030.	-3,000,000	0	-3,000,000	Carbon Reduction spending within revenue
<b>Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion</b>	Costs to support the framework to promote in-house equality, diversity and good practice.	-2,000,000	0	-2,000,000	EDI spending within revenue
<b>Equipment Renewals</b>	To level out cost variances in the required annual provisions for replacement.	-2,000,000	91,634	-1,908,366	Equipment renewals spending within revenue
<b>PFI Equalisation</b>	To meet future costs of the Training Centre PFI project	-3,191,623	285,777	-2,905,846	Current figures which may change slightly with indexation
<b>Capital Receipts</b>	To meet costs of the capital programme. Reserve applied as receipts are generated	0	-58,153 58,153	0	All capital receipts received in year will be used to fund capital expenditure
<b>Joint Control Lease Reserve</b>	To meet the lease costs over an eight year period (from 2017/18)	-200,000	100,000	-100,000	Annual Joint Control lease costs
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-16,967,013</b>	<b>1,952,953</b>	<b>-15,014,060</b>	

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**REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24**  
**Appendix 3**  
**Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 (18.09.2023)**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 This report presents the grant position for the 2023/24 financial year. Information on initial grant awards paired with the forecast spending will provide members with the cost of running the various grant funded initiatives in addition to the impact over spending has on the revenue budgets.

### **1.1.1 FIRE CRIME**

The Community Safety department is comprised of many different initiatives, Fire Crime being one of those which is funded by Welsh Government. The grant funds the cost of a police secondment, the lease of three vehicles and salary costs. The Fire Crime team are assigned in patrolling high-risk areas of fire crime to deliver safety advice. The areas of focus are Operation Bang which covers Halloween and Bonfire Night, and Operation Dawns Glow which concentrates on the lead-up to and over the Easter period in the view to help target the grass fire season.

### **1.1.2 HFS STOCK**

Community Safety receives grant funding towards the purchase of Home Fire Safety stock to be delivered to the homes of South Wales, particularly aiming to provide safety measures to vulnerable people and is issued according to individual needs. Items include smoke alarms, fire retardant bedding, heat detectors and other life-saving equipment.

### **1.1.3 YOUTH**

Youth combines both the Phoenix and Crimes & Consequences department and is also funded by Welsh Government. The Youth initiative is centred on encouraging teamwork, raising self-motivation, developing communication skills, and achieving positive outcomes. The purpose of each department:

- Phoenix – provides an opportunity for both primary and secondary schools, colleges, alternative education agencies and pupil referral units to refer young people to a five-day interactive course to learn about the FRS, who we are, what we do and how we engage with the communities we serve.
- Crimes & Consequences – aimed at young people who may be on the cusp of offending or at risk of re-offending, this initiative aims to engage and educate in the dangers of arson, car crime and anti-social behaviour.

#### 1.1.4 **INNOVATIONS & DIVERSIFICATION**

Grant funding is received in relation to Innovations and Diversification, for the secondment of an Occupational Therapist (OT) from Aneurin Bevan, who supports the initiative on an all-Wales basis. The OT identifies vulnerable and high-risk individuals in communities and establishes working groups with health boards to introduce pathway referrals. These working groups enable the 3 Welsh FRS' to plan and deliver fire safety awareness to ensure protection of high-risk individuals. Three main areas of focus for assessments are discharge from hospitals to home, dementia and memory assessment clinics, bariatric individuals including mobility issues.

#### 1.1.5 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent provides a grant to fund an Anti-Social Behaviour and Deliberate Fire Reduction Practitioner with an aim to improve community safety within the Gwent area. The post holder works with young people who may be at risk of being involved in offences, and the outcomes expected to be achieved include a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community wellbeing and educating individuals to be able to make positive choices.

#### 1.1.6 **NATIONAL RESILIENCE**

Funding for National Resilience is received from Welsh Government and covers a variety of areas including Mass Decontamination and HVP training, specialist training such as confined space and USAR timber shoring, and the long-term maintenance capability of NR vehicles.

#### 1.1.7 **MTA**

The grant funding from Welsh Government for Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) allows the delivery of extensive training to individuals with the outcome of ensuring an efficient response to an MTA incident within Wales.

#### 1.1.8 **USAR**

Welsh Government funding enables specific training requirements to be met which ensures Wales have a specialist USAR team with the ability to respond to a range of incidents including missing persons, wildfire, flooding, major fires and rescues from height/water.

#### 1.1.9 **SECONDMENTS**

Reimbursement of salary related costs are currently being received from numerous sources due to the secondment of some SWFRS personnel.

### 1.1.10 CIRCULAR ECONOMY

To support climate change and the move to a circular economy in Wales, where waste is avoided and materials are kept in use for as long as possible, grant funding from Welsh Government has enabled SWFRS to phase out single use plastic.

Previous funding helped with the introduction of aluminium water bottles to each employee and has contributed to the purchase of water butts fitted to frontline appliances and the supply of plumbed in water coolers at all 47 operational fire stations.

The balance of funding has been carried forward to continue to support the rental costs of the water coolers. This has dramatically reduced the amount of plastic water bottles bought by the service and previously issued to stations.

### 1.1.11 FF APPRENTICES

Aside from gaining firefighter skills at Cardiff Gate, new recruits to the service also attend The Vale and Cardiff College to learn basic skills to enhance their duty as a firefighter. Funding is received directly from the college to reimburse salary costs within the revenue budget of the recruits whilst attending the course.

### 1.1.12 CYBER TRAINING

Grant funding from Welsh Government has been received to assist in the training of ICT personnel to help enhance the knowledge around a cybersecurity program which would lead to an increase in cyber resilience.

### 1.1.13 TRAINING LAPTOPS

To support SWFRS' initiative to make environmental improvements by reducing stationery used for the provision of training at Cardiff Gate, funding has been received from Babcock to move training to a digital platform.

Babcock's obligation to provide bounded, hard copy course note materials will be removed and the funding will help SWFRS transition to digitalisation and improve digital training at Cardiff Gate.

## 2. ISSUES

2.1 Since grants were awarded there have been a number of changes to individual projects as summarised below:

### 2.1.1 FIRE CRIME - £19.8k forecasted underspend

Gwent Police have been unable to fulfil the secondment of a Police Sergeant this financial year. Negotiations are ongoing for the

possibility of securing a secondment with SW Police later in the year.

#### 2.1.2 **HFS STOCK - £119.1k forecasted overspend**

Alongside the typical home safety checks the focus this year will increase around dementia awareness, generating more expenditure in the issue of home fire safety equipment.

Albeit not guaranteed, there is the possibility of using any underspends on an all-Wales basis. An application for additional 'in-year' funding will be submitted to Welsh Government at a later date, both of which have the potential of covering any overspends in HFS stock.

#### 2.1.3 **YOUTH - £16.3k forecasted overspend**

With the award of grant funding from Welsh Government remaining static for several years and an increase in salary costs, there is a shortfall in income available to offset forecasted spends.

As above, there may be the possibility of using an all-Wales underspend or requesting additional funding if either become available later in the financial year.

#### 2.1.4 **ANTI – SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - £6.4k forecasted underspend**

A vacancy in the Anti-Social Behaviour post at the beginning of this financial year has seen a forecasted underspend in grant funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

#### 2.1.5 **HAFOD SUSTAINABILITY GRADUATE SECONDMENT - £15k forecasted overspend**

The secondment of the Sustainability Graduate from Hafod is 50% funded, therefore the overspends will be offset against the Service's Revenue salary costs.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Overall, there is a projected overspend on grants equating to £124.2k.

Financing over spends from respective revenue budgets can be undertaken to address the shortfall and there is also scope to use underspends from our Welsh Fire counterparts for a large part of the overspend, although this carries a risk that these may not materialise. Realistic grant monitoring information is required to be shared by all three Welsh services to ascertain whether this can be achieved.

**REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24**  
**Appendix 4**  
**Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 – Table (18.09.2023)**

	FIRE CRIME	HFS STOCK	YOUTH	INNOVATIONS & DIVERSIFICATION	ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	NATIONAL RESILIENCE	MTA	USAR	FBU
<b>Employee Costs</b>									
Salaries, NI & superann.	34,829	0	113,830	0	33,662	320,416	90,060	324,256	49,204
Travel & Subs	0	0	0	0	0	1,017	928	0	0
<b>Premises Related Expenses</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Training Expenses</b>	7,840	0	0	0	0	39,365	0	0	0
<b>Supplies &amp; Services</b>	223	449,000	10,000	0	0	602,982	58	29,747	0
<b>Transport Related Expenses</b>	10,000	0	8,828	0	0	2,995	3,191	1,162	0
<b>Third Party Payments (Contracted Services)</b>	35,053	0	0	60,090	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>87,945</b>	<b>449,000</b>	<b>132,658</b>	<b>60,090</b>	<b>33,662</b>	<b>966,776</b>	<b>94,238</b>	<b>355,165</b>	<b>49,204</b>
<b>Other/Additional Income</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Grant Income</b>	<b>-107,748</b>	<b>-329,900</b>	<b>-116,355</b>	<b>-60,000</b>	<b>-40,085</b>	<b>-966,776</b>	<b>-94,238</b>	<b>-355,165</b>	<b>-49,204</b>
<b>(Under)/Overspend to be transferred to Revenue</b>	<b>-19,803</b>	<b>119,100</b>	<b>16,303</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>-6,424</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

	NRW	MERSEYSIDE FRS	NFCC	HAFOD	CIRCULAR ECONOMY	FF APPRENT	CYBER TRAINING	TRAINING LAPTOPS	Total
<b>Employee Costs</b>									
Salaries, NI & superann.	43,699	64,141	55,330	27,483	0	105,320	0	0	1,262,229
Travel & Subs	0	179	102	0	0	0	0	0	2,225
<b>Premises Related Expenses</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Training Expenses</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	0	47,805
<b>Supplies &amp; Services</b>	0	0	0	0	16,202	0	0	45,000	1,153,213
<b>Transport Related Expenses</b>	0	3,109	0	0	0	0	0	0	29,285
<b>Third Party Payments (Contracted Services)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95,143
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>43,699</b>	<b>67,428</b>	<b>55,432</b>	<b>27,483</b>	<b>16,202</b>	<b>105,320</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>2,589,901</b>
<b>Other/Additional Income</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Grant Income</b>	<b>-43,699</b>	<b>-67,428</b>	<b>-55,432</b>	<b>-12,526</b>	<b>-16,202</b>	<b>-105,320</b>	<b>-600</b>	<b>-45,000</b>	<b>-2,465,677</b>
<b>(Under)/Overspend to be transferred to Revenue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14,957</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>124,223</b>

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 7  
18 SEPTEMBER 2023**FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

**CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2023/24****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF FINANCE,  
PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN**SUMMARY**

The Capital Monitoring Report provides details of the capital budget, transactions to date and the forecast year end position for the year ending 31 March 2024.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the budget and progress of capital schemes, approve alterations identified in appendix 1 and associated movements in funding.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report provides an update of the major changes affecting the capital budget since budget setting.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 illustrates budget information and funding analysis for all approved capital investment plans for the current financial year. Longer time horizons are expected for capital investment schemes, this often results in budgets being phased over more than one financial year and this is referred to as slippage.
- 1.3 In summary, Appendix 1 presents the total budget (2022/23 slippage + 2023/24 budget) of £16.5 million, set against this is the forecast outturn position, budget overspend and slippage as £14.8 million, £1.9 million and £3.6 million respectively.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 details grant funded initiatives and the impact these have on the capital budget and associated funding streams.

- 1.5 Below a detailed narrative supports the above position and a funding analysis provides information on how we intend to finance the investment.

## 2. BUDGET HEADINGS

### 2.1 Property

2.1.1 The overall budget for the year is £16.5million, forecast expenditure and budget slippage are £14.8m million and £3.6m respectively. A net overspend of £1.9m is driven by a number of schemes, the largest of these being the Monmouth station refurbishment (£676k) and the Solar Panels project (£130k). The full overspend is to be funded by co-location recharges and grant funding.

More detail on individual schemes is provided below;

#### 2.1.2 New Inn Station

The purchase of land at a new site did not materialise and plans are in place to develop the current site. Design has commenced and will continue for the remainder of this year, with construction anticipated to begin at the end of 2023/24. The forecast spend during this financial year is expected to be made up of mainly design fees and the set-up of a temporary site. Design plans include the aim to make the station the first zero carbon station within the SWFRS land and building portfolio and likely the whole of Wales.

#### 2.1.3 Whitchurch

Following the completion of the grant funded USAR build at Whitchurch last year, further grant funding has been made available to finish the project including the purchase of furniture and the installation of solar panels.

#### 2.1.4 Solar Panels

Salix funding has been acquired to purchase and install solar panels at sites across the service. Following surveys completed last year, it was discovered that the roof at HQ is unsuitable to house the panels. Further inspections have revealed that the roof at Barry station is suitable and will therefore be progressed during this financial year.

#### 2.1.5 Monmouth (co-location)

This is a co-location project with Gwent Police and WAST. Discussions are ongoing around designs and costings before a

decision is made as to whether all partners are onboard. The forecast is based on estimates and the assumption that the costs will be split 3 ways.

#### 2.1.6 Pontyclun

Expenditure in this financial year is expected to be only design fees with work to commence in 2024/25.

#### 2.1.7 Penarth

The forecast for the refurbishment of Penarth station is largely made up of design fees with construction to continue until 2025/26. The costs include an estimate for the set-up of a temporary building to ensure business continuity.

#### 2.1.8 On-call Station Storage

Works at Treorchy and Pontycymer are expected to be completed in October and December respectively. Planning and design work is progressing on other sites with Gilfach Goch to commence before year end.

#### 2.1.9 Planned and Preventative

This heading covers the station towers project that has been ongoing over the last couple of years. Roath tower works have now been completed and Maindee is expected to be completed later this year.

#### 2.1.10 Equality and Diversity

Continuing the work that commenced in 2022/23, this project aims to address equality and diversity issues on stations in regard to toilets and dormitories. Construction at Roath station has seen the completion of work on the toilets and has now commenced phase 2 to address the dormitories. Costings for Whitchurch are due back shortly and designs for Merthyr station will process later in the year.

## 2.2 **Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP)**

2.2.1 The overall budget equates to £5.0m, forecast expenditure is £5.6m, with no slippage currently forecast. A net overspend of £599k is largely due to the £352k increase in cost of Water ladders, light utility 4 wheel drives and Water Carriers. There are less significant overspends in other areas the largest of these relates to the purchase of a replacement Bobcat for USAR and is wholly funded by WG.

### 2.2.2 Truck

This budget was originally submitted for 2018/19 and has since slipped forward year on year due to insufficient market (potential suppliers) interest. This issue has been overcome and an order was placed in 2023/24. As expected and reported last year, costs have since risen resulting in a £47k overspend. This is currently in build stage and is due for delivery in September.

### 2.2.3 Water Ladders

Last years budget was slipped into this year due to delivery timings and the 7 water ladders relating to the 2022/23 VRP have now been delivered. There are 7 further vehicles due to be delivered by the end of the financial year relating to the 2023/24 VRP and this will bring us up to date with the water ladder programme. As reported last year, the cost of vehicles has increased resulting in an overspend of £155k across 14 vehicles. The prices in the VRP going forward have been updated accordingly.

### 2.2.4 Vans/Ops Estate Cars

The order of 9 vehicles was completed in 2022/23 however due to delivery timings, one vehicle not being completed prior to year end and the remaining budget was slipped into this financial year and will be delivered before March 2024. Working is ongoing to determine how many vehicles can be purchased within the 2023/24 budget with the aim to get the vehicles ordered and delivered within this financial year.

### 2.2.5 Wildfire Unit

The tender for this vehicle is due back shortly but costs are expected to be £28k higher than the budget submitted last year which is reflective of current market conditions. We are therefore forecasting a £28k overspend.

### 2.2.6 Rescue Boat

No order has been placed yet due to discussions continuing about the specification that is needed. It is hopeful that an order can be placed shortly to ensure delivery within this financial year but that is dependent on the progress of the decision making and delivery timescales.

### 2.2.7 Water Carrier

The tender went out in August and costs are expected to be returned at up to £100k more than the budget. Depending on the outcome of the tender process this vehicle may not be delivered

before year end and therefore the budget will slip into 2024/25.

## 2.3 Operational Equipment

2.3.1 The overall budget equates to £240k, forecast expenditure is £404k with an overspend of £164k. The majority of this is due to increased costs for the RTC Cutting equipment/Rescue tender equipment and the remaining overspend is to be covered by grant funding.

2.3.2 RTC Cutting/Rescue Tender Equipment  
This budget is slippage from the 2022/23 budget and as reported in the last capital monitoring report of 2022/23, the returned tender costs were £96k more than the initial budget submission. This equipment has now been delivered and the project completed.

2.3.3 MTA Equipment (**grant funded**)  
Grant funding has been acquired for the purchase of MTA manikins which are expected to be delivered later this year.

2.3.4 USAR Bio-diesel Upgrade (**grant funded**)  
Another grant funded initiative to be completed in this financial year is the upgrade to bio-diesel fuel tanks at USAR sites. This is expected to be completed by the end of March 2024.

## 2.4 ICT Equipment

2.4.1 The overall budget is £554k and forecast spend is £576k resulting in a £22k overspend. This overspend is due to cost increases since the budget was set and relate to the Core Switch Replacement.

## 2.5 Joint Control (**co-location**)

This budget relates to the Vision Hardware Refresh at our shared Joint Public Service Centre. The costs of this project are to be split 50/50 with MWWFRS with £269k to be recharged. The project will continue into 2024/25 and so some of the budget has already slipped.

## 3 IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Appendix 1 illustrates current capital spending plans for the year and how this differs from the original budget.

A forecast spend of £14.8m and slippage of £3.6m result in a net £1.9m overspend. This overspend is to be offset by £299k grant funding, £945k

income from co-location partners and £1k of underspends. The remaining £657k is to be funded as part of the capital financing set out in appendix 1. This is analysed below.

CAPITAL SCHEME	Over spend	Under spend	Additional Funding	Report Variances
MONMOUTH (co-location scheme)	-676		676	0
WHITCHURCH USAR (grant funded)	-41		41	0
SOLAR PANELS (grant funded)	-130		130	0
TRUCK (SLIDE DECK / CRANE)	-47			-47
WATER LADDERS	-155			-155
LIGHT UTILITY 4WD	-210			-210
WILDFIRE UNIT	-28			-28
WATER CARRIER	-100			-100
LADDERS		1		1
USAR VEHICLES (grant funded)	-60		60	0
RTC CUTTING/RESCUE TENDER EQUIPMENT	-96			-96
MTA Equipment (grant funded)	-28		28	0
NEW DIM EQUIPMENT (grant funded)	-40		40	0
CORE SWITCH REPLACEMENT	-22			-22
JOINT CONTROL (co-location)	-269		269	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-1,902</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>-657</b>

### 3.2 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

### 3.3 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No
Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	No

National Policy	No
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### 3.4 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

## 4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The total capital investment for the year is forecast at £14.8m and will be largely funded through borrowing, grants, a revenue contribution and capital receipts.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Members note the budget and progress of capital schemes, approve alterations identified in appendix 1 and associated movements in funding.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Mullan Temporary Head of Finance, Property & Procurement	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
Revenue Monitoring Report	2023/24	Temp Head of Finance, Property & Procurement

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Capital Monitoring 2023/24 (18.09.2023)
Appendix 2	Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 - Capital (18.09.2023)

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**CAPITAL MONITORING 2023/24**  
**Appendix 1**  
**Capital Monitoring 2023/24 (18.09.2023)**

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24							APPENDIX 1	
	Project Total £000	SLIPPAGE B/F 2022/23 £000	2023/24 BUDGET £000	ACTUAL AS AT 04.08.23 £000	COMMITTED AS AT 04.08.23 £000	OUTTURN POSITION 31.03.24 £000	BUDGET UNDER/ OVER/ SPEND £000	SLIPPAGE C/F 2024/25 £000
<b>PROPERTY</b>								
<b>STATION REFURBISHMENTS</b>								
MONMOUTH (co-location scheme)	600	338	0	12	12	1,014	-676	0
NEW INN	3,800	1,848	4,000	133	176	2,309	0	3,539
PONTYCLUN	1,100	10	0	0	0	10	0	0
PENARTH	3,250	25	250	1	0	275	0	0
ON-CALL STATION PROJECT	1,850	1,210	2,000	461	507	3,210	0	0
PLANNED & PREVENTATIVE MAINT	0	58	200	187	22	258	0	0
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY	0	0	400	51	19	400	0	0
WHITCHURCH USAR (grant funded)	1,040	0	0	22	0	41	-41	0
SOLAR PANELS (grant funded)	130	0	0	6	14	130	-130	0
	<b>11,770</b>	<b>3,489</b>	<b>6,850</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>7,647</b>	<b>-847</b>	<b>3,539</b>
<b>VEHICLES</b>								
TRUCK (SLIDE DECK / CRANE)	150	150		0	197	197	-47	0
WATER LADDERS	3,692	1,697	1,995	1,859	1,988	3,847	-155	0
VAN/OPS ESTATE CAR	257	73	184	0	91	257	0	0
LIGHT UTILITY 4WD	250	240	250	0	0	700	-210	0
NON OP 4WD	1	26	1	0	27	27	0	0
WILDFIRE UNIT	100	0	100	0	0	128	-28	0
RESCUE BOAT	30	0	30	0	0	30	0	0
WATER CARRIER	200	0	200	0	0	300	-100	0
LADDERS	95	0	95	94	0	94	1	0
USAR VEHICLES (grant funded)	60	0	0	0	0	60	-60	0
	<b>4,835</b>	<b>2,186</b>	<b>2,855</b>	<b>1,953</b>	<b>2,303</b>	<b>5,640</b>	<b>-599</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>								
RTC CUTTING/RESCUE TENDER EQUIPMEN	300	240	0	336	0	336	-96	0
MTA EQUIPMENT (grant funded)	28	0	0	0	0	28	-28	0
USAR BIO-DIESEL UPGRADE (grant funded)	40	0	0	0	0	40	-40	0
	<b>368</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>-164</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>ICT</b>								
WIRELESS LAN CONTROLLERS	80	27	0	24	0	27	0	0
END USER COMPUTER REPLACEMENT	450	0	150	9	14	150	0	0
BACKUP REPLACEMENT SYSTEM	30	0	80	0	0	80	0	0
CORE SWITCH REPLACEMENT	130	123	0	0	145	145	-22	0
SERVERS AND STORAGE REPLACEMENT	150	27	0	0	0	27	0	0
SERVER SOFTWARE UPGRADE	150	7	0	0	0	7	0	0
WIRELESS ACCESS POINTS	40	0	140	26	28	140	0	0
	<b>1,030</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>0</b>
JOINT CONTROL (co-location)	675	0	310	0	643	538	-269	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,003</b>	<b>6,099</b>	<b>10,385</b>	<b>3,222</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>14,804</b>	<b>-1,901</b>	<b>3,580</b>
<b>FUNDING ANALYSIS</b>								
						13,302		
						945		
						200		
						0		
						239		
						58		
						<b>14,804</b>		

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**CAPITAL MONITORING 2023/24**  
**Appendix 2**  
**Grant Monitoring Report 2023/24 – Capital (18.09.2023)**

	NATIONAL RESILIENCE
<b><u>Vehicles</u></b>	
<i>USAR Bob Cat Replacement</i>	60,000
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>	
<i>MTA Training Manikins</i>	28,496
<i>Bio-Diesel Upgrade</i>	39,500
<b><u>Property</u></b>	
<i>USAR property development</i>	22,419
<i>USAR Solar Panels</i>	18,200
<b>Income</b>	<b>-168,000</b>
<b>Additional Income</b>	0
<b>(Under)/Overspend</b>	<b>615</b>

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

AGENDA ITEM NO 8  
18 SEPTEMBER 2023

**FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY

**2022/23 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY

REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN

**SUMMARY**

To review the treasury management activities for the year ending 31 March 2023, in accordance with the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The committee recommend to full fire authority the following;

- note the annual treasury management review data for 2022/23, and
- approve the actual prudential and treasury indicators set therein.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 There is a statutory and regulatory obligation for the Authority to comply with the reporting requirements detailed in Appendix 1. An 'Annual Treasury Management Review Report' is required to be presented to full Authority as soon after the close of the financial year as is practicable or by the 30 September at the latest. The purpose of this is to compare the actual position to the treasury management strategy (TMSS) set in advance of the year to confirm or otherwise, compliance and assess performance.

**2. ISSUE**

- 2.1 Effective treasury management can be measured by its budget impact i.e financing costs and investment income, organisational solvency and cash flow.

- 2.2 The Authority can receive bank deposits in excess of £90 million any one financial year and monthly bank payments can total as much as 8 million and is dependant on a number of factors. The timing of these cash flows can be uncertain and as such, it is imperative that the flow of cash in and out of Authority bank accounts is managed to support budget strategies and minimise risk.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 provides Members with detail on the capital investment activity for the year, financing and the impact on the Authority's indebtedness, i.e. Capital Financing Requirement. Also detailed is year end treasury position and prudential / treasury indicators.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

#### **3.1 Borrowing Outturn**

The Authority maintains a competitive, average debt book rate of approx 3.80% which is marginally lower than 2021/22 3.83%. Interest on borrowing is £1.1 and £1 million for 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively. The current borrowing strategy is to utilise the Authority's cash reserves in the first instance and to undertake external borrowing for long term investment.

#### **3.2 Investment Outturn**

There were no investments made during the year as cash surpluses were used to fund capital spending. Returns were significantly better 2022/23 at £260k in comparison with £10k the previous year and links with steadily increasing bank rate throughout the financial period.

### **4. EQUALITY RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 There are no equality implications resulting directly from this report.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 The committee recommend to full fire authority the following;

- note the annual treasury management review data for 2022/23, and
- approve the actual prudential and treasury indicators set therein.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Mullan Temporary Head of Finance, Procurement & Property
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- CIPFA Code Treasury Management</li><li>- CIPFA Prudential Code</li><li>- Treasury Management Strategy</li><li>- Capital Outturn Report</li><li>- Annual statement of Account</li><li>- Treasury Management Practices (TMP's)</li></ul>

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# Annual Treasury Management Review

## 2022/23

### Purpose

This Authority is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2022/23. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, (the Code), and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, (the Prudential Code).

During 2022/23 the full Authority received the following reports:

- an annual treasury management strategy in advance of the year reported to Fire Authority 28 March 2022
- a mid-year treasury update report reported to Fire Authority 19 December 2022
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy, (this report)

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is, therefore, important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Authority's policies previously approved by members.

This Authority confirms that it has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to all of the above treasury management reports by the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Scrutiny / Committee before they were reported to the full Authority.

### Executive Summary

During 2022/23, the Authority complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The Treasurer also confirms that no new borrowing was undertaken in the year and the statutory borrowing limit, (the authorised limit), was not breached.

The financial year 2022/23 saw an increase in bank rates from 0.75% at the start to 4.25% at the end of the financial year. Investment rates however were slow to catch up and consequently returns remained relatively low. The treasury strategy of utilising internal borrowing in the short term was maintained to avoid the cost of carry on borrowing.

## Introduction and Background

This report summarises the following:-

- Summary position
- Capital activity during the year;
- Impact of this activity on the Authority's underlying indebtedness, (the Capital Financing Requirement);
- The actual prudential and treasury indicators;
- Overall treasury position identifying how the Authority has borrowed in relation to this indebtedness, and the impact on investment balances;

## Summary Position

<b>Capital, Financing &amp; Prudential Indicators</b>	<b>2021/22 Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Budget</b>
Opening CFR	41,630	40,226	41,541
			0
<b>Capital Spending</b>	<b>2,443</b>	<b>7,857</b>	<b>10,338</b>
			0
CERA	-200	-200	-250
Capital Receipts	-189	-24	0
Capital Grant	-392	-1,424	-1,143
Revenue Reserves	0	0	0
<b>Borrowing requirement for the year</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>6,209</b>	<b>8,945</b>
			0
<b>Repayment of Debt</b>			0
MRP	-2,701	-3,212	-3,497
MRP on PFI	-365	-419	-419
			0
<b>Closing CFR</b>	<b>40,226</b>	<b>42,805</b>	<b>46,571</b>
			0
Movement in closing CFR	-1,404	2,578	5,030
			0
Gross borrowing at start of year	29,062	28,147	28,147
New borrowing	0	0	5,000
Loan repayments	-916	-1,409	-1,409
Gross borrowing at end of year	28,147	26,738	31,738
			0
Other long term liabilities i.e. pfi and leases	4,097	3,679	3,679
			0
Gross Debt	32,244	30,416	35,416
			0
<b>Under/Over borrowed (Gross debt vs CFR)</b>	<b>7,983</b>	<b>12,388</b>	<b>11,154</b>
			0
Movement in OLTL from year to year	-365	-419	-419

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## The Authority's Capital Expenditure and Financing

The Authority undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- Financed immediately through the application of revenue resources i.e. capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc., which have no impact on the Authority's borrowing need; or
- If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources immediately, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

Capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table above shows the actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

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## The Authority's Overall Borrowing Need

The Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and is a gauge of the Authority's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Authority and resources used to pay for the capital spending. It represents the 2022/23 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Part of the Authority's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the Finance team organises the Authority's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies such as the Public Works Loan Board [PWLb], or as in 2022/23, utilising temporary cash resources from within the Authority.

The Authority's CFR is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Authority is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), to reduce the CFR and is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need.

The CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, i.e. capital receipts; or
- charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

The Authority's 2022/23 MRP Policy, as required by Welsh Government Guidance, was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2022/23.

The Authority's CFR for the year is shown in the table above, and represents a key prudential indicator. It includes PFI on the balance sheet, which increases the Authority's borrowing need although no borrowing is required as a borrowing facility is included in the contract.

Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

In order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent and are only for a capital purpose, the Authority should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total CFR in the preceding year (2021/22) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2022/23) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Authority is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. The table above highlights the Authority's gross borrowing position against the CFR and that the Authority has complied with this prudential indicator.

The authorised limit is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Authority does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2022/23 the Authority has maintained gross borrowing within its authorised limit.

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The operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Authority during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream - this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, i.e. borrowing and other long term obligations net of investment income, against the net revenue stream. The below table shows the financing costs are less than anticipated as a result of no new borrowing being taken in the year.

	2022/23 £000's
Authorised limit	48,000
Maximum gross borrowing position during the year	28,146
Operational boundary	46,000
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream estimate	6.85%
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream actual	6.10%

## Treasury Position as of 31st March 2022

The Authority's treasury management debt and investment position is organised by the finance team to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through member reporting detailed in the summary, and through officer activity detailed in the Authority's Treasury Management Practices. At the end of 2022/23 the Authority's treasury, (excluding borrowing by PFI and finance leases), position was as follows:

<b>Borrowing</b>	<b>22/23</b>
<b>PWLB</b>	
Opening Principal	28,138,845
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	-401,899
Maturity Principal Repaid	-1,000,000
Closing Principal	26,736,946
<b>Salix</b>	
Opening Principal	6,917
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	0
Maturity Principal Repaid	-6,917
Closing Principal	0
<b>Total</b>	
Opening Principal	28,145,762
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	-401,899
Maturity Principal Repaid	-1,006,917
Closing Principal	26,736,946
<b>Total principal paid</b>	<b>-1,408,816</b>

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The maturity structure of the debt portfolio as of 31 March 2022, was as follows:

<b>Maturing Within</b>	<b>PWLB Principal £</b>	<b>Average Rate</b>	<b>Non-PWLB</b>	<b>Total</b>
Less than 1 year	1,382,819	4.44	0	1,382,819
over 1 not over 2 years	1,394,739	4.45	0	1,394,739
over 2 not over 5 years	4,525,218	4.55	0	4,525,218
over 5 not over 10 years	9,334,169	3.58	0	9,334,169
over 10 not over 15 years	10,100,000	3.50	0	10,100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,736,946</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26,736,946</b>

The Authority held a balance of £2,163,212 of instant cash with our contracted bankers as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

There have been no changes to the Authority's risk appetite and no debt re-scheduling during the year as the average debt rate remains low at 3.80%.

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 9  
18 SEPTEMBER 2023**FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE ACO CORPORATE SERVICES

**INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT & AUDIT ACTION UPDATE****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ACO CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMP HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT  
PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN**SUMMARY**

This report updates Members upon progress being made against the Internal Audit Plans for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to note internal audit recommendations and work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 TIAA Limited have been appointed as the Authority's Internal Auditors to undertake work covered in the Internal Audit Plan as approved by the FAPM Committee.
- 1.2 As previously agreed, all audit reports with an assurance level of limited or no assurance will be provided in full. Recommendations only will be provided for reports with an assurance level of substantial or reasonable.

**2. ISSUES**

- 2.1 The areas of the internal annual audit plan that were completed with 4 final reports being issued and attached as appendices, are as follows:-
  - **Sustainable Procurement**
  - **Payroll**
  - **Review of Assets – Mobile Phones**
  - **Follow Up**

The Summary Internal Controls Progress Assurance (SICA) Report written by TIAA limited is attached as an appendice.

## **2.2 ASSURANCE REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT 2022/2023**

2.2.1 The review considered the arrangements in place to utilise procurement and supply chains to support social, economic, and environmental change.

2.2.2 The key findings are as follows:-

- Concerted activity has been undertaken by the Service to develop its sustainable procurement practices both individually and collaboratively with the other Welsh Fire & Rescue Services.
- Elements have already been embedded in processes relating to tender assessments and contract requirements and the Service has commenced a process of supplier engagement and work is ongoing to develop processes further.
- Recommendations have been made to support and enhance this developing area for the Service.

## **2.3 ASSURANCE REVIEW OF PAYROLL 2022/2023**

2.3.1 The review considered the arrangements for the creation, amendment, and deletion of payroll records; payment of travel, subsistence, and expenses; payment of allowances; pay awards; payment of salaries; and arrangements for recovery of payroll overpayments. The scope of the review did not include determination of salary scales, severance payments or pension arrangements.

2.3.2 Key findings are as follows:-

- There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities and effective separation of duties regarding payroll processes.
- Sample testing identified nine of a sample of ten overpayments related to late notification of change by staff to the Human Resources department.
- The salary field was left blank on 'Request for Contract to be Sent' forms in nine out of ten cases tested.

## 2.4 ASSURANCE REVIEW OF ASSETS – MOBILE PHONES 2022/2023 AUDIT PLAN

2.4.1 The review considered the administration of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service's mobile phones including recording, allocation, monitoring of use and disposal.

2.4.2 Key findings are as follows:-

- Appropriate arrangements are in place over the recording, allocating, and monitoring of mobile phones but improvements to governance arrangements and process efficiencies were also identified.
- Improvements to the governance arrangements include updating the ICT Plan, creating an ICT Asset Management Policy and associated procedure documents.
- Plans are in place to develop a more streamlined process for managing mobile phone records on the Asset Management System.
- Smartphone agreements had not been completed for the new iPhones 13s purchased in August 2022.

## 2.5 FOLLOW UP REVIEW 2022/2023

2.5.1 The review considered the progress made in implementing the recommendations from previous internal audit reports, as listed on page 1 of the audit report, and assessed the extent to which management has taken the necessary actions to address the control issues that gave rise to the recommendations.

2.5.2 Recommendations fell into the following evaluation categories with detailed descriptions and assessments being contained within the report itself.

Evaluation	Number of Recommendations
Implemented	18
Outstanding	11
Considered but not Implemented	1
Not Implemented	-

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

#### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	Yes
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	No
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

3.2.1 This report has been produced in accordance with the annual internal audit programme in discharging the Service's obligations for governance. Internal audit provides a system of control and assurance that provides oversight and assists the Service in achieving both compliance and maintaining standards.

#### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

### 4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The issues raised within this report have no adverse impact on the protected characteristics and would have been considered during the audit process.

### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Members are asked to note the internal audit recommendations and work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Mullan – Temp Head of Finance & Procurement
<b>Background Papers</b>	Appendix 1 – Sustainable Procurement Report Appendix 2 – Payroll Report Appendix 3 – Review of Assets – Mobile Phones Appendix 4 – Follow Up Review 2022/2023 Appendix 5 – SICA Report

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Internal Audit

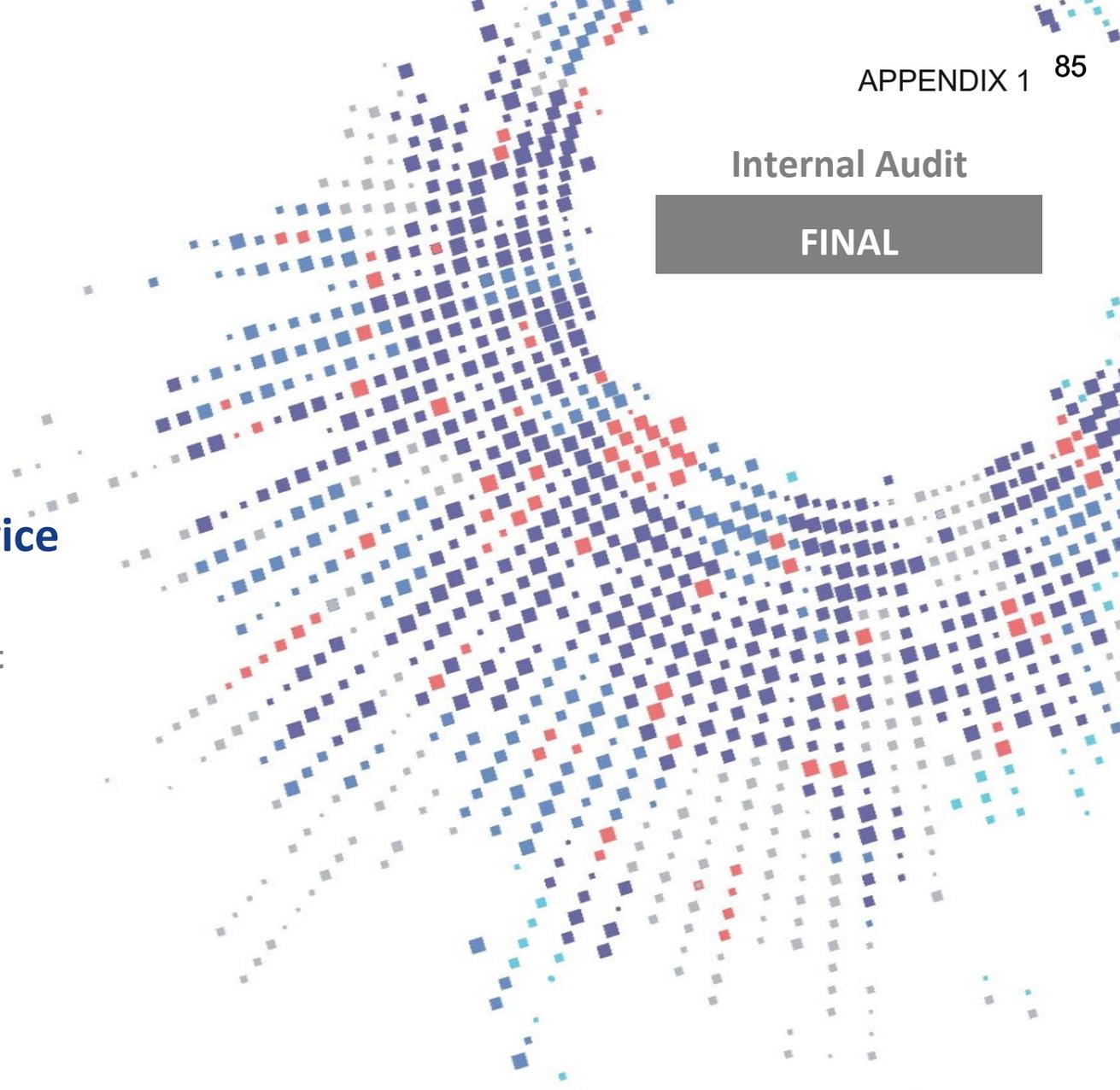
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## South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Assurance Review of Sustainable Procurement

**2022/23**

August 2023



## Executive Summary

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

**ASSURANCE OVER KEY STRATEGIC RISK / OBJECTIVE**

There are no departmental risks specific to sustainable procurement.

**SCOPE**

The review considered the arrangements in place to utilise procurement and supply chains to support social, economic and environmental change.

**KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS**

- Concerted activity has been undertaken by the Service to develop its sustainable procurement practices both individually and collaboratively with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services.
- Elements have already been embedded in different aspects of processes such as tender assessments and contract requirements and the Service has commenced a process of supplier engagement and work is ongoing to develop processes further.
- Recommendations have made to support and enhance this development.

**GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED**

- Procurement procedures make it mandatory for sustainability criteria to account for a minimum of 5% of the overall evaluation weighting within tenders.

**ACTION POINTS**

Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational
0	0	2	5

## Assurance - Key Findings and Management Action Plan (MAP)

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
1	Delivery	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are currently not members of the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG).	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to sign up to the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG).	3	<i>The EESG charter is currently waiting sign off from the chief but should be done imminently.</i>	30/09/23	Sustainability Officer
2	Delivery	Good practice identified at other TIAA clients is that their website is used to provide potential suppliers with information on procurement processes within the organisation. Typically, this might include how to become a supplier, procurement forward plans or information on current or pending tenders, links to where tender opportunities can be found, supplier terms and conditions and also information of procurement strategies, policies and related codes of practice.	Content be developed on the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service website to provide potential suppliers with information procurement processes within the organisation.	3	<i>The procurement pages are currently being reviewed and redesigned. This will include a "How to do Business" section for suppliers which will include information around the procurement strategy and actions to reduce carbon emissions.</i>	30/09/23	Procurement Officers

PRIORITY GRADINGS

**1** **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

**2** **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

**3** **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

## Operational - Effectiveness Matter (OEM) Action Plan

Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
1	Directed	<p>Analysis of examples of sustainable procurement policies at other TIAA clients identified that good practice content for such documents includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A definition of sustainable procurement</li> <li>• The aims and objectives of the policy</li> <li>• A description of the relative roles and responsibilities of for delivery the policy and associated actions or compliance.</li> <li>• The scope of the policy and their activities it seeks to cover.</li> <li>• The criteria by which the success or delivery of the strategy are to be assessed.</li> <li>• The associated actions and measures.</li> <li>• How awareness of the policy will be developed.</li> <li>• How the organisation seeks to ensure compliance with the policy.</li> <li>• The governance arrangements for monitoring and reporting (on the Policy).</li> <li>• Associated and linked Strategies and Policies.</li> <li>• The review period for the policy.</li> </ul>	<p>South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to consider the content noted in further development of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy.</p>	<p><i>Good practice is noted and will be considered when Sustainable Procurement Strategy is reviewed.</i></p>

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
2	Directed	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has a form called a 'Proc 5' which is used to record Pre-Procurement Actions for purchases over £25,000 in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations. This includes responses and feedback from departments such as Finance and Legal and also has a consultation section which considers the potential effect on other departments and also legal implications in terms of areas such as Welsh Language Standards, Equality, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and Data Protection.	Consideration be given to including the Sustainability Officer as a consultee on the 'Proc 5' form and/or effect on the Carbon Reduction Plan.	<i>In line with the mandatory sustainability criteria included in all prescribed procurements, procurement leads will recommend that contract managers discuss the specification with the Sustainability Officer as part of the pre-tender stage. The newly developed Sustainability Risk Assessment will require the Officers input prior to any procurement process taking place.</i>
3	Directed	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service does not currently record whether a supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) as part of the supplier set up, however, it was identified during the review that there may be a potential to include this on the Service's new supplier form and within the finance system.	Consideration be given to determining whether a supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) as part of the supplier set up and including that information within the finance system to enable reporting and analysis of SME suppliers used by the Service.	<i>This will be considered as part of our Procurement Form review. Discussion will be held with the Procurement system software provider to discuss the adding of an additional field to capture supplier status.</i>

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
4	Delivery	<p>TIAA has identified an example of good practice at one of our emergency services clients where a visit and tour of the waste management provider's recycling facility was undertaken. Part of the visit was to meet and speak with members of staff onsite and better understand the provider's employment practices helping to support and demonstrate the emergency service client's commitment to tackling and preventing modern day slavery. The provider was also requested to complete a self-assessment question in relation to modern day slavery and also pass the questionnaire on to their recruitment agencies.</p>	<p>Consideration be given to adopting similar practices where appropriate and practical with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's contracts.</p>	<p><i>Facilities Management staff have attended our Waste Management suppliers facility to review their recycling procedures.</i></p> <p><i>As part of the Services commitment to the Code of Practice for Ethical Employment in Procurement, questions are asked at tender stage to tackle Modern Slavery.</i></p>
5	Delivery	<p>In working with South Wales Fire and Rescue Services TIAA has noted as good practice how the Service seeks to align its strategies, policies and reporting to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and its Well-being Goals and Sustainable Development principles. It would be good practice to apply a similar approach to its sustainable procurement strategies and policies and the associated objectives, measures and outcomes.</p> <p>South Wales Fire and Rescue Services Strategic Plan 2020-2030 is good example of how this can be applied.</p>	<p>Consideration be given to including greater reference to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and its Well-being Goals and Sustainable Development principles in sustainable procurement strategies and policy documents and plans.</p>	<p><i>This is noted and will be considered.</i></p>

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

## Findings



**Directed Risk:**

Failure to properly direct the service to ensure compliance with the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation	Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
GF	<b>Governance Framework</b> There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.	In place	-	1
RM	<b>Risk Mitigation</b> The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.	In place	-	-
C	<b>Compliance</b> Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.	In place	-	2, & 3

### Other Findings



An all-Wales Fire and Rescue Service Procurement Strategy has been agreed between the Welsh Fire and Rescue Services which sets out the framework for procurement from 2022 to 2027 and which is deemed to be in line with the Welsh Government’s Welsh Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS, 2021). The Strategy includes the key aim of promoting sustainability practices in the Fire and Rescue Services’ procurement processes, aligned with Welsh Government’s net zero 2030 ambition.

## Other Findings

This Strategy is designed to take account of the following Welsh policies and encourage stakeholders to consider the long-term implications of each procurement activity.

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS);
- Prosperity for all: A Low Carbon Wales;
- The Future Generations Act Procurement Report 2020; and
- Wales "Beyond Recycling" Circular Economy Strategy.

The Strategy is overseen by the National Issues Committee (NIC) Strategic Procurement Board.



A draft Sustainable Procurement Policy has been produced which includes the following sections: background, a definition of sustainable procurement, the Services commitment, key aims and short, medium and long-term actions.



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Procurement Service Procurement Procedures has a section titled 'Sustainability and Environment' which outlines that purchasers 'must consider the environmental impact of products for the whole of its life and comply with the Carbon Reduction Plan.' Further that 'environmental impacts must be assessed by utilising either the Service's Sustainable Decision and Planning Framework Document or Well-being template depending on threshold.' The Procedures also make it mandatory for sustainability criteria to account for a minimum of 5% of the overall evaluation weighting within tenders.

The section also notes that the following areas should be considered when making procurements:

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle;
- Packaging;
- Operating Costs;
- Pollution; and
- Disposal.



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has a Carbon Reduction Plan for the period 2020-2023 and a Sustainability Officer has been appointed whose role included to further develop the plan and support sustainability and carbon reduction activities within the Service.

## Other Findings

- 

As noted, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service collaborates on procurement on an All-Wales basis with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services and also participates and obtains goods and services through a range of other consortia and frameworks. This includes development of an All-Wales Strategic Contract Plan which is led by a Strategic Procurement Board who advise on the strategic direction of procurement in the Welsh Fire and Rescue Service sector. The Strategic Procurement Board consists of the three Deputy Chief Fire Officers and procurement professionals from each Service.
- 

An invitation to tender document has been developed for use by the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services.

The common invitation tender document includes a section on Corporate Social Responsibility which references the Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains and also the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The invitation also has provision to outline where there is Welsh language requirement associated with the contract.
- 

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has been working with WRAP (Waste and Resources Action programme) to develop a sustainable procurement toolkit with support of an external consultant, Ricardo. The toolkit aims to help South Wales Fire and Rescue's procurement team to embed environmental sustainability into the procurement of services (including consultancy services), supplies/goods, and works.

The toolkit asks a series of questions and suggests next steps relating to environmental sustainability. Outcomes from this toolkit can help to decide which sustainability criteria will be mandatory within tenders, which will be scored and weighted as part of the technical envelope, and which will be set as Key Performance Indicators.

At the time of the internal audit review the toolkit was still under development but the intention was for an agreed template to be used for a pilot procurement as a trial.
- 

A quality and price assessment methodology is applied to the majority of most tenders invited by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Depending on the nature of the procurement South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's quality evaluation will include a percentage of the assessment related to supply chain and demand and also Corporate Social Responsibility. As noted, Procurement Procedures also make it mandatory for sustainability criteria to account for a minimum of 5% of the overall evaluation weighting within tenders.
- 

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service standard contract terms and conditions contains clauses in relation to discrimination and equality and human rights and environmental regulation.

**Delivery Risk:**

Failure to deliver the service in an effective manner which meets the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation		Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
PM	<b>Performance Monitoring</b>	There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.	In place	-	-
S	<b>Sustainability</b>	The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.	In place	-	4
R	<b>Resilience</b>	Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.	Partially in place	1 & 2	5

**Other Findings**

A Sustainable Procurement Priorities and Action Plan document has been developed which identified seven themes:

1. Leadership and Accountability to drive forward policy, initiatives, and sustainability;
2. Awareness and Knowledge;
3. Availability and Price: Market Engagement;
4. KPI's and targets;
5. Life Cycle Costs;
6. Product Quality; and
7. Procurement Process.

## Other Findings

The action plan consists of five recommendations, each with a series of actions against which, each has assigned responsibilities and target dates. The recommendations are:

- Engagement with suppliers to understand carbon baseline;
- Review Pre-Procurement stage to include completion of a preferred Sustainable Decision and Planning Framework tool for procurement above £120k in value;
- Inclusion of Sustainability as a mandatory criteria in procurements above £25k; and
- Include evaluation criteria around carbon reduction in procurements above £25k.



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has written to suppliers explaining their commitment to carbon reduction and sustainable procurement seeking feedback in terms of the following:

- Do you or your parent company already have Carbon Reduction Plans (CRPs) in place setting out your commitments and current emissions?
- Are you willing to cooperate to complete sustainability information requests and build a strategic relationship around sustainable procurement?
- Location of main operations.
- Are you at risk of not meeting SWFRS expectations of net zero by 2050?

The intention is to use the information gathered to work with the Service's suppliers in a collaborative way, setting challenging targets and to report on progress on the journey to become a carbon neutral organisation.

A Carbon Reduction Plan Template has also been produced to enable suppliers to record their baseline and current emissions footprint for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.



South Wales Fire & Rescue Service has adopted the Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Ethical Procurement in Supply Chains. This is designed to ensure that high-quality public services are delivered throughout Wales by a workforce that is treated legally, fairly and safely, and is well rewarded. This Code includes a commitment to consider promoting the Real Living Wage in relevant contracts.



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is currently not a member of the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG). This Sustainability Charter has been developed for members to pledge their support to work towards a set of common goals and aspirations, embed sustainability within their own organisations and achieve national and international sustainability objectives. The Charter has adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Group itself considers the following key themes: People, Planet and Public Purse.

## EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

## Appendix A

### Scope and Limitations of the Review

1. The definition of the type of review, the limitations and the responsibilities of management in regard to this review are set out in the Annual Plan. As set out in the Audit Charter, substantive testing is only carried out where this has been agreed with management and unless explicitly shown in the scope no such work has been performed.

### Disclaimer

2. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of the review, and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

### Effectiveness of arrangements

3. The definitions of the effectiveness of arrangements are set out below. These are based solely upon the audit work performed, assume business as usual, and do not necessarily cover management override or exceptional circumstances.

<b>In place</b>	The control arrangements in place mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Partially in place</b>	The control arrangements in place only partially mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Not in place</b>	The control arrangements in place do not effectively mitigate the risk from arising.

### Assurance Assessment

4. The definitions of the assurance assessments are:

<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>No Assurance</b>	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

**Acknowledgement**

- 5. We would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of our work.

**Release of Report**

- 6. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Stage	Issued	Response Received
<b>Audit Planning Memorandum:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
<b>Draft Report:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2023
<b>Final Report:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	

## AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM

## Appendix B

<b>Client:</b>	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service		
<b>Review:</b>	Sustainable Procurement		
<b>Type of Review:</b>	Assurance	<b>Audit Lead:</b>	Audit Manager

<b>Outline scope (per Annual Plan):</b>	The review considers the arrangements in place to utilise procurement and supply chains to support social, economic and environmental change.		
<b>Detailed scope will consider:</b>	<p>Directed</p> <p>Governance Framework: There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Risk Mitigation: The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.</p> <p>Compliance: Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.</p>	<p>Delivery</p> <p>Performance monitoring: There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.</p> <p>Sustainability: The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.</p> <p>Resilience: Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.</p>	
<b>Requested additions to scope:</b>	None		
<b>Exclusions from scope:</b>	As above		

<b>Planned Start Date:</b>	20/02/2023	<b>Exit Meeting Date:</b>	23/02/2023	<b>Exit Meeting to be held with:</b>	Senior Procurement Officer, Procurement Officer, Sustainability Officer
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**SELF ASSESSMENT RESPONSE**

<b>Matters over the previous 12 months relating to activity to be reviewed</b>	<b>Y/N (if Y then please provide brief details separately)</b>
Has there been any reduction in the effectiveness of the internal controls due to staff absences through sickness and/or vacancies etc?	N
Have there been any breakdowns in the internal controls resulting in disciplinary action or similar?	N
Have there been any significant changes to the process?	N
Are there any particular matters/periods of time you would like the review to consider?	N

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Internal Audit

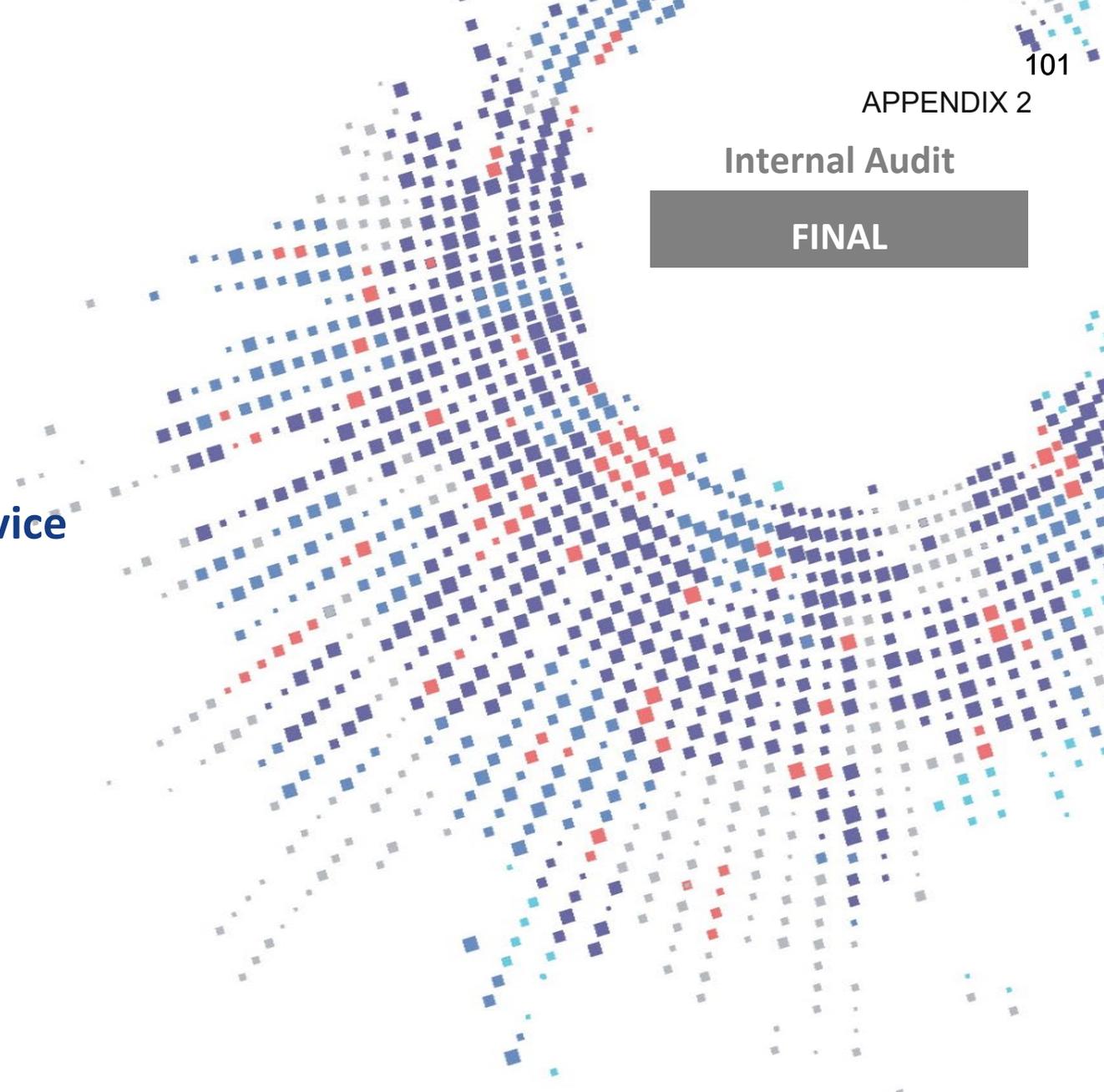
**FINAL**

## South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Assurance Review of Payroll

**2022/23**

**August 2023**



## Executive Summary

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

**ASSURANCE OVER KEY STRATEGIC RISK / OBJECTIVE**

There are no specific risks relating to Payroll in the latest Departmental Risk Register Report presented to the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee.

**KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS**

- There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities and effective separation of duties regarding payroll processes.
- Sample testing identified nine of a sample of ten overpayments related to late notification of change by staff to the Human Resources department.
- The salary field was left blank on Request for Contract to be Sent forms in nine out of ten cases tested.

**GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED**

- No additional areas of good practice were identified.

**SCOPE**

The review considered the arrangements for: the creation, amendment and deletion of payroll records; payment of travel, subsistence, and expenses; payment of allowances; pay awards; payment of salaries; and arrangements for recovery of payroll overpayments. The scope of the review did not include determination of salary scales, severance payments or pension arrangements.

**ACTION POINTS**

Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational
0	1	2	0

## Assurance - Key Findings and Management Action Plan (MAP)

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
3	Directed	Nine out of ten overpayments tested related to the late notification of change to Human Resources (HR).	Staff be reminded to notify HR of changes before the monthly Payroll run to avoid overpayments.	2	<i>A monthly reminder of deadlines for pay affective changes will be added to the Service Routine Notice.</i>	30/06/23	Employee Relations Manager
1	Directed	The Travelling, Subsistence, and Travel Time Claims procedures document is dated 26 March 2019 and was due to be updated in the third quarter of 2021.	The Travelling, Subsistence, and Travel Time Claims procedures be updated in line with the review timetable.	3	<i>I have sent the already revised policy to Jemma Wells Employee Relations Manager for her to check and advised that it can then be published.</i>	09/07/23	Payroll Manager
2	Directed	For all ten starters selected Request for Contract to be Sent forms were appropriately authorised and included the correct job title or grade, but the salary field was left blank.	HR staff be reminded to include salaries on the Request to Submit Contract forms.	3	<i>I have passed this information to the Recruitment team and requested that the salary field be completed in future.</i>	15/06/23	Employee Relations Manager

PRIORITY GRADINGS

**1** **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

**2** **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

**3** **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

## Operational - Effectiveness Matter (OEM) Action Plan

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Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
No Operational Effectiveness Matters were identified.				

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

## Findings



**Directed Risk:**

Failure to properly direct the service to ensure compliance with the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation		Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
GF	<b>Governance Framework</b>	There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.	Partially in place	1	-
RM	<b>Risk Mitigation</b>	The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.	In place	-	-
C	<b>Compliance</b>	Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.	Partially in place	2, & 3	-

### Other Findings



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service’s Financial Procedure Rules were under review at the time of the internal audit review. A recommendation relating to this has been made in previous Key Financial Controls review reports and is being followed up through TIAA’s annual follow-up review process.



The following procedural documents were reviewed during the audit:

## Other Findings

- Operational Procedure 02.036: Travelling, Subsistence and Travel Time Claims
- Procedures for setting up new starter ER and Payroll and ending an employee.
- Procedural Note for Running and Checking Core Expense
- Instructions on navigating the Core Expense system and how to complete a week-long expense run.
- Overpayment of Salaries and other payments – Repayment arrangements
- HR bulletin that makes clear the terms of recovery of overpayments made to current and former employees.

The Travelling, Subsistence and Travel Time Claims Procedure was last amended on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and was due to be reviewed in the third quarter of 2021/22 (Recommendation 1 refers). All other procedure documents were up to date.

 A sample of ten starters was selected to ensure Request to Commence Contract forms were in place and appropriately authorised, first month of pay agreed to their payroll record and Core Personal, and the start date on their Request to Commence Contract form agreed to Core. All starters had been appropriately authorised and entered onto Core, and correct pay was made in the first month of employment. In nine of the ten starters tested, the Request to Commence Contract form did not include the salary (Recommendation 2 refers).

 A sample of fifteen changes was selected for testing and agreed to supporting documentation and Core Personnel. All changes were processed in accordance with procedure with no exceptions noted.

 A sample of ten leavers was tested to ensure they had been appropriately removed from the system and payments stopped in line with their end date. One item was identified where the end date was in July 2022, but the last payment was made in September 2022. Explanation was given that auxiliary fire fighters are paid quarterly so the July-September period would be paid in September. This, however, resulted in an overpayment made that would need to be recovered (Recommendation 3 refers).

 A sample of three BACS payments from July 2022 to September 2022 was reviewed. It was confirmed that each BACS payment had appropriate review and dual authorisations at expected stages. BACS run totals were agreed to payroll data reports and confirmed that items in the error reports had been excluded.

## Other Findings

-  A sample of fifteen expenses was selected for testing. Expenses claims were reviewed to check that they had been appropriately reviewed and receipts were included where relevant. Testing was completed with no exceptions noted. For the three mileage claims included in the sample, distances were checked to confirm they agreed to miles claimed.
-  A data analytics exercise was undertaken to identify potential duplicate expense claims for a sample period incorporating all travel, allowance, and expenses from April-September 2022. One potential duplicate was identified, however, on further investigation, it was found that the claim was not a duplicate, but the staff member had entered identical dates for two separate claims. These dates spanned a two-week period, and each claim was for one week. There was no incorrect financial consequence of this and given the example was the only potential duplicate identified within the sample, no recommendation is made.

**Delivery Risk:**

Failure to deliver the service in an effective manner which meets the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation	Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
PM	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.	In place	-	-
S	<b>Sustainability</b> The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.	Out of scope	-	-
R	<b>Resilience</b> Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.	In place	-	-

**Other Findings**

-  Variance and Exception reports are produced monthly from Core Personnel and reviewed by the Payroll Manager. The reports include narrative explanations and are signed and dated as evidence of review. Exception and Variance Reports for August 2022 were provided during the audit and showed evidence of review.
-  HR and Payroll Documentation is stored digitally reducing the use of paper. Read only access was granted to CorePay, CorePersonnel, and CoreExpenses for the purposes of the review. Employee data is stored on the Core system and used to calculate payroll payments. Evidence given during the review included digital smart forms which have replaced paper forms as per the sustainability review. It was noted that during Covid more documentation was scanned and stored digitally for the ease of remote working demonstrating resilience.

## EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

## Appendix A

### Scope and Limitations of the Review

1. The definition of the type of review, the limitations and the responsibilities of management in regard to this review are set out in the Annual Plan. As set out in the Audit Charter, substantive testing is only carried out where this has been agreed with management and unless explicitly shown in the scope no such work has been performed.

### Disclaimer

2. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of the review, and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

### Effectiveness of arrangements

3. The definitions of the effectiveness of arrangements are set out below. These are based solely upon the audit work performed, assume business as usual, and do not necessarily cover management override or exceptional circumstances.

<b>In place</b>	The control arrangements in place mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Partially in place</b>	The control arrangements in place only partially mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Not in place</b>	The control arrangements in place do not effectively mitigate the risk from arising.

### Assurance Assessment

4. The definitions of the assurance assessments are:

<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>No Assurance</b>	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

### Acknowledgement

5. We would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of our work.

### Release of Report

6. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Stage	Issued	Response Received
<b>Audit Planning Memorandum:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
<b>Draft Report:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2023	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2023
<b>Final Report:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	

**AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM**

**Appendix B**

<b>Client:</b>	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service			
<b>Review:</b>	Payroll			
<b>Type of Review:</b>	Assurance	<b>Audit Lead:</b>	Senior Auditor	
<b>Outline scope (per Annual Plan):</b>	The review considers the arrangements for: the creation, amendment and deletion of payroll records; payment of travel, subsistence, and expenses; payment of allowances; pay awards; payment of salaries; and arrangements for recovery of payroll overpayments. The scope of the review does not include determination of salary scales, severance payments or pension arrangements.			
<b>Detailed scope will consider:</b>	<p>Directed</p> <p>Governance Framework: There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Risk Mitigation: The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.</p> <p>Compliance: Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.</p>	<p>Delivery</p> <p>Performance monitoring: There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.</p> <p>Sustainability: The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.</p> <p>Resilience: Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.</p>		
<b>Requested additions to scope:</b>	None.			
<b>Exclusions from scope:</b>	The scope of the review does not include determination of salary scales, severance payments or pension arrangements.			
<b>Planned Start Date:</b>	26/09/2022	<b>Exit Meeting Date:</b>	29/09/2022	<b>Exit Meeting to be held with:</b> Payroll Manager

<b>SELF ASSESSMENT RESPONSE</b>	
<b>Matters over the previous 12 months relating to activity to be reviewed</b>	<b>Y/N (if Y then please provide brief details separately)</b>
Has there been any reduction in the effectiveness of the internal controls due to staff absences through sickness and/or vacancies etc?	N
Have there been any breakdowns in the internal controls resulting in disciplinary action or similar?	N
Have there been any significant changes to the process?	N
Are there any particular matters/periods of time you would like the review to consider?	N



Internal Audit

FINAL

## South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Assurance Review of Assets - Mobile Phones

2023/24

August 2023

## Executive Summary

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT



### ASSURANCE OVER KEY STRATEGIC RISK / OBJECTIVE

There are no risks on the Risk Register that directly relate to Mobile Phones.

### KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS



Appropriate arrangements are in place over the recording, allocating, and monitoring of mobile phones but improvements to governance arrangements and process efficiencies were identified.



Improvements to the governance arrangements include updating the ICT Plan, and creating an ICT Asset Management Policy and procedure documents.



Plans are in place to develop a more streamlined process for entering and maintaining mobile phone records on the Asset Management System. In the interim there is duplication with spreadsheets used to record the issuing of the roll out of mobile phones prior to updating the Asset Management System.



Smartphone agreements had not been completed for the new iPhones 13s purchased in August 2022.

### GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED



Bi-annual spot checks are carried out by the ICT Service Management Team to verify assets with reports submitted to Finance at the year end.

### SCOPE

The review considered the administration of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's mobile phones including recording, allocation, monitoring of use and disposal.

### ACTION POINTS

Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational
0	4	5	0

## Assurance - Key Findings and Management Action Plan (MAP)

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
1	Directed	The ICT Plan 2019-2022 was provided for review during the audit which includes a mobile phone replacement plan to take place in 2021-22. The next plan is now overdue and has not yet been approved. A draft version of the next Plan was not ready for review at the time of the audit.	The next ICT Plan be drafted and approved to ensure continuity in strategic direction for ICT.	2	ICT Plan drafted and the ICT Annual Plan issued.	30/09/23	Head of ICT
3	Directed	The Appliance & Equipment (A&E) Note 52 - Mobile Telephones states that a smartphone agreement is completed for all smartphones issued to users. It was identified during the audit that smartphone agreements had not been completed for the new iPhone 13s purchased in August 2022.	Smartphone agreements be completed for all phones currently issued to users in compliance with A&E Note 52.	2	New electronic form has been created and will be sent to all users.	30/09/23	ICT Infrastructure Manager

PRIORITY GRADINGS

**1** **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

**2** **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

**3** **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
6	Directed	The Service does not currently have a separate ICT Asset Management Policy, or procedures detailing the process for tagging, recording, assigning, and monitoring ICT Assets. The Service Centre Manager is in the process of developing a policy with procedures, but a draft was not available for review at the time of the audit.	An ICT Asset Management Policy and procedures be drafted and approved as planned.	2	ICT Asset Management procedure to be approved.	01/11/23	ICT Service Manager
8	Directed	A complete and up to date list of mobile phones is maintained by the Infrastructure Team Manager, but all mobile phones have not yet been added to the Asset Management System, House on the Hill.	All assets be added to the Asset Management System, House on the Hill, at the point of purchase to comply with the Service's policy of maintaining a central asset inventory. This will facilitate sharing of information, monitoring, and ensure the consistency of data across platforms.	2	Completed.	N/A	ICT Infrastructure Manager

## PRIORITY GRADINGS

1

**URGENT**

Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2

**IMPORTANT**

Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3

**ROUTINE**

Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
2	Directed	The ICT Plan 2019-2022 states that the governance over ICT is exercised through the Director of Technical Services, Executive Leadership Team, ICT Strategic Steering Group and Asset Management Scrutiny Group. The ICT Strategic Steering Group is no longer meeting, and oversight of ICT is included in the Service Scrutiny Group, minutes, which were provided for review during the audit.	The Governance section in the new ICT plan be updated to reflect current governance arrangements.	3	<i>The new ICT Plan will be updated to reflect the governance.</i>	30/09/23	Head of ICT
4	Directed	A contract has not yet been awarded for disposal of mobile phones. Twenty-two iPhone 11s and approximately 300 iPhone 7s are ready for disposal but have not yet been resold or recycled.	A contract be awarded via the appropriate procurement process for the disposal of mobile phones.	3	<i>A new tender is being created for the purchase and disposal of mobile phones</i>	01/12/23	ICT Infrastructure Manager

PRIORITY GRADINGS

**1** **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

**2** **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

**3** **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
5	Directed	iPhone 7s ready for disposal are kept securely in boxes in the locked Waste Electrical Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Safe but a list of individual phones ready for disposal was not available during the audit. The phones ready for disposal need to be switched on to retrieve their serial and IMEI number to create a record of iPhone 7s ready for disposal.	A complete record of all phones ready for disposal be created.	3	<i>A list to be created of all mobile phones for disposal.</i>	01/12/23	ICT Infrastructure Manager
7	Directed	The activity of iPhones is detected on the Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) system. UEM is reviewed on an annual basis to identify inactive iPhones for insurance purposes.	Reports be run from UEM on a regular basis to identify any phones that are inactive and need to be returned to ICT because they are no longer needed or relate to leavers equipment held in departments but have not yet been returned.	3	<i>Reports to be run on a quarterly basis to identify phones that are unused. The first run to be undertaken in September.</i>	30/09/23	ICT Infrastructure Manager

## PRIORITY GRADINGS

1

**URGENT**

Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2

**IMPORTANT**

Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3

**ROUTINE**

Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
9	Directed	During the asset verification testing Asset Number 22232 was verified, but the user indicated that they did not currently use the iPhone and it was kept in an envelope in their desk. Through discussion with the Infrastructure Team Manager, it was understood that Station Managers had been issued with iPhones but since the move to Office 365 they no longer needed them, and a report was to be presented to senior managers to propose removing iPhones from station managers.	The report on station manager use of iPhones be completed and submitted for review, and a decision reached on assigning smartphones to station managers.	3	<i>A report will be created about mobile phones used by retained watch managers which will then be discussed with the Head of Operations.</i>	01/12/23	ICT Infrastructure Manager

PRIORITY GRADINGS

<b>1</b>	<b>URGENT</b>	Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.
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<b>2</b>	<b>IMPORTANT</b>	Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.
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<b>3</b>	<b>ROUTINE</b>	Control issue on which action should be taken.
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## Operational - Effectiveness Matter (OEM) Action Plan

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Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
No Operational Effectiveness Matters were identified.				

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

## Findings



**Directed Risk:**

Failure to properly direct the service to ensure compliance with the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation	Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
GF	<b>Governance Framework</b> There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.	Partially in place	1, 4, 5, 6, 9	-
RM	<b>Risk Mitigation</b> The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.	In place	-	-
C	<b>Compliance</b> Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.	Partially in place	2, 8	-

### Other Findings



There are no risks on the Strategic Risk Register that directly relate to mobile phones.



No previous audits of mobile phones have been performed by TIAA. The External Auditor's Report for 2021-22 does not include any matters relating to mobile phones.

## Other Findings

-  There is a Public Statement on Information Technology Policy (Corporate Policy 07) available on the website dated 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

This states that the Service is committed to develop strategies, plans and procedures across all areas of its business to ensure compliance with legislation and codes of practice; effective use is made of fixed and mobile technology to maximise service delivery while providing best value; business continuity is maintained; security and integrity of ICT systems is maintained; and systems are fit for purpose and enable effective service delivery.
-  The Service does not currently have an ICT Asset Management Policy in place, and there are no procedures in place for the asset tagging, recording on the asset management system, and assigning of ICT assets. The Service Centre Manager indicated during the audit that a policy and procedures documents were in development and a recommendation has been raised in this report to complete this intention.
-  The Appliance & Equipment (A&E) Note 52 - Mobile Telephones was provided for review and considers the function, specifications, method of use and limitations of Mobile Telephones. The Note details the procedures for issuing staff with a mobile phone and smartphone including for temporary use. The Note also details procedures for use and return of items.

Procedure documents for recording phones on the Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) system were provided for review. The Service has an iPhone returns procedure in place which was provided for review. The procedure details the steps to be followed when iPhones are returned to ensure the phone is secure and can be reset for a new user and removed from UEM and assigning the phone to ICT.
-  The approach to utilisation of information and communication technology (ICT) is set out in the Service's Strategic Plan 2020-2030 which includes a section on Using Technology Well. The four-year update on the plan reports on actions taken in 2022-23, and what is planned for 2023-24. The Strategic Plan and updates do not specifically reference mobile phones, but the plan gives an overview of the Service's commitment to using technology well by using the most suitable technology and equipment to improve services and reviewing the standard and use of technology and equipment across the service.

The ICT Plan 2019-2022 gives more detail on the implementation of the Strategic Plan in relation to technology and outlines a smartphone replacement plan to take place in 2021-22.
-  An appropriate procurement process was conducted for the purchase of new iPhones in July 2022 in line with the replacement programme set out in the ICT Plan 2019-2022. The Pre-procurement form for purchases over £20,000 was completed by the Infrastructure Team Manager on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Tenders from four providers and the Tender Evaluation document were provided for review during the audit. The acceptance letter, confirmation email dated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022, contract, and new supplier request form sent to the successful provider were also sighted during the review. The signed contract with Kingsfield Computer Products Ltd was sighted during the review and was dated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
-  Two entries on the finance system for the purchase of iPhones in August 2022 for a total of £116,680 were agreed to two invoices from Kingsfield IT. A sample of five serial numbers from each invoice was agreed to the asset list confirming that iPhones purchased had been appropriately assigned and recorded.

## Other Findings

- 

A sample of 15 mobile phones was selected from the asset list and verified with the user listed and the correct asset number was affixed to the phone in each case. A sample of 10 users was selected during the onsite visit and the asset number affixed to their phone was agreed to the asset list. Testing was completed with no exceptions giving assurance that appropriate records are kept of who phones are issued to and that assets are appropriately numbered and tagged.
- 

During the asset verification testing Asset Number 22232 was verified but the user indicated that they did not currently use the iPhone and it was kept in an envelope in their desk. Through discussion with the Infrastructure Team Manager, it was understood that part-time Station Managers had been issued with iPhones but since the move to Office 365 they no longer needed them. This is because Outlook can be accessed from their personal phones. The Infrastructure Manager states that the following controls are in place over data security when employees use their personal phones to access files and outlook: a Bring Your Own Device policy document is in draft with the Integrated Guidance and Control Team to detail what security is placed on phones, and a policy has been created within Microsoft 365 to match the policy document. A Report is due to be issued to Senior Management on part-time Station Managers use of smartphones and a recommendation has been raised that the report be completed and unused phones be returned to ICT.
- 

A complete and up to date asset list of mobile phones is kept on a spreadsheet maintained by the Infrastructure Team Manager. Phones are recorded on this spreadsheet when they are assigned to users and uploaded to UEM but are not currently added to the Asset Management System, House on the Hill (HoTH) at point of purchase. This is due to time constraints when large volumes of phones are purchased at the same time and need to be assigned to users and put into use quickly. The list is then submitted to the ICT Service Manager's team for entry onto HoTH but at the time of the audit the migration of data from the asset list to HoTH was not complete, with approximately 10% of phones not yet added to HoTH.

The use of a spreadsheet in addition to HoTh creates a duplication and inefficiency in the recording, assigning and monitoring process. This was discussed with the Infrastructure Team Manager and ICT Service Manager who agreed that mobile phones should be entered into HoTh at point of purchase following a similar process to laptops. When a large batch of mobile phones is purchased an upload file will be prepared for HoTh which will automatically create sequentially numbered records for the mobile phones. This will improve efficiency and reduce the risk of human error through manual entry. A recommendation has been made in this report to complete the process of recording all phones currently held on the spreadsheet onto HoTh.

## Other Findings



iPhones 11s ready for disposal that are still usable are recorded on a separate tab of the mobile telephone asset list spreadsheet and kept in the locked ICT Project Store which is only accessible to ICT Staff via fob entry. These iPhones are kept as temporary phones in case a member of staff breaks or loses their phone. A sample of five iPhones ready for disposal was selected for testing and verified in the Project Store with no exceptions noted.

iPhones 7s that are no longer functional are kept in boxes in the WEEE Safe in an area outside the head office. Keys to the safe are kept in a locked box in an office with fob access and a combination is needed to retrieve the keys. There is no list available for these phones, but there are approximately 300 iPhone 7s awaiting disposal in the WEEE safe. A recommendation was raised to create a complete record of all phones ready for disposal and for all data to be wiped ready for disposal.

The physical controls over iPhones ready for disposal were observed during an onsite visit during the audit.



No iPhones have yet been disposed of as a contractor has not yet been selected for the reselling and recycling of mobile phones. Two proposals were provided for review projecting a return of £29,585 and £15,903 respectively. The proposals are based on 300 iPhone 7 Plus phones and 49 iPhone 11 phones ready for disposal together with three other iPhones and an iPad. A recommendation has been raised to complete the tender process and proceed with the disposal of mobile phones.



Smartphones are assigned to users based on role when starting, and new requests for a mobile phone must be supported by a business case. HR notify ICT of leavers and leavers must hand in any equipment to ICT on their last day. Testing performed did not identify any mobile phones that were assigned to members of staff who had left the Service. All phones verified, and all inactive phones investigated during the audit related to mobile phones assigned to current employees. The Infrastructure Team Manager stated that there have been a small number of occasions when leavers have not returned their equipment.



All iPhones are recorded on the UEM system managed by Apple that records the data and time of last use. This enables the Service to identify phones that are inactive. The list is checked on an annual basis to verify assets for insurance purposes. A recommendation has been raised to perform regular checks of the UEM system to identify inactive assets that may be lost or may be leavers equipment that has not yet been returned to ICT.



At the time of the internal audit review seven iPhone 13s had been inactive for over one month. In all cases reasonable explanations were given including five staff members being on long term leave, one recently returned on a reduced homeworking basis, and one having reported their mobile phone lost. For the member of staff whose phone had been reported lost, call notes were provided and the electronic form reporting the asset as lost (O39 Form) was also provided for review.



**Delivery Risk:**

Failure to deliver the service in an effective manner which meets the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation		Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
PM	Performance Monitoring	There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.	Partially in place	3, & 7	-
S	Sustainability	The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.	In place	-	-
R	Resilience	Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.	In place	-	-

**Other Findings**

-  Internal spot-checks of assets are performed bi-annually when reports are sent to the insurers and to the Finance team. A record of assets that have been checked with the date of the audit check is sent to Finance along with the complete asset list and disposals list for the year end. The asset list, disposals list, and record of spot-checks for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 sent to Finance on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were provided for review during the audit. The list of assets by location sent to the insurance company was also provided for review.
-  An extract from the Business Management Information System (BMIS) used to monitor implementation of the Strategic Plan was provided for review. Item ICT22.06 is a task from the Business Action Plan to replace the currently in use iPhone 7 Plus mobile phone devices with new devices linked into Office 365 implementation. Updates on the item show the progress from completion of tender to deployment of iPhone 13 devices to users. Review of the BMIS item gives assurance over the appropriate monitoring of progress against mobile phone related tasks linked to the Strategic Plan.

## Other Findings

-  Mobile usage is monitored by the Communications team who are notified if any users go over their data allowance. Users are notified and any additional charges are charged to the individual.
- In cases where staff members have far exceeded their data allowance an email is sent to the relevant Head of Service to have a conversation with the member of staff to understand the reasons for far exceeding their data use and outline guidance on managing data use. A guidance document on managing data is provided by the Communications Team for discussion with the staff member and was sighted during the review. An example email from ICT to a Head of Service about a member of staff who had far exceeded their data usage in two consecutive months was provided as evidence of the monitoring process.
-  Oversight of mobile phones is performed through the monthly ICT Managers meetings in the first instance. Additional oversight is provided by the Executive team, the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee, and the Scrutiny Group. Minutes to the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee from March 2023 and from the Scrutiny Group from September 2022 to April 2023 were provided for review. Review of minutes did not indicate that mobile phones had been discussed but if a risk or significant decision relating to mobile phones were to arise it would be highlighted at these groups.
- The latest ICT Plan 2019-2022 references the ICT Strategic Steering Group, and Asset Management Scrutiny Group that are no longer meeting. A recommendation was raised to update the governance arrangements in the new ICT Plan.
-  Discussion with the Infrastructure Team Manager indicated that the iPhone replacement programme would be completed in two parts with the first purchase completed in 2022/23 and the second scheduled for 2023/24. This was evidenced in the Business Management Information System showing preparation for tender to purchase the remaining iPhones started on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. During the audit it was identified that the second phase of the replacement programme had not been included in the ICT revenue budget for 2023/24. This exclusion was an oversight and was rectified during the course of the audit. An invitation to tender is due to go out in August 2023.

## EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

## Appendix A

### Scope and Limitations of the Review

1. The definition of the type of review, the limitations and the responsibilities of management in regard to this review are set out in the Annual Plan. As set out in the Audit Charter, substantive testing is only carried out where this has been agreed with management and unless explicitly shown in the scope no such work has been performed.

### Disclaimer

2. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of the review, and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

### Effectiveness of arrangements

3. The definitions of the effectiveness of arrangements are set out below. These are based solely upon the audit work performed, assume business as usual, and do not necessarily cover management override or exceptional circumstances.

<b>In place</b>	The control arrangements in place mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Partially in place</b>	The control arrangements in place only partially mitigate the risk from arising.
<b>Not in place</b>	The control arrangements in place do not effectively mitigate the risk from arising.

### Assurance Assessment

4. The definitions of the assurance assessments are:

<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>No Assurance</b>	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

### Acknowledgement

5. We would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of our work.

### Release of Report

6. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Stage	Issued	Response Received
<b>Audit Planning Memorandum:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
<b>Draft Report:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2023
<b>Final Report:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	

# AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM

## Appendix B

<b>Client:</b>	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service		
<b>Review:</b>	Assets - Mobile Phones		
<b>Type of Review:</b>	Assurance	<b>Audit Lead:</b>	Principal Auditor

<b>Outline scope (per Annual Plan):</b>	The review will consider the administration of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service’s mobile phones including recording, allocation, monitoring of use and disposal.		
<b>Detailed scope will consider:</b>	<p>Directed</p> <p>Governance Framework: There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Risk Mitigation: The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.</p> <p>Compliance: Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.</p>	<p>Delivery</p> <p>Performance monitoring: There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.</p> <p>Sustainability: The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.</p> <p>Resilience: Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.</p>	
<b>Requested additions to scope:</b>	None		
<b>Exclusions from scope:</b>	As above.		

<b>Planned Start Date:</b>	03/07/2023	<b>Exit Meeting Date:</b>	06/07/2023	<b>Exit Meeting to be held with:</b>	Infrastructure Team Manager
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### SELF ASSESSMENT RESPONSE

<b>Matters over the previous 12 months relating to activity to be reviewed</b>	<b>Y/N (if Y then please provide brief details separately)</b>
Has there been any reduction in the effectiveness of the internal controls due to staff absences through sickness and/or vacancies etc?	N
Have there been any breakdowns in the internal controls resulting in disciplinary action or similar?	N
Have there been any significant changes to the process?	N
Are there any particular matters/periods of time you would like the review to consider?	N

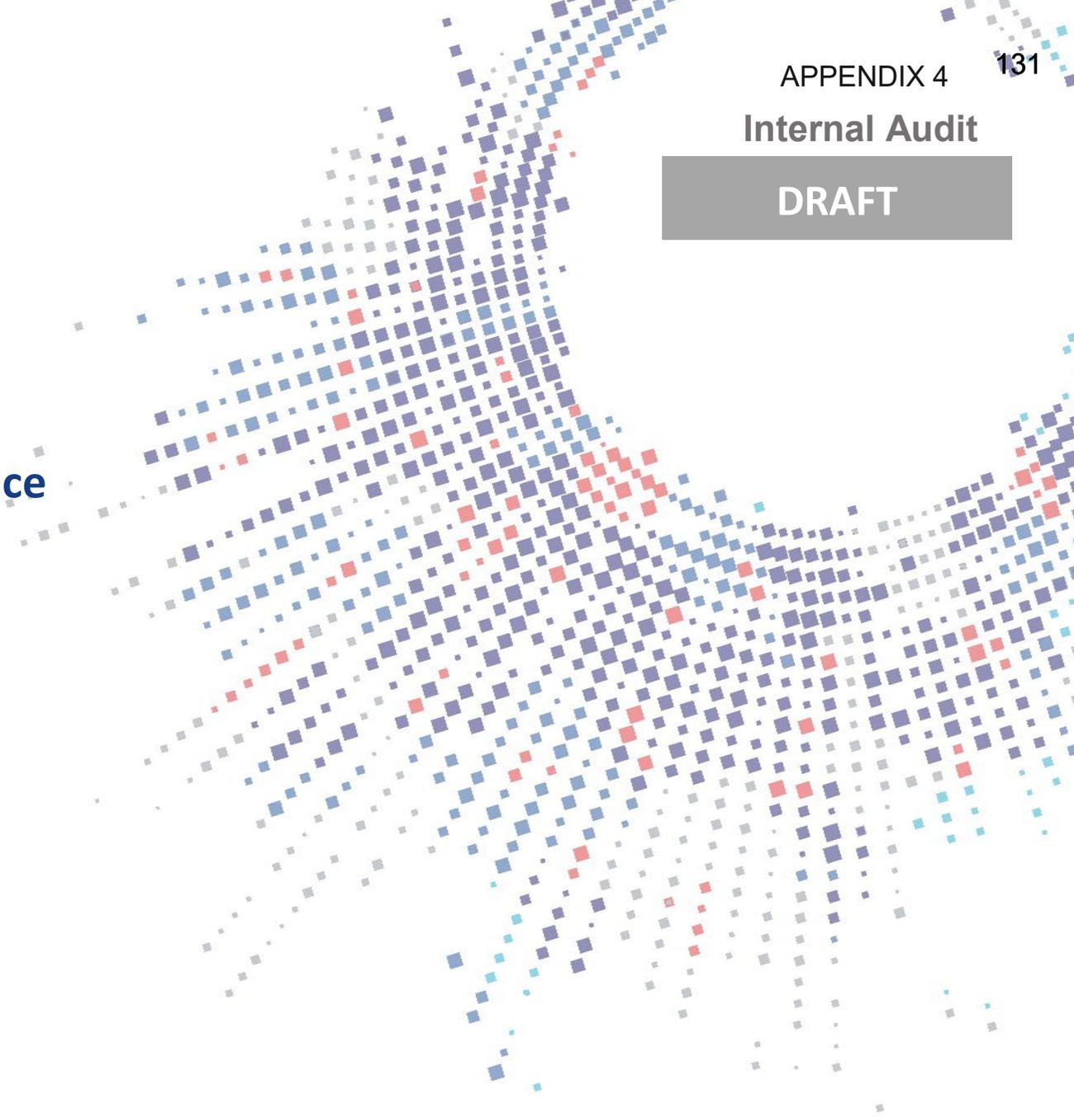
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# South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Follow Up Review

**2022/23**

April 2023



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

1. This follow up review by TIAA established the management action that has been taken in respect of the recommendations arising from the internal audit reviews listed below at South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The review was carried out in Quarter 4 2022/23.

Review	Year	Date Presented to Finance and Performance Management Committee (FAPM)
HR Management – Rosters	2018/19	September 2019
ICT Strategy	2019/20	September 2019
Communications	2020/21	July 2020
20/21 Procurement	2020/21	November 2020
20/21 Estate Management - Delivery	2020/21	March 2021
20/21 Key Financial Controls	2020/21	March 2021
20/21 Sustainability: Paper Usage	2020/21	March 2021
20/21 Outside Commitments, Personal and Business Interests	2020/21	July 2021
21/22 Core HR	2021/22	March 2021

Review	Year	Date Presented to Finance and Performance Management Committee (FAPM)
21/22 Payment Cards	2021/22	September 2021
21/22 Safeguarding	2021/22	December 2021
21/22 Death in Service Scheme	2021/22	April 2022
21/22 Equality and Diversity	2021/22	April 2022
21/22 Mitigating Controls	2021/22	July 2022
21/22 Station Visits	2021/22	July 2022

### Key Findings & Action Points

2. The follow up review considered whether the management action taken addresses the control issues that gave rise to the recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against misstatement or loss. From the work carried out the following evaluations of the progress of the management actions taken to date have been identified.

Evaluation	Number of Recommendations
Implemented	18
Outstanding	11
Considered but not Implemented	1
Not Implemented	-

3. The majority (60%) of recommendations have been implemented. Implementation was found to be in progress for all those recommendations identified as outstanding. Revised target dates will need to be determined where not identified. An outstanding recommendation relating to HR Management – Rosters has been re-raised in a review of the system undertaken in 2022/23 and will therefore be closed for the purpose of monitoring.

### Scope and Limitations of the Review

4. The review considered the progress made in implementing the recommendations made in the previous internal audit reports and established the extent to which management has taken the necessary actions to address the control issues that gave rise to the internal audit recommendations.
5. The responsibility for a sound system of internal controls rests with management and work performed by internal audit should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses that may exist. Neither should internal audit work be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity, should there be any, although the audit procedures have been designed so that any material irregularity has a reasonable probability of discovery. Even sound systems of internal control may not be proof against collusive fraud.
6. For the purposes of this review reliance was placed on management to provide internal audit with full access to staff and to accounting records and transactions and to ensure the authenticity of these documents.

**Disclaimer**

- 7. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of our work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

**Release of Report**

- 8. The table below sets out the history of this report.

<b>Date draft report issued:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
<b>Date management responses rec'd:</b>	
<b>Date final report issued:</b>	

## Executive Summary

### Follow Up

9. Management representations were obtained on the action taken to address the recommendations and limited testing has been carried out to confirm these management representations. The following matters were identified in considering the recommendations that have not been fully implemented:

#### 10. HR Management – Rosters

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>HR Management – Rosters</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2018/19	<b>Priority</b>	2
<b>Recommendation</b>	Reporting of Crew Manager and Watch Manager over and under availability be developed and reported to management alongside the existing performance data.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	Meeting to be arranged with Kronos to discuss reporting system on RAPS.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Office Manager	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2019	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Latest Update</b>	<p>South Wales Fire and Rescue Service have a number of open cases with Kronos that they are working to resolve and have needed to take priority. Staff resource and absence have also impacted upon the team's ability to produce crewing reports with optimum crewing reporting also having been put on hold in the three months prior to the follow up review in January 2023.</p> <p>An internal audit review of rosters has been undertaken in 2022/23 which re-raised this recommendation, therefore it will be closed for the purposes of monitoring.</p>				
<b>New implementation date</b>	N/A	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Recommendation to be closed – superseded by new recommendation.	

11. **ICT Strategy**

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>ICT Strategy</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2019/20	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Red Kite Assets system be incorporated into the central data hub to provide an overarching asset management system in accordance with the ICT Strategy.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	The tender specification for the new Asset Management System included requirements for replacing the Red Kite System. However other areas of the service are currently being integrated into the new Asset Management System with the Red Kite System being left until last as this had a useable system and some other areas did not. ICT Applications Manager will meet with the Head of Operational Risk Management to discuss integrating the Red Kite System into the new Asset management System. Note: The implementation date is for the decision to integrate the Red Kite System following extensive research and consultation.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	ICT Applications Manager	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2022
<b>Latest Update</b>	Working with the current ICT Asset Management System supplier a test system was built, cloud-based, asset system for the management of firefighting equipment. Although an attempt was made to follow a similar process flow as the Redkite software the test system was not able to perform some of the tasks as efficiently as the current Redkite application. It was also highlighted that it would be difficult to separate the ICT assets from the Operational Firefighting Equipment assets due to limitations within the configuration. In consultation with Operational Risk Management and end users it was felt that the limitations and potential issues did not warrant continuing with the trial and it was decided that Redkite would continue to be used for operational firefighting equipment.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	N/A	<b>Status</b>	Considered but not Implemented	Recommendation to be closed.	

12. **Communications**

All recommendations have been implemented.

## 13. Procurement

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Procurement</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Sustainable Procurement Policy 2020 be reviewed and approved by the Senior Management Team.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	The draft Sustainable Procurement Policy will be reviewed and amended as appropriate.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Procurement Officer	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	N/A
<b>Latest Update</b>	The Sustainable Procurement Policy will be reviewed in line with the All Wales working group that has recently been implemented. The outcomes of the working group will feed into the Sustainable Procurement Policy review.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	TBC	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Procurement</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The latest version of the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement be uploaded to the Authority's website.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	The Modern Slavery Statement forms part of the Code of Practice for Ethical Employment. Procurement will work with HR to draft and seek approval of the statement.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Procurement Officer and HR Manager	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31/03/2022
<b>Latest Update</b>	The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement is yet to be uploaded to the Authority's website.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	TBC	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

## 14. Estate Management Delivery

All recommendations have been implemented.

15. **Key Financial Controls**

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Key Financial Controls</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	2
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Financial Procedure Rules be reviewed and updated as previously agreed.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	COVID disrupted the plan to research and consult and so this work was postponed during 2020/21 and is now scheduled in 2021/22.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Accountant	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31st August 2022
<b>Latest Update</b>	A draft Financial Procedure Rules document has been developed. A date has been set in April 2023 for the Finance team to undertake a final review prior to seeking approval through the Finance, Assurance and Performance Meeting.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	<b>Status</b>	Outstanding	Implementation is in progress.	

16. **Sustainability: Paper Usage**

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Sustainability: Paper Usage</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	2
<b>Recommendation</b>	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service formally document its waste pathways into and out of the organisation and continue to keep this document up to date to support delivery of the Carbon Reduction Plan 2020-2030.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	A review of waste management across the service is currently underway. The aim is to reduce overall waste, recycle where possible and to standardise the approach across all of our sites.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Procurement Officer	<b>Original implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Latest Update</b>	The Waste Collection contract is currently out to tender with a start date of 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023. One of the key drivers in going to the marketplace is the need to collect data on waste streams in order to make improvements and reduce the amount the Fire Service is producing.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	<b>Status</b>	Outstanding	Implementation is in progress.	

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Sustainability: Paper Usage</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	2
<b>Recommendation</b>	Data be developed on paper usage and waste disposal through implementation of the projects in place to procure alternative printer and waste collection services.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	Improvements in data capture and reporting are part of the review mentioned above. This will be further enhanced with the appointment of the Sustainability officer within the team.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Procurement Officer	<b>Original implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Latest Update</b>	Historically issues with printing have been due to paper quality. A new contract has been awarded for the service MFD's and printers which should enable the capture of data on paper usage. The Services Waste Management contracts is currently out to tender with a start date of 1 <sup>st</sup> April 23.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	<b>Status</b>	Outstanding	Implementation is in progress.	

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Sustainability: Paper Usage</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	Periodic waste audits be implemented to examine the volumes and variations in waste across the organisation and to physically inspect locations to identify wasteful practices.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	This too forms part of the waste management review and will be implemented along with the other findings.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Senior Procurement Officer	<b>Original implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Latest Update</b>	Waste audits have been specified in the tender for the services waste management contract. This is aimed to commence in line with the contract start date – 1 <sup>st</sup> April 23.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	<b>Status</b>	Outstanding	Implementation is in progress.	

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Sustainability: Paper Usage</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2020/21	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The review of how Fire Authority, Committee and Senior Management Team papers are distributed be undertaken as planned.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	Discussions will be held with Fire Authority Members and SMT to review the best options for reducing the need for paper reports.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Head of Corporate Support	<b>Original implementation date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Latest Update</b>	<p>The Senior Management Team have now been issued with i-Pads to reduce the need to print paper copies of documents. The review of the Fire Authority and other Committees paper distribution is still to be undertaken.</p> <p>Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Committee receive paper copies. The next step would be to look at a more inclusive digitised method of records management regarding papers and publication of papers.</p>				
<b>New implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

17. **Outside Commitments, Personal and Business Interests**

All recommendations have been implemented.

18. **Core HR**

All recommendations have been implemented.

## 19. Payment Cards

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Payment Cards</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2021/22	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The new Purchasing Card Policy be approved by the Treasurer before being rolled out for use.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	Research is required to draft an initial policy which we will then take through various stages of scrutiny before implementation.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Temp Head of FP&P	<b>Original implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	NA
<b>Latest Update</b>	The Policy has been approved and has gone to Senior Management Team for approval.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Payment Cards</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2021/22	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Cardholder limits be updated within the Purchasing Cardholder Policy when it is reviewed to reflect the current arrangements.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	Agreed, limits were increased as a temporary measure due to COVID-19 pandemic and these need to be reviewed and brought back to 'normal levels'. Research into acceptable limits for staff segments will determine where these will final settle. The review will also take a fresh look at which segments of staff should have access to a credit card.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Temp Senior Accountant / Temp Head of FP&P	<b>Original implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	NA
<b>Latest Update</b>	Cardholder limits have been reviewed and included in the revised Policy which has gone to Senior Management Team for approval.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

20. **Safeguarding**

<b>Audit title</b>	<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>Audit year</b>	2021/22	<b>Priority</b>	3
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Safeguarding structure and governance arrangements be defined and clearly outlined within the new Safeguarding Procedure with roles and responsibilities included in job descriptions as planned.				
<b>Initial management response</b>	The SG structure will be included within the revised SG policy and procedures. This will include roles and responsibilities at all levels. The policy is currently under review and will be published with all necessary amendments.				
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>Original implementation date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2022	<b>Revised implementation date(s)</b>	NA
<b>Latest Update</b>	The restructure has been undertaken. Through the restructure a new post of Safeguarding Practitioner has been created. This post was awaiting advertisement at the time of the internal audit review. The new Safeguarding Procedure will be updated upon their appointment.				
<b>New implementation date</b>	TBC	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Implementation is in progress.	

21. **Death in Service Scheme**

All recommendations have been implemented.

22. **Equality and Diversity**

All recommendations have been implemented.

23. **Mitigating Controls**

All recommendations have been implemented.

24. **Station Visits**

All recommendations have been implemented.

25. The following recommendations have been implemented.

Audit Title	Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Officer	Due Date
Communications	To help support the Strategy aims noted, it is recommended that the objectives and estimated social media interaction at the outset of the campaign are incorporated into the campaign evaluations to provide a comparison of how the campaign performed against the original targets set.	2	Head of Service Performance and Communications	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2020
Core HR	Given the number of projects in progress or identified for future development and recognising that the Service has finite resources to deliver the improvements, it is recommended that a process of prioritisation is applied to ensure that the benefits of the system are maximised.	2	Andrew Jones	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Core HR	Feedback from users whose work is affected by Core HR be obtained with a view to collating the historic issues and establish working groups to clarify and rectify the concerns identified. Timetable: 30/07/22 Officer: Payroll Manager / Financial Accountant	2	Accountant People Services/Payroll Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2022
Core HR	The risks relating to reliance on the Core HR Support and Development Officer be considered and arrangements be put in place to provide resilience. Timetable: 30/07/22 Officer: Head of Human Resources	2	Andrew Jones	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Death in Service Scheme	A decision be made on whether maintaining the Death in Service spreadsheet causes a duplication of efforts that may increase the risk of human error being made in relation to calculating Death in Service Scheme donations.	2	Julia Thompson (Pension Liaison Officer)	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
Procurement	The Authority's Action Plan for meeting the Commitments in the Welsh Governments' Code of Practice – Ethical Employment in Supply Chains be reviewed by HR to assign responsibilities and implementation target dates.	3	Senior Procurement Officer and HR Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021
Estate Management - Delivery	Stock and Asset Condition Surveys are routinely undertaken to inform on what assets required maintenance.	3	Building and Maintenance Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
Outside Commitments, Personal and Business Interests	The Outside Employment procedure be reviewed, updated and approved as planned.	3	Employee Relations Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021

Audit Title	Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Officer	Due Date
Payment Cards	The requirement to use a Pinsentry card reader be included within the Purchasing Card Policy when the policy undergoes a review.	3	Temp Senior Accountant	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Safeguarding	A full review of the Safeguarding Database be undertaken to ensure that records are correct and up to date.	3	Designated Safeguarding Lead	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Safeguarding	A Terms of Reference be developed for the Strategic Safeguarding Group setting out the role and responsibility of the Group and all meetings of the Group to be formally minuted.	3	Designated Safeguarding Lead	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Safeguarding	The NFCC Safeguarding Action Plan be updated to ensure that all necessary information is included on the Plan and to include commentary and information on what has been done to mark off actions as complete.	3	Designated Safeguarding Lead	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Safeguarding	The Safeguarding Database be amended by ICT so that the key fields are marked as mandatory thus preventing cases from being closed or marked as completed without all necessary fields being completed.	3	Designated Safeguarding Lead	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Safeguarding	Staff be reminded to close down safeguarding concerns in a timely manner once action has been completed.	3	Designated Safeguarding Lead	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
Equality and Diversity	The controls for Risk ID 210 Equality and Diversity be updated to reflect the change in name of the Inclusivity Group to the Inclusive Workforce Group.	3	Kevin Rudge BMIS Team	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
Equality and Diversity	The Annual Equality Report for 2020/21 be reviewed, approved and published as planned.	3	Carey Wood E&D Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
Mitigating Controls	The responsibility for control tasks be reviewed and updated as required as part of the period performance review to help ensure that the RAG rating is updated and a comment is provided as to the implementation of the control task. Where the responsibility is yet to be determined the control task be assigned to the risk owner until such time as a decision is made.	3	Head of Service Performance and Communications	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
Station Visits	Actions arising from each station visit report be recorded on BMIS be as planned.	3	GM John Treherne	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2022

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Internal Audit

FINAL



South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Summary Internal Controls Assurance (SICA) Report

2023/24

August 2023

## Summary Internal Controls Assurance

### Introduction

1. This summary controls assurance report provides the Finance Audit and Performance Management (FAPM) Committee with an update on the emerging Governance, Risk and Internal Control related issues and the progress of our work at South Wales Fire and Rescue Service as of 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
2. The Executive Summaries and the Management Action Plans for each of the finalised reviews are within meeting papers. There are no issues arising from these findings which would require the annual Head of Audit Opinion to be qualified.

### Audits completed since the last SICA report to the FAPM Committee

3. The table below sets out details of audits finalised since the previous meeting of the FAPM Committee.

*Audits completed since previous SICA report*

Review	Evaluation	Key Dates			Number of Recommendations			
		Draft issued	Responses Received	Final issued	1	2	3	OEM
<b>2022/23</b>								
Sustainable Procurement	Reasonable	06/04/2023	21/08/2023	21/08/2023	-	-	2	5
Payroll	Reasonable	02/06/2023	21/08/2023	21/08/2023	-	1	2	-
Follow Up	N/A	05/04/2023	21/08/2023	21/08/2023	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2023/24</b>								
Assets - Mobile Phones	Reasonable	27/07/2023	02/08/2023	21/08/2023	-	4	5	-

### Progress against the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Annual Plans

4. Our progress against the Annual Plan for 2022/23 is set out in Appendix A and against the Annual Plan for 2023/24 Appendix B.

### Frauds/Irregularities

5. We have not been advised of any frauds or irregularities in the period since the last SICA report was issued.

**Other Matters**

6. We have issued the following briefing notes and fraud digests through the Client Portal, shown in Appendix B, since the previous SICA report.

Briefing Note
Guidance issued by HMRC on tax avoidance schemes
Fraud Alert
Payment Systems Regulator confirms new requirements for Authorised Push Payment fraud reimbursement
Jail sentence for fraudster after £660K fake invoice scam

**Responsibility/Disclaimer**

7. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. The matters raised in this report not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

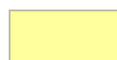
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## Progress against Annual Plan 2022-23

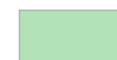
System	Planned Quarter	Current Status	Comments
Collaboration – Co-location	1	Fieldwork commenced	Draft report pending
Rosters	1	Final Report Issued: 19/12/2022	Presented to February 2023 meeting
Human Resources Management – Wellbeing	1	Final Report Issued: 09/11/2022	Presented to November 2022 meeting
Station Visits	2	Final Report Issued: 26/05/2023	Presented to July 2023 meeting
Payroll	2	Final Report Issued: 21/08/2023	Presented to September 2023 meeting
Contract Management	2	Fieldwork completed	Draft report pending
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	2	Final Report Issued: 08/11/2022	Presented to November 2022 meeting
ICT Network Security	3	Final Report Issued: 11/11/2022	Presented to February 2023 meeting
Key Financial Controls	3	Final Report Issued: 15/02/2023	Presented to February 2023 meeting
Risk Management – Mitigating Controls	3	Final Report Issued: 21/03/2023	Presented to July 2023 meeting
Human Resources Management – Training	3	Final Report Issued: 07/12/2022	Presented to February 2023 meeting
Sustainable Procurement	4	Draft Report Issued: 21/08/2023	Presented to September 2023 meeting
Follow Up	4	Final Report Issued: 21/08/2023	Presented to September 2023 meeting
Annual Planning	1	Final issued: 20/04/2022	
Annual Report	4	Indicative Draft Report Issued: 02/03/2023	
Audit Management	1 – 4		

### KEY:

 To be commenced

 Site work commenced

 Draft report issued

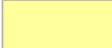
 Final report issued

## Progress against Annual Plan 2023-24

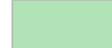
System	Planned Quarter	Current Status	Comments
Electric Vehicle Charging	1	Draft Report Issued: 30/05/2023	
Assets - Mobile Phones	1	Final report issued: 21/08/2023	Presented to September 2023 meeting
ICT Data Assurance	2	TBC	
Station Visits	2	Scheduled date: 29/08/2023	
Estates Strategy – Property Compliance	2	TBC	
Payroll – Core HR Pay Award and Month-end Payroll Processing	2	Fieldwork completed	Replaces Airwave / Emergency Services Network Draft report pending
Risk Management – Mitigating Controls	3		To be replaced by review of Core HR
Core HR	3	TBC	Replaces Risk Management – Mitigating Controls (above)
O365 Implementation	3	Suggested date: 02/10/2023	
Airwave / Emergency Services Network	3	NA	Deferred to 2024/25, replaced by Payroll (above)
Budgetary Control	3	Scheduled date: 25/09/2023	
Pensions	3	Scheduled date: 02/10/2023	
Sustainability	4	Scheduled date: 05/02/2024	
Health and Safety Management	4	Scheduled date: 15/01/2024	
Follow Up	4	Scheduled date: 08/01/2024	
Annual Planning	1	Final issued: 14/03/2023	
Annual Report	4		
Audit Management	1 – 4		

**KEY:**

 To be commenced

 Site work commenced

 Draft report issued

 Final report issued

## Briefings on developments in Governance, Risk and Control

TIAA produces regular briefing notes to summarise new developments in Governance, Risk, Control and fraud which may have an impact on our clients. These are shared with clients and made available through our Online Client Portal. A summary list of those CBNs and fraud Alerts issued since the previous FAPM Committee which may be of relevance to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is given below. Copies of any CBNs are available on request from your local TIAA team.

### Summary of recent Client Briefing Notes (CBNs)

Date Issued	CBN Ref	Subject	Status	TIAA Comments
10/08/23	23009	Guidance issued by HMRC on tax avoidance schemes		<p><b>Action Required</b></p> <p>Raise the profile of tax avoidance across networks and communication channels Support HMRC by sharing the following link with stakeholders to help raise awareness among workers in the health and social care sectors, and to warn them of the risks of getting involved in tax avoidance.</p> <p>Link: <a href="https://taxavoidanceexplained.campaign.gov.uk/">https://taxavoidanceexplained.campaign.gov.uk/</a></p>

### Summary of recent Fraud Alerts

Ref	Subject	Status	TIAA Comments
July 2023	Payment Systems Regulator confirms new requirements for Authorised Push Payment fraud reimbursement		<p><b>Action Required</b></p> <p>This alert provides information and advice to staff about fraud and economic crime, and the risks associated with it. If you think that your organisation has been a victim of APP fraud, contact your Anti-Crime Specialist immediately for advice.</p>
July 2023	Jail sentence for fraudster after £660K fake invoice scam		<p><b>Action Required</b></p> <p>This alert provides information and advice to organisations about fraud and economic crime, and the risks associated with it. If you think that your organisation has been a victim of invoice fraud, contact a TIAA Anti-Crime Specialist immediately for advice.</p>

# PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

Appendix 1

01 April 2023 – 30 June 2023



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
De Cymru

South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

Produced in

**BMIS**  
Business Management  
Information System

## Introduction

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The Performance Monitoring Report reviews the Service's performance for the period 01 April 2023 to 30 June 2023. The report includes:

- Strategic Indicator Performance Summary.....Page 5
- Strategic Indicator Performance Comments.....Pages 6-9
- Analysis of incident activity levels by Unitary Authority Area (UAA).....Pages 10-20

The performance indicators show six years of data to demonstrate trends in the Service's long-term performance.

Following consideration by the Senior Management Team and the Fire and Rescue Authority, the report is made available to the public via the internet.

When comparing Q1 2022/23 to Q1 2023/24, incident numbers for fires were:

- Total fires: increased from 1,955 to 2,193, +12%
  - Accidental fires: 474 to 596, +26%
  - Accidental dwelling fires: 166 to 161, -3%
  - Deliberate fires: 1,481 to 1,597, +8%
  - Deliberate refuse fires: 800 to 648, -19%
  - Deliberate grass fires: 462 to 610, +32%

The increase in grass fires was associated with the period of extreme hot weather experienced in June when the Service attended 311 grass fires. This was the highest number attended in the month of June since 2010. While we have previously seen an increase in grass fires mirrored by an increase in refuse fires, this was not the case in Q1. However, these incidents are associated with an increase in good intent false alarm incidents and comparing Q1 2022/23 to Q1 2023/24:

- Good intent false alarm calls: 799 to 899, +13%

A recent Wales Audit Review (March 23) into False Alarm reduction has highlighted how the Authority must make better use of data and learning from elsewhere to identify opportunities to better manage performance and risks. One of the recommendations in the report was to align performance monitoring and reporting to the new four-stage approach for Unwanted Fire Signals (UFS), ie, actuation of an Automatic Fire Alarm for any reason other than fire. This policy for targeting reductions from high volume premises was adopted in 2020. It created a four-stage system for monitoring and building on data recorded by crews at incidents. Each stage is based on the volume of alarms generated at a premises in the preceding rolling 12 months.

Stage 1 – Up to 4 Unwanted Fire Signals in the 12-month period

Stage 2 - 5 to 9 Unwanted Fire Signals in the 12-month period

Stage 3 - 10 to 19 Unwanted Fire Signals in the 12-month period

Stage 4 – 20 or more incidents in the 12-month period

The following table shows the number of premises in each stage since September 2022. As you will see there is an upward trend in premises in Stage 2 since January 2023 while premises in Stage 3 have reduced in recent months. Premises in stage 4 have fallen from 11 in September 2022 to 8 in June 2023 (all premises at this Stage are hospitals which have historically recorded high volumes on UFS).

Stages	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
Stage 2 - 5 to 9 UFS in 12 months	136	137	120	115	131	143	149	159	162	164
Stage 3 - 10 to 19 UFS in 12 months	24	27	31	31	31	31	30	30	32	26
Stage 4 - 20 or more incidents in a 12 month period	11	6	6	6	6	6	8	8	7	8
Totals	171	170	157	152	168	180	187	197	201	198

More detailed information will be introduced in future reports.

Other Special Service incidents have shown an upward trend since 2020/21 when incident numbers for the full financial year were 2,275. The numbers increased to 2,712 in 2021/22 and then increased again to 3,079 in 2022/23. For Q1 of this year this upward trend has continued with the Service experiencing a 13% increase in Other Special Service Calls compared to Q1 of the previous year. The following incident types have experienced an increase:

- Assist other agencies: 143 to 194, +36%
- Assistance to the Police/Ambulance: 110 to 159, +45%

- Bariatric patients: 47 to 70, +49%
- Suicide or attempted suicide: 11 to 15, +36%
- Lift release: 17 to 28, +65%

Other Special Service incident types such as water rescues and flooding and are influenced by extreme weather conditions and are likely to become more prevalent in future years. The number of water rescues in Q1 coincided with the period of hot weather experienced in June - there were 4 water rescues in April, 1 in May and 9 in June. Compared to Q1 of the previous year the incident numbers were:

- Rescue or evacuation from water: 3 to 15, +400%

Flooding calls in Q1 have also increased although most of these were internal flooding and not related to weather conditions:

- Flooding: 30 to 45, +50%

The Service has experienced an increase of 34% in calls to Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) from 166 in Q1 2022/23 to 222 in Q1 2023/24. The proportion of incidents involving Extractions/release of persons in Q1 2023/24 were 18% of all RTCs which is slightly lower than 2022/23 when it was 20% of incidents, although the number of incidents increased. There have been 5 fatalities in Q1 2023/24 compared to 3 in 2022/23 and there were 102 injuries (incl. rescue with injury) compared to 95 in the previous year in Q1.

During Q1 2023/24 the Service recorded 3,857 home fire safety checks: 3,235 were carried out, 205 were refused and at 417 addresses we were unable to contact the occupier. The majority of home fire safety checks are now carried out face-to-face.

The Service Performance & Communications Department co-ordinates and compiles this report on behalf of the Service Delivery Directorate. Incident data is extracted from the Incident Recording System (IRS) and may be subject to change pending validation by the Statistics and Risk Team. Data for this report was extracted on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

If you have any questions or comments on this report, please contact Neil Herniman at [n-herniman@southwales-fire.gov.uk](mailto:n-herniman@southwales-fire.gov.uk) 01443 232775 or Suzanne Absalom on [s-absalom@southwales-fire.gov.uk](mailto:s-absalom@southwales-fire.gov.uk) 01443 232588 to discuss.

## Strategic Indicators 2023-24 Q1 Performance

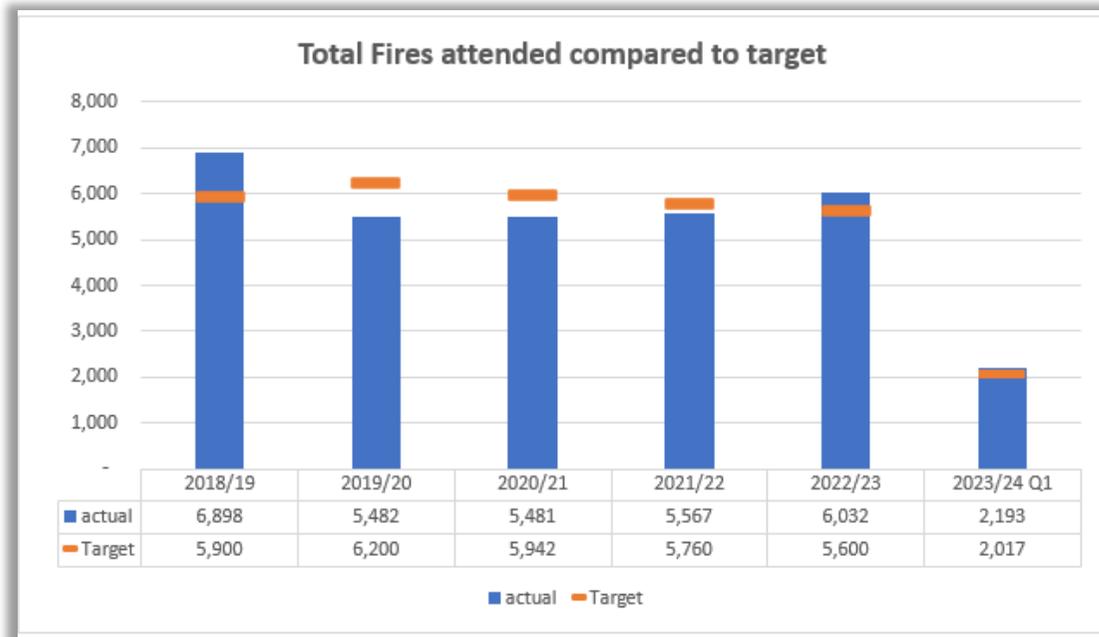
The sunburst below displays the progress of each Strategic Indicator based on its performance against the target set.

<b>Performance Key</b>	★ Better than or equal to target	● Up to 5% above target	▲ Over 5% from target
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	Q1 23-24	Q1 Target	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23
Total Fires Attended	2,193	2,017	▲	1,955
Total RTCs Attended	222	205	▲	166
Total False Alarms Attended	2,156	2,162	★	2,146
Total Other SSCs Attended	803	671	▲	708
% of Dwelling Fires Confined to Room of Origin	79.77%	85.00%	▲	81.00%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	9	18	★	18
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	8	15	★	17

The following charts show the total incident numbers for the financial year compared to the target set for that year. The 2023/24 data is for Q1 and shows the target for Q1 only. Numbers in brackets in the commentary are figures for Q1 2022/23 in comparison to Q1 2023/24 and the corresponding percentage increase/decrease between the two figures.



#### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23

- Total fires (1,955 – 2,193) ↑ 12%.
- 9% **above** the target of 2,017.
- Accidental fires (474 – 596) ↑ 26%.
- Deliberate fires (1,481 – 1,597) ↑ 8%
- Deliberate grass fires (462 – 610) ↑ 32%
- Deliberate refuse fires (800 – 648) ↓ 19%
- Deliberate road vehicle fires (77 – 109) ↑ 42%
- Deliberate fires accounted for 73% of all fires.

### Total False Alarms attended compared to target



### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23

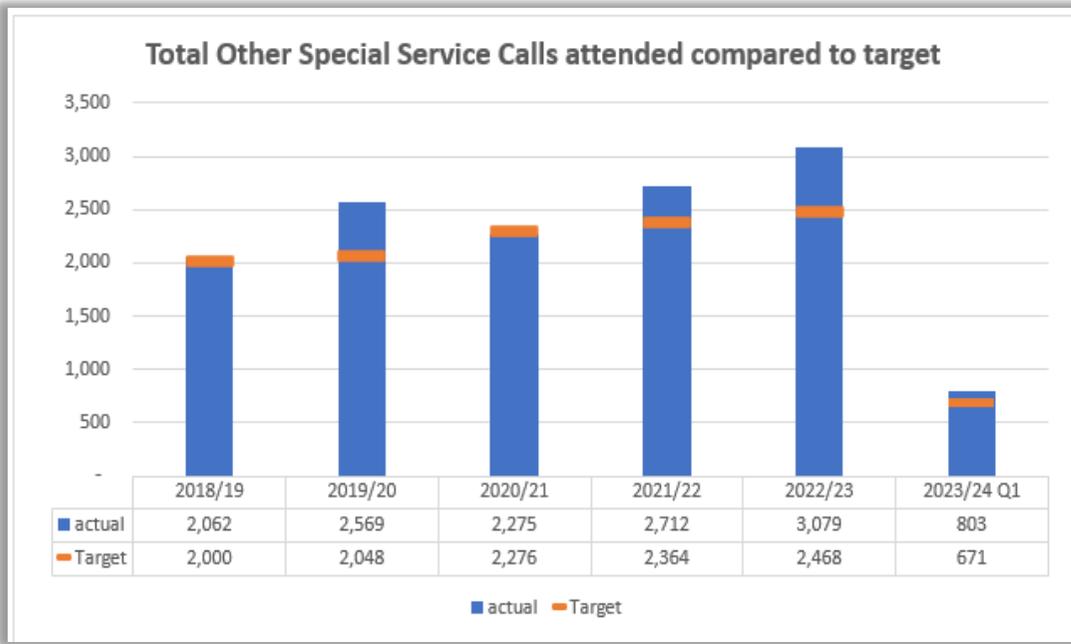
- Total False Alarms (2,146 – 2,156) ↑ 0.5%.
- 0.3% **below** the target of 2,162.
- False alarm due to apparatus (1,279 – 1,206) ↓ 6%.
- False alarm good intent (799 – 899) ↑ 13%.
- False Alarm Malicious (68 – 58) ↓ 15%.
- Residential homes (91 – 92) ↑ 1%, Education (154 – 128) ↓ 17%, Hospitals (155 – 158) ↑ 2%.
- Appliances in attendance at Residential homes (143 – 152) ↓ 6% Education (247 – 186) ↑ 25%, Hospitals (221 – 252) ↑ 14%.

### Total Road Traffic collisions attended compared to target

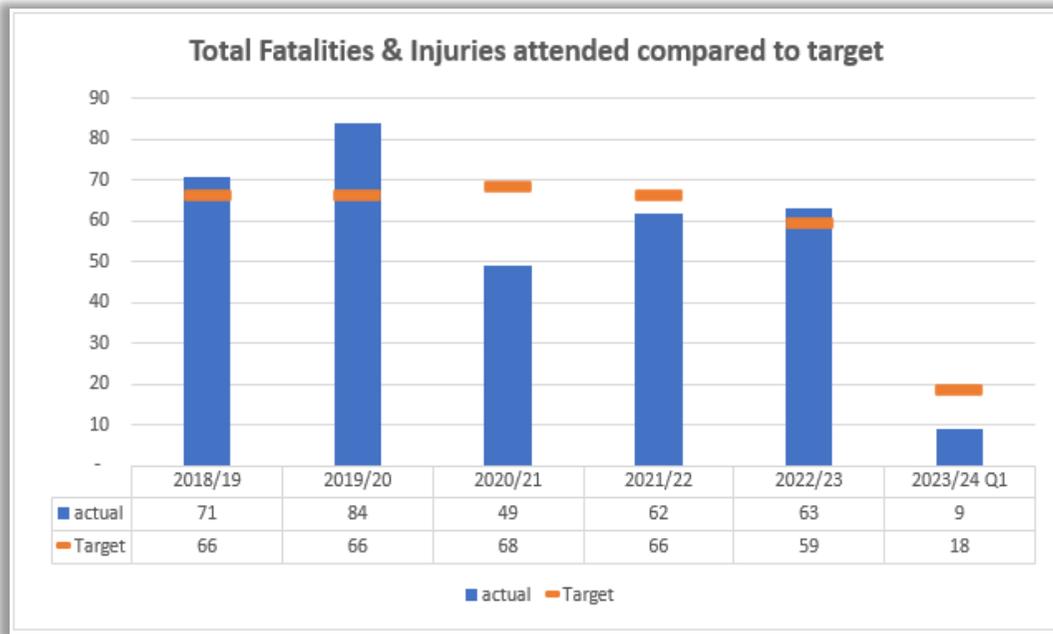


### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23

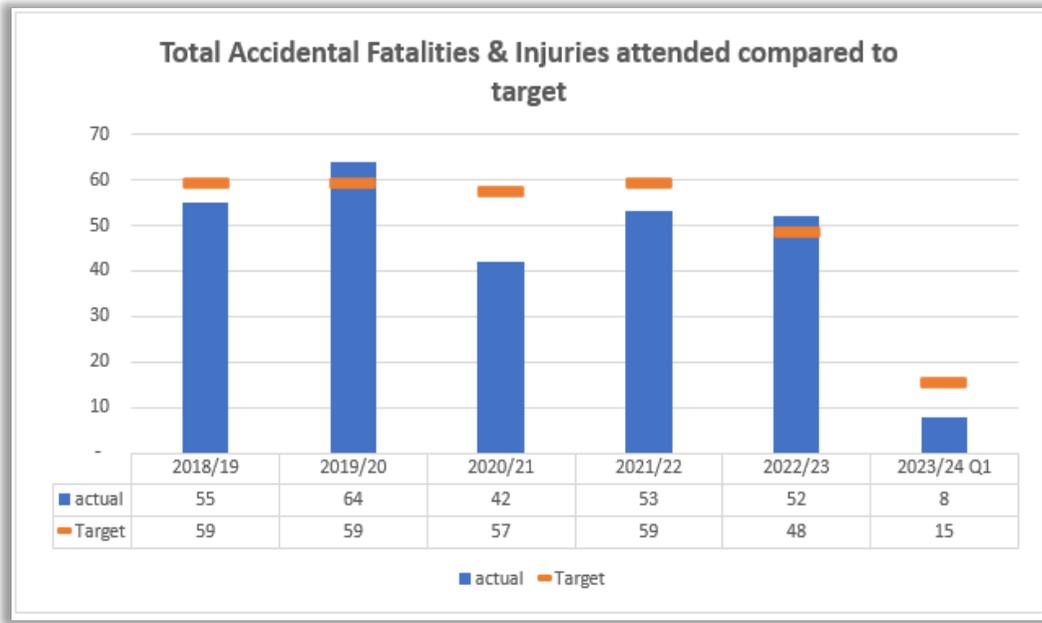
- Total RTCs (166 – 222) ↑ 34%.
- 8% **above** the target of 205.
- Extrications/release of persons in Q1 were 18% of all RTCs which is slightly lower than last year when it was 20%.
- There have been 5 fatalities at RTCs this year (all males) compared to 3 last year in Q1. There have been 102 injuries compared to 95 last year in Q1 and there have been 18 rescues without injury compared to 21 last year in Q1.



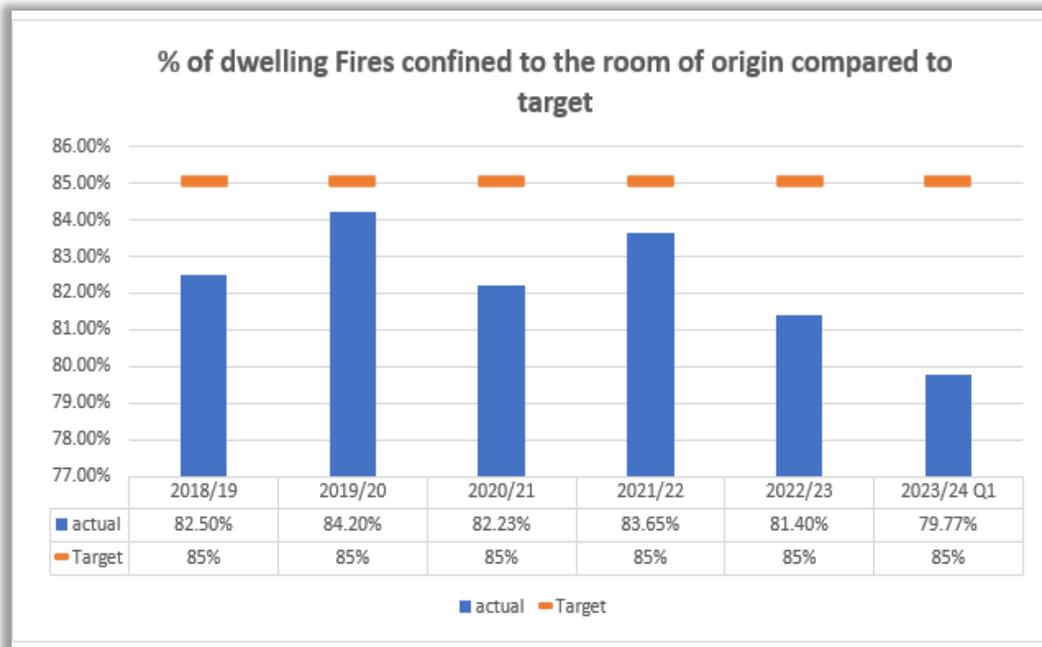
- ### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23
- Other SSCs (708 – 803) ↑ 13%.
  - 20% **above** the target of 803.
  - Lift release (17 to 28) ↑ 65%, flooding (30 to 45) ↑ 50%. other rescue release of person (45 to 63) ↑ 40%.
  - Assisting other agencies (143 – 194) ↑ 36%, Bariatrics (47 – 70) ↑ 49%. Suicides (11 to 15) ↑ 36%.
  - Compared to last year in Q1 calls originating from the Ambulance Service were 50% higher (91 to 136). The proportion of calls from the Ambulance Service also increased from 56% last full financial year to 70% so far in Q1.



- #### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23
- Total fatalities and injuries have fallen from 18 in Q1 2022/23 to 9 in Q1 2023/24.
  - 50% **below** the target of 18.
  - 1 fatality from fire, compared to 2 last year.
  - The fatality was in an accidental dwelling fire and started in the kitchen. An alarm was present but did not raise the alarm.
  - There were 3 serious injuries this year which was the same as last year.
  - There were 5 slight injuries compared to 13 last year.



- #### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23
- Accidental fatalities and Injuries have fallen from 17 in 2022/23 to 8 in 2023/24.
  - 46% **below** the target of 15.
  - There were 1 accidental fatality which started in the kitchen. An alarm was present but did not raise the alarm.
  - There were 2 accidental serious injuries compared to 3 last year.
  - There were 5 accidental slight injuries compared to 12 last year.



- ### Q1 2023/24 Performance V Q1 2022/23
- 131 of 168 dwelling fires have been confined to the room of origin (79.77%).
  - This is **below** last year and is 5.23% **below** the target set of 85% at the start of the year.
  - Torfaen UA had 100% of fires confined to the room of origin.(7 of 7)
  - Caerphilly UA had the **lowest** percentage with 64% of fires confined to the room of origin. (7 of 11).
  - Of the 37 fires not confined to the room of origin in 19 of them (51%) there was no alarm present.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	1,091	98	114	150										362	282	80	28%
Special Service Calls	165	22	12	17										51	32	19	59%
Total RTCs Attended	32	4	2	4										10	1	9	900%
Total Other SSCs Attended	133	18	10	13										41	31	10	32%
Total False Alarms Attended	413	33	32	38										103	108	-5	-5%
Malicious False Alarms	13	3	1	0										4	1	3	300%
Good Intent False Alarms	178	14	17	26										57	52	5	10%
Automatic False Alarms	222	16	14	12										42	55	-13	-24%
Total Fires Attended	513	43	70	95										208	142	66	46%
Deliberate Fire	430	30	54	70										154	123	31	25%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	76	8	28	35										71	28	43	154%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	298	16	17	23										56	81	-25	-31%
Accidental Fire	83	13	16	25										54	19	35	184%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	32	5	3	1										9	6	3	50%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	3	1	0	1										2	1	1	100%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	3	1	0	1										2	1	1	100%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have increased by 50% compared to last year with 9 in total compared to 6 last year. 3 of the 9 incidents were caused by cooking compared to 2 of 6 last year. 4 of the 9 fires were due to human factors with falling asleep (3) and distraction (1) the main incident types. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were 2 slight injuries in Q1, which is 1 more than last year. Other Special Service Calls have increased from 31 to 41 (+32%). Assistance to other agencies has increased from 5 last year to 11 (+120%) this year and is the highest incident category. The number of bariatric incidents has increased from 2 last year to 3 this year. Effecting entry incidents has decreased from 9 incidents last year to 2 incidents this year. The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 1 to 10 (+900%). 7 of the 10 incidents were to making the scene safe. There were no extrications/release of persons in Q1. Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 154% from 28 to 71. Deliberate refuse fires have decreased by 31% from 81 to 56. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 24% from 55 to 42. There were particularly high numbers of calls to Residential homes with 9 incidents this year in Q1 compared to 7 in the previous year, the majority being to cooking/burnt toast (6). Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have increased from 1 to 4 and there was a 10% increase in good intent false alarms (52 to 57) with calls to grass (14) and loose refuse (13) accounting for most of this call type.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	1,522	149	135	194										478	443	35	8%
Special Service Calls	345	26	24	34										84	83	1	1%
Total RTCs Attended	80	9	5	3										17	17	0	0%
Total Other SSCs Attended	265	17	19	31										67	66	1	2%
Total False Alarms Attended	722	62	43	64										169	187	-18	-10%
Malicious False Alarms	21	2	2	0										4	3	1	33%
Good Intent False Alarms	291	24	21	31										76	73	3	4%
Automatic False Alarms	410	36	19	31										86	111	-25	-23%
Total Fires Attended	455	61	68	96										225	173	52	30%
Deliberate Fire	314	49	52	65										166	124	42	34%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	84	17	20	35										72	48	24	50%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	172	16	17	15										48	62	-14	-23%
Accidental Fire	141	12	16	30										58	49	9	18%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	48	4	5	6										15	18	-3	-17%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	3	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	3	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have decreased by 17% compared to last year with 15 in total compared to 18 in the previous year. 2 of the 15 incidents were caused by cooking compared to 8 of 18 last year. 7 of the 15 fires were due to human factors with falling asleep (3) and distraction (2) the main reasons. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were no fatalities or injuries in Q1 compared to 1 serious injury last year in Q1. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased from 66 to 67 (+2%), although assistance to other agencies has decreased from 17 to 14 (-18%) compared last year. Crews also attended 6 bariatric incidents compared to 5 (+20%) last year. There were increases to Other release /rescue of persons with numbers rising from 6 to 11 (+83%) and animal assistance incidents rising from 4 to 5 (+20%). The number of road traffic collisions attended has remained the same as last year with 17 incidents with crews attending 5 extrications/release of persons, the same as last year. Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 50% from 48 to 72. Deliberate refuse fires have decreased by 23% from 62 to 48. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 23% from 111 to 86. There was however an increase in attendance at Educational properties (11 to 14). Incidents in residential homes have decreased compared to last year from 15 to 4. Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have increased from 3 to 4 and there was a 4% (73 to 76) increase in good intent false alarms with calls to dwellings (24) and grass (19) accounting for the majority of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	2,156	195	206	264										665	611	54	9%
Special Service Calls	383	45	44	31										120	69	51	74%
Total RTCs Attended	96	10	11	11										32	19	13	68%
Total Other SSCs Attended	287	35	33	20										88	50	38	76%
Total False Alarms Attended	889	61	67	91										219	219	0	0%
Malicious False Alarms	26	1	0	1										2	4	-2	-50%
Good Intent False Alarms	420	26	38	59										123	123	0	0%
Automatic False Alarms	443	34	29	31										94	92	2	2%
Total Fires Attended	884	89	95	142										326	323	3	1%
Deliberate Fire	664	72	74	112										258	262	-4	-2%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	160	19	36	53										108	88	20	23%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	408	41	30	41										112	141	-29	-21%
Accidental Fire	220	17	21	30										68	61	7	11%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	78	3	3	3										9	22	-13	-59%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	9	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	9	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have decreased by 59% compared to last year. The number of incidents has fallen from 22 to 9. 2 of the 9 incidents were caused by cooking compared to 8 of 22 last year. 7 of the fires were due to human factors with distraction (2) and incidents when the reason was not known (2) the main reasons. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There has been no fatalities or injuries in Q1 compared to 1 fatality last year in Q1. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased from 50 to 88 (+76%) with Assistance to other agencies increasing from 11 to 25 (+127%) compared to last year. There were also increases to other rescue/release of persons from 1 to 14 (5 rescue from height) and hazardous material incidents, 3 to 5 (+67%). The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 19 to 32 (+68%) with crews attending 2 extrications/release of persons compared to 5 last year in Q1. Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires however have decreased by 2% from 262 to 258. Deliberate refuse fires have also decreased by 21% from 141 to 112. Automatic false alarms have increased by 2% from 92 to 94. The property type accounting for the most call outs was industrial manufacturing rising from 15 to 19 (+27%) Incidents at Educational premises decreased from 12 to 6 (-50%). Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have decreased from 4 to 2 (-50%) and good intent false alarms have remained the same as last year with 123 calls to loose refuse (31) being the reason for most of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 -																	
	Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %	
Total Incidents	4,413	342	429	441										1212	1,108	104	9%	
Special Service Calls	925	68	88	73										229	238	-9	-4%	
Total RTCs Attended	155	12	16	10										38	34	4	12%	
Total Other SSCs Attended	770	56	72	63										191	204	-13	-6%	
Total False Alarms Attended	2,371	183	200	199										582	546	36	7%	
Malicious False Alarms	88	3	8	7										18	22	-4	-18%	
Good Intent False Alarms	628	42	58	79										179	153	26	17%	
Automatic False Alarms	1,655	138	134	113										385	371	14	4%	
Total Fires Attended	1,117	91	141	169										401	324	77	24%	
Deliberate Fire	752	61	103	119										283	234	49	21%	
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	193	13	17	35										65	57	8	14%	
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	462	39	53	48										140	147	-7	-5%	
Accidental Fire	365	30	38	50										118	90	28	31%	
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	138	12	13	20										45	34	11	32%	
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	9	1	0	3										4	1	3	300%	
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	9	1	0	2										3	1	2	200%	

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have increased by 32% compared to last year. The number of incidents has risen from 34 to 45. 11 of the 45 (24%) incidents were caused by cooking which was lower than last year when there was 10 of 34 (29%) fires caused by cooking. 19 of the fires were due to human factors with distraction (8) and not known (6) two of the main reasons. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. Sadly, there was a fatality in June, a male aged 58, which started in the bedroom. An alarm was present, but it did not operate. There was also 1 serious and 2 slight injuries. Attendance at Other special service calls have decreased by 6% from 204 to 191 with assistance to other agencies decreasing from 40 to 36 (-10%) compared to last year. There was also a decrease to effecting entry/exit incidents from 41 to 28 (-32%). The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 34 to 38 (+12%) with crews attending 5 extrications/release of persons compared to 5 also last year. Most of the calls attended were to making the scene/vehicle safe (22). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 14% from 57 to 65. Deliberate refuse fires have decreased by 5% from 147 to 140. Automatic false alarms have increased by 4% from 371 to 385. There was an increase in attendance hospitals (58 to 70) and retail premises (35 to 42). Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have decreased from 22 to 18 (-18%) and there was a 17% (153 to 179) increase in good intent false alarms with calls to domestic premises accounting for most of these calls.

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
De Cymru



South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

## Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 -																	
	Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %	
Total Incidents	735	70	86	114										270	199	71	36%	
Special Service Calls	162	19	12	16										47	31	16	52%	
Total RTCs Attended	42	6	2	3										11	5	6	120%	
Total Other SSCs Attended	120	13	10	13										36	26	10	38%	
Total False Alarms Attended	312	24	26	39										89	68	21	31%	
Malicious False Alarms	12	1	3	2										6	4	2	50%	
Good Intent False Alarms	118	8	11	21										40	30	10	33%	
Automatic False Alarms	182	15	11	15										41	34	7	21%	
Total Fires Attended	261	27	48	59										134	100	34	34%	
Deliberate Fire	203	22	39	49										110	84	26	31%	
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	67	12	22	26										60	37	23	62%	
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	102	9	5	17										31	36	-5	-14%	
Accidental Fire	58	5	9	10										24	16	8	50%	
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	26	2	2	4										8	10	-2	-20%	
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	12	0	0	0										0	4	-4	-400%	
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	12	0	0	0										0	4	-4	-400%	

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have decreased by 20% compared to last year. The number of incidents has fallen from 10 to 8. 4 of the 8 (50%) incidents were caused by cooking compared to 6 of 10 (60%) last year. 5 of the fires were due to human factors with reason not known (2) and distraction (3) the reasons. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were no fatalities or injuries in Q1 compared to 1 fatality, 1 serious and 2 slight injuries in Q1 last year. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased by 38% with assisting other agencies the main incident type rising from 7 last year to 11 (+57%). The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 5 to 11 (+120%) with crews attending 4 extrications/release of persons compared to 1 last year in Q1. Other calls were to making the scene/vehicle safe (6) and medical incidents (1). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate refuse fires however have decreased by 14% from 36 to 31. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 62% from 37 to 60. Automatic false alarms have increased by 21% from 34 to 41. There were 11 calls to Educational properties compared to 6 last year in Q1 and 9 calls to hospitals and medical care compared to 14 last year in Q1. Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have increased from 4 to 6 and there was a 33% (30 to 40) increase in good intent false alarms with calls to loose refuse accounting for most of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	984	65	83	76										224	265	-41	-15%
Special Service Calls	246	19	24	18										61	67	-6	-9%
Total RTCs Attended	75	7	6	5										18	21	-3	-14%
Total Other SSCs Attended	171	12	18	13										43	46	-3	-7%
Total False Alarms Attended	511	26	36	39										101	123	-22	-18%
Malicious False Alarms	5	0	0	2										2	1	1	100%
Good Intent False Alarms	150	7	11	8										26	42	-16	-38%
Automatic False Alarms	356	19	25	27										71	80	-9	-11%
Total Fires Attended	227	20	23	19										62	75	-13	-17%
Deliberate Fire	81	9	6	6										21	29	-8	-28%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	22	5	3	3										11	8	3	38%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	47	1	1	1										3	18	-15	-83%
Accidental Fire	146	11	17	13										41	46	-5	-11%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	34	1	4	4										9	11	-2	-18%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	1	0										1	1	0	0%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	1	0										1	1	0	0%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have decreased by 18% compared to last year. The number of incidents has fallen from 46 to 41. Cooking accounted for 3 of the 9 incidents compared to 5 of 11 in the previous year. 4 of the fires were due to human factors with persons falling asleep accounting for 2 incidents. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. Sadly, there was 1 accidental serious injury in Q1, a female aged 91 who suffered severe burns from the cooker. Attendance at Other special service calls have decreased from 46 to 43 (-7%), however assistance to other agencies has risen from 9 to 13 (+44%) compared to Q1 last year. There were also 4 calls to effecting entry compared to 5 the previous year and 4 calls to animal assistance incidents compared to 3 in the previous year. The number of road traffic collisions attended has decreased from 21 to 18 (-14%) with crews attending 3 extrications/release of persons compared to 10 in Q1 of the previous year. 11 of the calls were making the scene/vehicle safe. Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents as restrictions are eased. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 38% from 8 to 11. Deliberate refuse fires however have decreased by 83% from 18 to 3. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 11% from 80 to 71. There were 11 calls to hospitals which was 4 more than last year and calls to residential homes increased from 19 to 32. Educational premises have experienced a decrease in calls from 9 to 4. Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have increased from 1 to 2 and there was a 38% (42 to 26) decrease in good intent false alarms with calls to dwellings (9) and grass (5) accounting for most of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	2,505	176	173	237										586	609	-23	-4%
Special Service Calls	416	33	29	46										108	82	26	32%
Total RTCs Attended	80	3	6	5										14	16	-2	-13%
Total Other SSCs Attended	336	30	23	41										94	66	28	42%
Total False Alarms Attended	1,127	87	75	91										253	275	-22	-8%
Malicious False Alarms	56	1	1	0										2	12	-10	-83%
Good Intent False Alarms	335	21	29	37										87	98	-11	-11%
Automatic False Alarms	736	65	45	54										164	165	-1	-1%
Total Fires Attended	962	56	69	100										225	252	-27	-11%
Deliberate Fire	775	47	50	85										182	198	-16	-8%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	163	4	7	22										33	39	-6	-15%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	433	27	33	40										100	106	-6	-6%
Accidental Fire	187	9	19	15										43	54	-11	-20%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	69	5	10	2										17	17	0	0%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	1	1	0										2	1	1	100%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	1	1	0										2	1	1	100%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have remained the same as the previous year with 17 incidents in Q1. 4 of the 17 incidents were caused by cooking compared to 7 of 17 last year. 8 of the 17 fires were due to human factors with distraction (4) the main reason for the calls. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There was 1 serious injury in Q1, a female aged 80 who was overcome by gas, smoke, or toxic fumes from her coal fire. There was also a slight injury in Q1. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased from 66 to 94 (42%), with assistance to other agencies the main incident type with 16 incidents, the same as last year. There were 7 calls to bariatric incidents compared to 4 last year. Calls to flooding (3 to 7, +133%) and animal assistance incidents (4 to 8, +100%) also experienced an increase. The number of road traffic collisions attended has decreased from 16 to 14 (-13%) with crews attending 2 extrication/release of persons, compared to no incidents in Q1 during the previous year. Most of the calls were to making the scene/vehicle safe (7). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires however have decreased by 15% from 39 to 33, the majority of these were in June (22). Deliberate refuse fires have also decreased by 6% from 106 to 100. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 1% from 165 to 164. Calls to hospitals decreased by 30% from 20 to 14 and retail premises by 60% from 10 to 4. Calls to educational premises increased from 13 to 17 (+31%). Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have decreased from 12 to 2 and there was a 11% decrease in good intent false alarms from 98 to 87 with calls to dwellings (27) and loose refuse (15) accounting for most of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 -																	
	Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %	
Total Incidents	2,605	219	261	398										878	759	119	16%	
Special Service Calls	711	58	66	56										180	151	29	19%	
Total RTCs Attended	156	17	21	12										50	30	20	67%	
Total Other SSCs Attended	555	41	45	44										130	121	9	7%	
Total False Alarms Attended	1,072	86	81	141										308	273	35	13%	
Malicious False Alarms	36	2	4	5										11	14	-3	-21%	
Good Intent False Alarms	448	39	39	84										162	112	50	45%	
Automatic False Alarms	588	45	38	52										135	147	-12	-8%	
Total Fires Attended	822	75	114	201										390	335	55	16%	
Deliberate Fire	565	47	92	157										296	272	24	9%	
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	185	23	42	74										139	117	22	19%	
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	298	17	38	55										110	123	-13	-11%	
Accidental Fire	257	28	22	44										94	63	31	49%	
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	108	13	8	7										28	27	1	4%	
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%	
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	0	0										0	1	-1	-100%	

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have increased by 4% compared to last year. The number of incidents has risen from 27 to 28. 10 of the incidents were caused by cooking compared to 16 last year. 19 of the fires were due to human factors with distraction (7) and not known (8) the main reasons for the incidents. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were no deaths or injuries in Q1 compared to 1 slight injury during the previous year. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased from 121 to 130 (7%) with assistance to other agencies increasing from 23 to 31 (+35%) compared to the previous year. There were also 13 calls to bariatric incidents compared to 11 last year. The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 30 to 50 (+67%) with crews attending 11 extrications/release of persons compared to 4 in the previous year. Most of the calls were making the scene/vehicle safe (21). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have increased by 19% from 117 to 139. Deliberate refuse fires have decreased by 11% from 123 to 110. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 8% from 147 to 135. Educational premises reduced from 20 to 14 (-30%). There was an increase in calls to residential homes from 15 to 32 (+113%) and retail premises 9 to 12 (+33%). Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have decreased from 14 to 11 (-21%). There was a 45% (112 to 162) increase in good intent false alarms with calls to grassland (47) and loose refuse (36) accounting for most of these calls.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	1,299	95	115	128										338	377	-39	-10%
Special Service Calls	228	24	20	23										67	58	9	16%
Total RTCs Attended	42	6	4	3										13	8	5	63%
Total Other SSCs Attended	186	18	16	20										54	50	4	8%
Total False Alarms Attended	653	47	48	65										160	180	-20	-11%
Malicious False Alarms	17	1	1	4										6	5	1	20%
Good Intent False Alarms	227	13	24	32										69	61	8	13%
Automatic False Alarms	409	33	23	29										85	114	-29	-25%
Total Fires Attended	418	24	47	40										111	139	-28	-20%
Deliberate Fire	293	16	24	28										68	103	-35	-34%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	88	5	10	16										31	35	-4	-11%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	147	8	9	6										23	50	-27	-54%
Accidental Fire	125	8	23	12										43	36	7	19%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	46	1	4	2										7	13	-6	-46%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	0	0										0	3	-1	-300%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	4	0	0	0										0	3	-1	-300%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have decreased by 46% compared to last year. The number of incidents has fallen from 13 to 7. 2 of the incidents were caused by cooking compared to 5 last year. 1 of the fires was due to human factors with distraction the reason for this call. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were no fatalities or injuries in Q1 this year compared to 3 slight injuries during the previous year. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased by 8% from 50 to 54, with assistance to other agencies the highest incident type with 9, the same as the previous year. There were also 4 calls to bariatric incidents, the same as last year in Q1. There were 7 calls to flooding this year compared to 5 last year. The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 8 to 13 (+63%) with crews attending 4 extrications/release of persons compared to 1 last year in Q1. Most of the calls were making the scene/vehicle safe (6). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have decreased by 11% from 35 to 31. Deliberate refuse fires have also decreased by 54% from 50 to 23. Automatic false alarms have decreased by 25% from 114 to 85. Calls to residential homes have fallen from 16 to 9 (-44%) and calls to educational properties experienced a 29% reduction from 17 to 12. Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have experienced a small increase from 5 to 6 and there was a 13% (61 to 69) increase in good intent false alarms with calls to dwellings and loose refuse accounting for most of the incidents.



Incident Categories	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1 23-24	Q1 22-23	Q1 diff	Q1 %
Total Incidents	1,396	115	139	115										369	322	47	15%
Special Service Calls	347	29	29	21										79	63	16	25%
Total RTCs Attended	90	6	10	3										19	15	4	27%
Total Other SSCs Attended	257	23	19	18										60	48	12	25%
Total False Alarms Attended	676	57	71	51										179	167	12	7%
Malicious False Alarms	30	1	1	0										2	2	0	0%
Good Intent False Alarms	228	20	35	22										77	55	22	40%
Automatic False Alarms	418	36	35	29										100	110	-10	-9%
Total Fires Attended	373	29	39	43										111	92	19	21%
Deliberate Fire	205	12	25	21										58	52	6	12%
Deliberate Grass Fire Attended	35	2	9	11										22	5	17	340%
Deliberate Refuse Fire Attended	131	8	12	2										22	36	-14	-39%
Accidental Fire	168	17	14	22										53	40	13	33%
Accidental Dwelling Fire Attended	44	7	6	1										14	8	6	75%
Total Deaths and Injuries in Fires	8	0	0	0										0	3	-3	-300%
Total Accidental Deaths and Injuries in Fires	8	0	0	0										0	3	-3	-300%

Data on accidental dwelling fires indicates that the numbers have increased by 75% compared to Q1 last year. The number of incidents has risen from 8 to 14. 3 of the incidents were caused by cooking compared to 4 last year. 7 of the fires were due to human factors with distraction (5) the main reason. The South Wales Fire and Rescue strategy to reduce accidental dwelling fires is closely linked to the Welsh Government wider social justice and supporting people agendas by targeting the most vulnerable groups within our society and making them safer within their homes. There were no fatalities or injuries in Q1 compared to 3 Slight injuries in the previous year. Attendance at Other special service calls have increased by 25%, with assistance to other agencies rising from 6 to 13 (+117%). Effecting entry calls have also increased from 8 to 9 (+13%). There were also 3 calls to a bariatric persons compared to 1 during the previous year. The number of road traffic collisions attended has increased from 15 to 19 (+27%) with crews attending 2 extrications/release of persons which was the same as last year. Most of the calls were making the scene/vehicle safe (15). Deliberate fire setting remains an issue within the UA and therefore stations will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the number of these types of incidents. Deliberate grass fires have increased from 5 to 22 (+340%). Deliberate refuse fires have decreased by 39% from 36 to 22. Automatic false alarms have decreased from 110 to 100 (-9%) compared to the previous year in Q1. Calls to educational properties have reduced by 64% from 22 to 8 but there was an increase in calls to residential homes from 5 to 11 (+120%) and food and drink establishments from 2 to 5. Crews will continue to target premises that are identified on the Business Management Information system to identify causes and trends to be able to liaise with premises owners to provide advice on reducing these call outs. Malicious false alarms have remained the same as last year with 2 calls and good intent false alarms have risen from 55 to 77 (+40%) with calls to dwellings, grass, and loose refuse accounting for most of these calls.

# BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS REPORT

Health Check

2023-2024 Quarter 1 (1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023)



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
De Cymru

South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

Produced in

**BMIS**  
Business Management  
Information System

## Summary

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This paper will give assurance to the Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority and senior management within South Wales Fire & Rescue Service on progress towards achievement of the Strategic Themes and performance of the Strategic Performance Indicators for the period 01 April – 30 June 2023.

## Background

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- 1.1 The Welsh Government requires South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to develop Strategic Plans to identify the direction for the Service and address areas for improvement. The Service does this by developing a Strategic Plan, implementing actions, and measuring indicators to enable the Service to achieve these organisational goals.
- 1.2 All departments link actions within their annual department plans to the appropriate Strategic Objectives. This enables us to measure how well we are performing against these objectives by how many of the linked actions are on target and review how the associated indicators are performing.
- 1.3 Quarterly updates are recorded by action owners onto the Business Management Information System (BMIS), and staff within the Planning, Performance and Risk Team monitor the information and extract reports accordingly.
- 1.4 To further support the performance management framework, National Strategic Indicators were introduced for reporting year 2015/16. Together these provide data and information to inform and support decision-making processes within the Service to target activity and drive improvement. The Statistics and Risk Team monitors the information and extract reports accordingly.
- 1.5 This report will provide Members and Officers with a health check on performance against the Strategic Themes and Strategic Indicators for the period 01 April – 30 June 2023.

## Issue

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2.1 For Members' information going forward, considering the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Service has adopted eight Strategic Themes, as detailed below, to structure our 2020-2030 Strategic Plan:

- ST01 – Keeping you safe
- ST02 – Responding to your emergency
- ST03 – Using technology well
- ST04 – Working with our partners
- ST05 – Engaging and communicating
- ST06 – Valuing our people
- ST07 – Protecting our environment
- ST08 – Continuing to work effectively

2.2 Each of these Strategic Themes has one or more Objectives that the Service has monitored progress against during 01 April – 30 June 2023.

2.3 Appendix 1 attached is a summary of the Performance Monitoring Report, which reviews the period 01 April – 31 June 2023 performance against agreed targets for the seven National Strategic Performance Indicators. It also includes a summary comment for each indicator.

2.4 Appendix 1 identifies that four indicators have not met their targets and performed worse than last year, two indicators have met their targets and performed better than last year, and one indicator has met their target but performed worse than last year.

2.5 Four indicators did not achieve target and performed worse than last year:

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1 2022-23 Actual	Q1 2023-24 Target	Q1 2023-24 Actual	% Under (-) or Over (+) Target	Q1 Year on Year Change
Total Fires Attended	1,955	2,017	2,193	+9%	+238
% of dwelling fires confined to the room of origin	81.00%	85.00%	79.77%	-5.23%	-1.23%
Other Special Service Calls Attended	708	671	803	+20%	+95
Road Traffic Collisions	166	205	222	+8%	+56

2.6 Two indicators met or exceeded their targets and performed better than last year:

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1 2022-23 Actual	Q1 2023-24 Target	Q1 2023-24 Actual	% Under (-) or Over (+) Target	Q1 Year on Year Change
Total Deaths and Injuries	18	18	9	-50%	-9
Accidental Deaths and Injuries	17	15	8	-47%	-9

2.7 One indicator met or exceeded their target but performed worse than last year:

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1 2022-23 Actual	Q1 2023-24 Target	Q1 2023-24 Actual	% Under (-) or Over (+) Target	Q1 Year on Year Change
False Alarms	2,146	2,162	2,156	-0.3%	+10

2.8 Appendix 1 attached provides information on the Service's performance during the period 01 April – 31 June 2023.

## Equality Risk Assessment

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1. This report, the accompanying appendices, and the targets themselves have no Equality Risk Assessment impact. The Service Performance and Communications Department and the respective Directorates are working with the performance data to establish any trends and implications that would include equality implications. These will be addressed at that time.
2. It is the responsibility of the action owners to ensure that Integrated Assessments are carried out for their actions in the planning framework.

## Recommendations

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- 4.1 That Members review the performance details and statistical data for the period 01 April – 30 June 2023 contained within this report.

## Strategic Theme Task Overview

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Theme ID	Theme	RED	AMBER	GREEN	DELAYED
ST01	Keeping you safe	0	6	7	3
ST02	Responding to your emergency	0	8	10	0
ST03	Using technology well	0	11	32	5
ST04	Working with our partners	2	6	9	0
ST05	Engaging and communicating	0	10	2	1
ST06	Valuing our people	2	9	21	10
ST07	Protecting our environment	0	4	10	0
ST08	Continuing to work effectively	2	8	23	3
		6	62	114	22

Since the Quarter four report 19 business plan tasks have been closed of which:

- 8 have now been completed.
- 8 have now been embedded as business as usual.
- 3 have been superseded by new tasks.

# Strategic Theme Task Commentary

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## ST01 – Keeping you safe

### 1.1 Reduce the impact of false alarms on our resources

The Unwanted Fire Signals Working Group is developing actions in response to the recommendations (see below) from the [Audit Wales report on False Fire Alarm Reduction](#) (published 27/07/23). This includes benchmarking against other FRSs. Data collection is being undertaken prior to engagement with Alarm Receiving Centres on the impact of false alarms on resources.

#### Approaches

1. We recommend that the Authority explore and assess other approaches taken elsewhere to identify opportunities to strengthen its management of and performance in reducing false alarms. This should be informed and include the utilisation of data held by the Authority.
2. We recommend that the Authority improve how it communicates and involves key stakeholders to ensure partners align their work to support a reduction in false alarms.
3. We recommend that the Authority facilitate the sharing and discussion of good practice internally through the Unwanted Fire Signal Champion scheme.

#### Data

4. We recommend that the Authority revise its coding system for recording false alarms to reduce the volume of 'unknown' causes to help target prevention work.

#### Reporting

5. We recommend that performance reporting on false alarms is strengthened by:
  - aligning performance monitoring and reporting to the four-stage policy approach;
  - providing a detailed commentary of the approaches taken and detailed trends over time to help members scrutinise activity.

### 1.2 Reduce the number of fires in the home and understand the behaviours and causes of them

The review of how we identify and apply risk rating of Home Safety Checks utilising the All-Wales Risk Stratification Group is making good progress in conjunction with adopting the [Safelincs](#) system which will provide an online home fire safety assessment. The on boarding process with Safelincs has now started with all three Welsh FRSs go live anticipated for December 2023.

The LEAF (Learning and Evaluation Action in Fires) project is being piloted by Community Safety (CS) with valuable information identified both pre- and post-fire. A review and initial report will be produced in Q2.

### 1.3 Reduce the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)

We continue to work with Welsh Government (WG) and [Go Safe Wales](#) to explore areas where we can initiate behavioural change amongst road users.

### 1.4 Reduce the number of deliberate fires

The Fire Crime Team continues to work with CS Partnerships and local partners, including [Natural Resources Wales](#) (NRW) and unitary authorities, to address deliberate fires through focussed interventions, campaigns and collaborative work.

A land management information form is being developed which would update a central database and discussions are taking place with partners on trialling this. Work on identifying and building relationships with landowners and partners continues.

### **1.5 Improve safety in and around water**

Phase 1 of the Water Rescue Strategy 2020-2025 went live in March 2023; an Ops Bulletin was published and Joint Fire Control (JFC) received training. We are progressing with Phase 2 which involves uplifting all Wholetime Duty System (WDS) firefighters from E type to D type with three stations this year and three stations next year. A budget of £100k has been secured. An additional 12 Water Incident Managers (WIMs) have been trained in the previous quarter.

The River Usk Trackway project (a deployable boat launch point trackway) is underway. All the relevant surveys have now been completed and the planning pack submitted to Newport City Council. A response is expected at the end of Q2.

Our Crucial Crew sessions with Year 6 pupils are being enhanced with water safety messages, coordinated with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). All unitary authorities receive a quarterly letter of advice to share with schools and home schooling teams on water safety as an initiative led by SWFRS with the All-Wales Water Safety Forum's education sub-group. The Harry Styles concerts in June brought crowds to Cardiff City Centre, and these were used as an opportunity for water safety events. CS continues to liaise with stations and support campaigns such as National Drowning Prevention Week 17<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June.

### **1.6 Improve fire safety in buildings in our communities**

A scoping document has been produced outlining the key benefits of implementing a programme dedicated to fire safety checks of non-domestic buildings by operational crews with options for how this could be conducted and consideration of training needs. The aim of this is to improve the ability to capture information on a wider scope of buildings to support firefighter safety at operational incidents. This has been discussed with the Heads of Risk Reduction and Operations who have provided strategic direction on how this could be tested involving a trial at some stations. This is now being researched.

High-Rise Phase 3 audits are now underway to address deficiencies with external walls of high-rise residential buildings which now fall under the amended legislation.

Work on our Business Fire Safety (BFS) regulating officers gaining access to the national Contextualized Auditors Register (CAR) is progressing. Access is for competent BFS officers only with required qualifications and experience. Not all members of the department have the required qualifications at this time but will be considered once achieved.

Work is ongoing to develop a reporting module via our Business Management Information System (BMIS) to provide BFS management information and this is on schedule to be reviewed by BFS mid-August.

JFC Systems Team continue to work with Operational Risk Management (ORM) Ops Intel to align Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) data held within the Command and Control System.

## ST02 – Responding to your emergency

### 2.1 Respond effectively when you need us

JFC recruitment has been successful for 2023 with nine staff recruited. One course is complete and the second is due to start in September. JFC are currently over establishment by five to mitigate the sudden loss of staff with one months' notice. There is no recruitment pool left for courses in 2024. Monitoring is in place for a further recruitment drive.

JFC minimum crewing was increased to seven during the first quarter. A further recruits' course commences in September, and once recruits have passed their assessments, the minimum will increase to eight on each watch as JFC establishment increases. Resilience continues with the training and systems teams Monday-Friday between the hours of 0800 and 2200 hrs. Operation Willow Beck can be instigated should it be required or opt out if staffing/activity does not allow.

***Operation Willow Beck** provides a pre-determined 999 call distribution plan. This means that during times of extreme call demand, the calls can be spread to a wider number of control rooms, limiting the number of calls taken by one single control room so they do not become overwhelmed. This will allow for quicker call answering, and improved resilience across all control rooms at no extra costs to individual fire and rescue services.*

JFC continues to test with partners on the full implementation of Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT).

***MAIT** is a highly resilient service for all emergency service providers. It facilitates the fast exchange of secure messages and incident notifications between agency control rooms.*

The Fire Investigation (FI) team has three additional competent members who have been distributed over the rota groups. This has created a consistent number of FI Officers available at all times. Due to promotion, movement and retirement, this work will continue to be routinely assessed.

The final draft (minus JFC element) of the review of Operation Ategol, in light of industrial action planning assumptions, SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures), training regime and concept of operations agreed has been presented to SMT prior to wider consultation, Auxiliary FF Control training elements being finalised prior to expected consult now in August.

Chassis have been ordered for “fit for purpose” 4x4 fire appliances and are expected in December when the body build will commence.

Vehicle modifications, to accommodate the new RTC equipment, has been completed on all Volvo and Scania appliances. Modifications to Mercedes appliances are ongoing.

SSRI Phase 1 Data Cleanse Report tasks have been allocated and discussed at Geospatial Data User Group (GDUG) / Building Risk Recommendation Group (BRRG). Phase 2 of the risk information flow report is currently undergoing proof reading prior to consideration by Head of ORM.

We are conducting research and development into emergency response to fires involving electric vehicles including visits to equipment manufacturers to view options. A demonstration day, in collaboration with all Welsh FRSs, is to be arranged for Autumn 2023. An EV fire blanket demonstration was carried out at CGTDC.

## 2.2 Do all we can to make sure that our On-Call Duty System crews are available

Improving the training pathway from initial recruitment to competent On-Call firefighter continues with a thematic review being carried out by the Retained Management Team (RMT). This includes on-call training hours / drill nights, and the expected date of completion is late September 2023.

*On-Call Firefighters* live or work in local communities to the stations they serve and respond to their station when required, within their contracted hours.

[Skills for Justice](#) (SFJ) are still evaluating changes to the On-Call qualification. This work stream will be looked at during the On-Call thematic review.

*SFJ is the leading Awarding Organisation for Fire and Rescue Qualifications offering a wide range of training for individuals, teams, and employers across fire and rescue, including fire safety, fire prevention, and much more.*

## 2.3 Train our personnel to respond to current and future risks in our communities

The Training and Development (T&D) department is working closely with staffing and operations to ensure training delivery minimises impact on service delivery. On-station instructors are being utilised to support where possible by staff exchange or being attached to course as a candidate to enable them to be utilised as instructor to develop their delivery and provide continual professional development (CPD) opportunities.

We are researching new ways to train and re-engineer current courses to best utilise our online technology including exploring opportunities to increase the delivery of online training to develop operational competence, achieved through virtual sessions and Micro-Teaching. Discussions with ICT on broadband width to support this work has begun. A webinar was delivered on Breathing Apparatus (BA) as trial, although this had to be conducted from a fire station due to lack of sufficient broadband width.

Actions from the [WG FRS Operational Training thematic review](#) have been allocated to the Operations RMT. Updates will be provided at key stages throughout 2023-24 via Service Delivery meetings, tasks are on course and work started during Q1.

Course and lesson plans have been developed for intended implementation of Section 19 of the 2006 Road Traffic Act. Course duration will need to increase to two weeks and include night driving. Staff contracts will need to be reviewed to accommodate increased hours and night element.

The BA department utilising and adapting online content via intranet page and webinars. Some projects awaiting completion by our Training Support Unit (TSU). Current BA Course following gap analysis to accommodate [National Operational Guidance \(NOG\)](#) and Health and Safety (H&S) requirements to improve Instructor welfare and course capacity. Content being reviewed in readiness for next training cycle.

## ST03 – Using technology well

### 3.1 Use the most suitable technology and equipment to improve our services

We are exploring technology to improve our suite of risk reduction activities and provide efficiencies whilst undertaking core risk reduction activities. Work in all areas is progressing and additional resources budgeted for in 2024-25.

An electronic audit form that links directly to RIDGE is currently on trial. Desktop audits have been completed and this will now progress to practical audits (on a test system) using a data tablet. There are outstanding actions on datasets to be resolved with WMFS.

*RIDGE (risk information data gathering engine) identifies and prioritises domestic and commercial properties that are most at risk from fire.*

We continue to explore options to develop a Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) Members reporting portal to allow access to relevant performance data. In addition to what content would be most useful there are technical issues as Members use ICT equipment provided by their host Unitary Authorities and presently do not have access to our Intranet.

The Recruitment Team has tested shortlisting through People-xd Portal (formerly known as CoreHR) and pilot work has been undertaken to feed data from Recruitment to Employee Relations.

The module to introduce the onboarding function within the People-xd system, which would enhance the introduction of new employees into the workplace, has been deferred. An onboarding team has been set up with relevant human resource (HR) personnel to work together to launch this during 2023. An initial meeting has been held with relevant parties.

GDUG maintains an overview of mapping systems and related data. New layers are being added to mobile data terminals (MDTs) making NRW forestry boundaries and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) sites available.

*MDTs comprise a vehicle mounted, fixed, ruggedised computer fitted with a 12-inch touch screen. The MDT and screen are fitted to the cabs of all frontline appliances enabling crews to access mobilising information, messages and operational data.*

Existing BMIS station dashboards continue to be supported pending the design and implementation of a revised dashboard to replace the existing 47 dashboards. This task has been delayed but discussions have taken place with Group Managers (GMs) and Station Commanders on their requirements. Team resources are being reviewed to prioritise this action in the coming quarter.

South Wales Police (SWP) replacement Command and Control solution is expected to go live in 2025. JFC will liaise to understand impact and to identify a process for the Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) and Red Box (voiced recorder). SWP are aware and a plan is under development.

*The ICCS is a touch screen interface enabling users to efficiently manage radio and telephony voice communications whilst being able to easily access other subsystems, for example, CCTV, voice recorders, intercom systems, door locks and alarms.*

The deployment of the [Emergency Services Network](#) (ESN) has been delayed with a likely implementation date of 2029. However, good multi agency progress is being made on the ESN Coverage Project with a projected completion by Sept 2023.

*ESN is a cross-government programme, led by the Home Office, to deliver the new Emergency Services critical communications system. This will replace the current Airwave service used by the emergency services in England, Wales and Scotland) and transform how they operate.*

While future procurement of a finance system is being considered in terms of procedure and timescales, our existing system is being upgraded which will provide investment and system benefits. E-fin Version 7 upgrade is due in Autumn 2023.

Work continues to develop a BMIS dashboard for T&D assurance metrics. The dashboard is now being trialled with improvements being made as and when required.

The pdrPro Project is meeting timelines with 57 modules completed and signed off by subject matter experts along with Risk Assessments. Three additional wildfire packs are under construction whilst two additional wildfire packs have been completed. Various others are under construction. The next pdrPro 3-year cycle is under construction, for completion by December 2023. The main system went 'live' on the 1st July 2022 and the modules are being updated and made 'live' in line with the pdrPro thematic training schedule.

*pdrPro is a planner-based maintenance of competence system that includes all the activities that make up a core skill. Whether attained in training, incidents, courses or e-learning they are recorded and reported in one place. The dashboard provides an overview and a route into all parts of the system.*

Meetings and demonstrations have taken place regarding the replacement of the hydrant monitoring system.

Ops Intel are reviewing the SSRI Management System database in preparation for migration to a new management system.

Heads of Service (HoS) have been updated regarding People-xd functionality and have suggested ideas for further developing the system to enhance reporting and the user experience. HR have worked with T&D and Employee Relations to streamline reporting and workflow of applications.

MS Office 365 / Teams training has been arranged for members of the Business Support Unit.

A proposal has been drafted and approved to outline the purchase of tablets to improve the access and administration for ORM team managers, the budget for these will be assigned as soon as practicable.

The appliances and equipment (A&E) team are focused on research and development to ensure the latest technology is considered during all A&E purchases.

Initial research has been undertaken to understand our current position and the options available going forward regarding our Management Information Systems. We have also undertaken an initial procurement

exercise where we have encouraged potential suppliers to register their interest in engaging with a larger-scale procurement for a replacement system when (or indeed if) we undertake one. An options paper, outlining the various ways forward in this area, is currently being drafted and will be shared with HoS when completed.

ICT have:

- Awarded the tender for the replacement of the existing core layer 2 switches at HQ and the disaster recovery (DR) site with new hardware. The order for new hardware and software has been placed. Due to global supply chain issues, availability of hardware is limited with an approximate lead time of 90 days.
- Purchased virtual Firewall Management Centre (vFMC) software for the replacement of the HQ inner firewall which will ensure that software allows management of new JFC firewalls as well as SWFRS.
- No significant progress on developing and integrating the Gazetteer and Geospatial Data (G2D) system.
- Commenced the creation of a client database to manage Community Safety (CS) contacts. This will enable the CS manager to interrogate the system to identify any other visits or interactions either the person or the premises has had with the Service. The new safeguarding element of this is awaiting sign off by CS.
- Commenced work on the server update project. Where the servers are ICT owned then we are updating to Server 2023 - for servers running systems owned by other departments we will be contacting the suppliers to see if we can just upgrade or if there is a new software version available.
- Awaiting sign off on the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) from Occupational Health Unit (OHU) before rolling out the system enabling text message to be sent to a group of people with their appointment details with a report back to OHU of all messages that have been successfully received. This will improve efficiency and provide evidence that a message has been received.
- Progressed the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) hardware replacement project and are updating Windows 10 images for the next phase of deployment.

***VDI** is a virtualisation solution that uses virtual machines to provide and manage virtual desktops. VDI hosts desktop environments on a centralized server and deploys them to end-users on request, accessed over the network with an endpoint device (laptop, tablet, etc.).*

- Tendered, through Gcloud, and await the results for replacement backup technology which will meet our existing disaster recovery plans and implement backup technologies to protect our Office 365 estate.

***Gcloud** is an online catalogue where public sector customers can buy cloud-based computing services such as hosting, software and cloud support.*

- Delivered additional Access Points (APs). 82 APs have now been replaced with new hardware. Looked at stations where coverage could be improved and reviewed requests for additional coverage. Need to purchase additional AP licenses to give enough for all required.
- Issued replacement laptops to users with older systems.
- Completed Airwave Tetra Encryption 2 (TEA2) Audit. Audit of Mobile Devices (Mobile and Smartphones) is underway. INF to undertake satellite location audits as part of equipment rollouts as agreed at ICTMM.
- Worked with IG&C to explore new tools to improve our information management and data retention – this will lay the groundwork to allow more data to be held in the cloud long term and adopt more tools in the Office 365 ecosystem. We will explore sharing and connecting our Tenant with other organisations to maximise collaborative potential once we have suitable tagging controls. Lack of resource in ICT, Transformation and IG&C is limiting the rate of progress on these key extra deliverables.

### 3.2 Review the standard and use of technology and equipment across the Service

We are reviewing the current mobilising hardware to ascertain whether it is still fit for purpose.

Review, document requirements, and update 24/7 system for IG&C. Follow-up meeting planned with ICT regarding implementation following an initial assessment and partial roll-out.

Awaiting tender for the replacement of in use iPhone 7 Plus mobile phone devices, now becoming end of life, with new devices linked into Office 365.

A paper outlining the current situation regarding the Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) model, along with options for future modelling risk, has been prepared and submitted to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for consideration. The Planning, Performance and Risk Manager and Head of SP&C will meet with the ELT to discuss the paper and to determine a suitable way forward for the organisation.

*FSEC was a software-based toolkit, used to assist FRSs in assessment of risk. FSEC can also be used to identify and help to reduce the number of people at significant risk and the amount of property, environment and heritage at significant risk from fire and other emergencies within the community.*

## ST04 – Working with our partners

### 4.1 Work with our Public Service Boards (PSBs) to support our communities.

Following restructure of local PSBs, subgroup attendances have been reassigned where appropriate to ensure we are fully supporting PSB activity across the Service area. The Statistics and Risk Team are working with GMs to establish data requirements and reporting in relation to the four PSBs to support their work with boards and sub-groups.

We are in the process of mapping each unitary authority to establish if there is a link between the frequency of refuse collections and deliberate fires. Our new arson reduction team vans will include a QR code for Crimestoppers and FlyMapper to help reduce the frequency of refuse fires.

A Planning, Performance and Risk Officer has been recruited and will lead on developing PSB reporting, developing resources relating to the seven goals of the WG Well-being of Future Generations Act.

### 4.2 Work with our partners to deliver our services where they are needed

Work on the specialised housing guide (addressing sheltered housing) is on hold as the guide is being amended by a NFCC working group. Awaiting update before developing guidance for SWFRS.

We continue to develop collaborative working with health and safety peer group partners. We recently met with colleagues from Mid and West Wales FRS (MAWWFRS) and North Wales FRS to discuss common themes and will feedback quarterly.

Work is ongoing to strengthen partnership working referrals for home safety checks. [St John Ambulance Cymru](#) recently on-boarded for referrals across Wales. Further work continues in dementia, hospital discharge and the bariatric arena.

A meeting has been held with MAWWFRS to consider how risk information can be shared, informed by heat maps created for MAWWFRS / SWFRS over border incidents. Options for a system to provide automated updates is under consideration. Currently investigating platforms.

The JFC IG&C manual will be progressed according to joint priorities between SWFRS and MAWWFRS.

Wider Wales Public Sector discussion have taken place around use of the [Social Value Portal](#). Whilst we have started to embed SV and Well-being outcomes in our procurements and have considered the national [Themes, Outcomes and Measures \(TOMs\)](#) it is not believed that we will be adding value by using the SV Portal. Alternatives are currently being explored by wider public sector.

We continue work to ensure Service Driving Licences checks are maintained in line with organisational policy. Process of introduction and embedding in final stages, with contact made to all staff requesting driver licence details for checking by new company. Resilience and Planning are working with HR and T&D to ensure ongoing system processes are embedded.

Reviewing and enhancing relationship with local resilience forum (LRF) partners and national resilience in Wales to ensure cohesive and collaborative approach to risks, threats and harm to our communities in line with emerging risks is ongoing.

LRFs are multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS and others. These agencies are known as Category 1 Responders, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act.

### **4.3 Review and evaluate our existing partnerships**

Property Services continue to work with our emergency service partners towards a co-ordinated strategy to develop future co-locations. Progress has been made with mapping of Fire, Ambulance and Police sites across South Wales utilising [Data Map Wales](#). This will allow all Services to access this information securely when looking at strategic areas for new/further sites.

We continue to review current lease arrangements for co-location sites with a view to replacing with a standardised cost recovery mechanism. Our Legal Officer has produced a draft agreement template. Legal advice has been sought regarding recharge mechanism and a response is awaited. Meeting arranged in August with Station Managers for discussions of local issues.

New Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Dwr Cymru on hold pending resolution of S-19 hydrants.

## **ST05 – Engaging and communicating**

### **5.1 Deliver on the recommendations of the Investors in People report**

This is now reported on under ST06 Valuing Our People.

### **5.2 Involve our communities and make sure they have their say in what we do**

We continue to review our social media channels. Tik Tok is still under consideration with resourcing, creativity, security concerns and culture review process remaining factors in postponing the launch. Threads, a new text-based conversation app like Twitter, is also under consideration.

Our stakeholder register continues to be reviewed. New sign-up forms are being designed to be filled out during events. A contact form and area of the website is also in progress to allow people to sign up online. We continue to identify additional mechanisms for engagement and consultation and have recently created a dedicated Intranet page for surveys so that staff can see current opportunities for consultation as well as feedback on previous surveys, enabling us to share consultation from other sources, eg, PSBs.

The engagement area of the Intranet is still in progress. Engagement Toolkit has been updated.

We continue to explore new and innovative ways to involve our partners and communities in our planning processes and will be developing our Annual Improvement Plan to incorporate additional community background and performance analysis.

Most action points from the Government Digital Service's accessibility audit have been implemented. This has raised the Service's score on the [Silktide](#) Index to 65%, which is rated 'Good'. A full review of the website's content still needs to be undertaken, with a particular focus on non-compliant PDFs. The outstanding action point from the accessibility audit relates to a PDF, which is an extensive FRA document which has in excess of 90 accessibility issues. Progress on this task has been delayed but will be a priority for the latter half of the financial year.

We continue to maintain awareness of high impact community events. Review of event matrix aligned to intelligence and threat risks is ongoing, with operational plans and representation at smaller event command functions already being undertaken in line with MA assessment events.

### **5.3 Help keep our communities safe through safety education and attending community events**

A series of 999 Days commenced at Bryn Bach Park in Blaenau Gwent on 10<sup>th</sup> June. We were joined by multiple partner organisations, including Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) and Gwent Police. We also attended Cardiff Pride on 17<sup>th</sup> June and stations continue to participate in local events. Caerphilly 999 day will be held on 19<sup>th</sup> August and Cardiff 999 day on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

We have provided our road safety resources to WG to use within a specialist team who will deliver 30-20 driver education packages across Wales. This will free our team up to divert resources into engaging with colleges within our area.

We have developed a new partnership with Welsh Water to deliver driver education to their staff across Wales to reduce overall road risk.

We have developed 'Street Firefighter', designed to engage with young people in the more deprived areas of Cardiff, to meet the needs of areas where community tension and increased fire risk are prevalent. This resource will enhance our reputation and reduce the risk of attacks on our crews and violence amongst young people.

We continue to develop our resources for home-schooled children and are working with [Water Safety Wales](#) to provide educational packages for all children in Wales. We have created a new partnership with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) to ensure all year 6/7 children receive drowning prevention input during Crucial Crew sessions.

Coordinating and promoting risk reduction involvement in large scale events is now embedded within policy. The Events Coordination Group meets each month to analyse the events risk matrix and decide upon the required actions for medium and high-risk events. Work is still required to ensure that all Station Commanders realise their role in actioning events within their area and updating the events risk matrix.

A digital campaign calendar will be discussed in the next CEG (Consultation and Engagement Group) meeting to decide what events shall be included and what method would be most effective for the delivery of this.

The engagement team will be working with recruitment to discuss and plan ways to improve coordination of community events and activities, providing support for stations at local events. We will also consider input from operational teams on how best to communicate with and support station events.

## **ST06 – Valuing our people**

### **6.1 Attract a workforce that reflects and represents our communities**

Work is ongoing with new initiatives aimed at increasing the diversity of applicants to the Service. This includes “work out with the watch” and female football and rugby teams. We have attended events such as the community cohesion event organised by the Ethnic Minority Welsh Women Award Association. Also, set up an attraction and engagement strategy group with Media/Comms, Recruitment, Ops and CS Teams.

The development and implementation of a Service recruitment strategy, considering the [NFCC recruitment hub](#) best practice, is in draft format and has been out for the first consultation. Amendments will be made prior to final consultation.

Recruitment continues to work with the Statistics and Risk Team to explore the use of recruitment metrics through obtaining data through People-xd. The recruitment dashboard is taking shape, e.g. past WDS data available, plus headcount/contracts.

Evaluation form now active for recruitment events and work underway to capture it for BMIS. Eventbrite will be trialled for On-Call month and 999 Day. Staffing remains an issue in the engagement team, which hampers delivery and evaluation.

The Auxiliary FF Cadre is currently above maximum establishment, so recruitment is on pause. BA and Technical courses are scheduled. 2023/24 MOS programme initiated with good attendance levels.

### **6.2 Develop our people by identifying training and development opportunities**

A team has been set up to develop all BFS tactical officers on engineered buildings via site visits and department training days. Following this, information will be provided to the operations department on how BFS tactical officers can assist incident commanders.

Learning and Development have launched Maintaining Excellence along with Leading Myself and Leading Others Pathways development programmes. The roll out of Middle and Strategic Level Pathways is in development and scheduled to launch late 2023. The review of talent management and succession planning has been deferred to 2024-25 once all Pathways have been embedded.

pdrPro, in its development phase, has now gone live in JFC as a recording system for training and training status reports. The training team has commenced uploading training material linked to training topics and this will be built upon in the coming months.

IG&C induction training has been updated and deployed with positive feedback being received. Other training and awareness materials are to be reviewed and updated in accordance with priorities and resources.

The Operational Assurance Support Team (OAST) is working on providing a breakdown of each station completed Personal Reviews (PRs) and the number of outstanding PRs to the station commanders. In addition to this it has now been established that the promotional pathways can only be access if PRs are current. PR level will be reviewed again following September mid-year reviews.

### 6.3 Support our people to feel well, healthy and happy at work

The Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2023-26 and the Inclusive Action Plan (IAP) 2023-26 have been developed to map out the Service's journey around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) over the next three years. The EDI Lead continues to promote the SEP and is developing the Inclusive Action Plan - both of which will be monitored and reported on annually.

As the Service is currently undergoing a Culture Review, the holistic EDI audit and assessment, which was to take place in 2023-24, would not be appropriate at this time. The Culture Review findings and recommendations will provide further information around EDI and the Service's provision for its staff upon publication.

The Equality Allies Network has been considered and will now be replaced by the Inclusive Workforce Group. This will be the focus for the Service and will provide more steer across all departments. Reps of the group will use the space to raise issues and help raise awareness of good practice across the Service.

The EDI Lead now attends Corporate, Wholetime and Joint Control induction to deliver a section around EDI and Upstander Behaviour. Once more resources are gained by the department, staff within the L, D & I Team will be able to host more sessions. The EDI Lead continues to work across departments relating to the Inclusive Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment review/relaunch.

A meeting is scheduled for August to progress the review of on-call arrangements for Green Book posts with a view to aligning arrangements where possible. This will include negotiating any changes with the Trade Unions and employees before implementing associated changes.

The project to incorporate inclusive facilities within our buildings is progressing well. The Roath fire and rescue station dormitory project is finished and phase 2 in design. Design is progressing on Whitchurch, Merthyr and Duffryn fire and rescue stations. Bathroom has been installed at Whitchurch fire and rescue station ahead of the main scheme. Work will progress throughout the year.

The decision to fully implement the 'Fire Fit Programme' is to be considered by SMT.

We have discussed our stance as a Service with WG Fire Advisor to undertake an all-Wales health and safety approach to contaminants. We have also set up a SWFRS working group with both uniformed and corporate staff. A SOP and risk assessment is in place.

Work to extend 10 On-Call fire and rescue stations to include gyms, drying facilities etc is progressing. Construction at Pontcymmer fire and rescue station is approximately 50% completed. Construction at Treorchy fire and rescue station started 03/07/23 - 25 week programme. Design works due to be completed for Gilfach Goch and Ferndale fire and rescue stations by early August with the view to have Gilfach Goch in construction in November 2023 and Ferndale in January 2024.

The PR process is in its 2nd year within JFC and progressing slowly due to issues aligning staff with correct managers. Agreement is almost in place for the SWFRS PR to trigger CPD payment for MAWWFRS staff. There has been no progress with sickness, CPD or Care of Dependents Leave (CDL) which are top priorities for staff.

New desks, PODS and chairs are in place in JFC. Snagging is still to take place.

#### **6.4 Deliver on the recommendations of the Investors in People report**

A survey has been conducted with Middle Leaders across the Service to determine the effectiveness of internal communications and feedback is being implemented into our internal communications approach and strategy. For example, collating news into an email update and making registering for staff Shout Forums simpler. A decision on whether to conduct a survey across the entire Service will be made soon.

#### **6.5 Encourage and support a bilingual culture across the Service**

A BMIS reporting portal has been designed to track compliance with the [Welsh Language Standards](#) and is being developed with Head of HR.

*The **Welsh Language Standards** promote and facilitate the Welsh language and ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language in Wales.*

## ST07 – Protecting our environment

### 7.1 Reduce our usage of single use materials

We continue to explore opportunities to reduce the amount of non-recyclable materials used.

We have developed a 'Sustainable Procurement Policy' with a view to ensuring the organisation considers sustainability impacts in all future procurements which is going out to consultation.

### 7.2 Expand the use of electric vehicles

We continue to expand our network of EV charging points to support increased use of EVs. 26 sites have been completed from the last round of WG funding. Only sites left are on-call stations.

A presentation is scheduled to be delivered to SMT in September regarding introducing an EV charging policy enabling individuals to charge personal vehicles, e.g. personal lease cars, personal cars, visitors.

We continue to review developments and opportunities in fuel and other technologies and a meeting is scheduled with MAWWFRS for mid-July to discuss using biodiesel (a form of diesel fuel derived from plants or animals).

We are in the process of devising and implementing a light vehicle replacement policy to meet Welsh Government 2030 target for zero emissions. We are waiting confirmation from [the Public Sector Tax Consultancy](#) regarding the use of provided cars which will guide on numbers of vehicles to be replaced.

### 7.3 Reduce our energy use and our carbon footprint

A gap analysis has been conducted to determine what needs to be done to implement an accredited [Environmental Management System](#) to gain recognition for our environmental practices and demonstrate our commitments to sustainability, consideration of environmental impacts, compliance with legislation and environmental protection. We are aiming for a minimum of level 3 out of 5 of the [Green Dragon Environmental Standard](#). Initial conversations have been held with Green Business Centre who can consult and assess for the award.

Energy use data for 2021-22 and 2022-23 at all sites is currently on the Sustainability Intranet Page. Waste data is being received following award of contract in April and will be published once data is reviewed and validated.

Design work is progressing well on the Net Carbon Zero design of New Inn fire and rescue station. The project has now moved into RIBA Stage 4, so working on detailed design and planning permissions. Pre-planning application has been submitted and we are awaiting further input from the planning committee. Work is progressing on the temporary site. The Site Investigation report is due back on the 26th July, once received we should be able to progress with heads of terms.

***RIBA Stage 4 – Technical Design*** - This stage is where we produce the detailed architectural and engineering designs and specifications ready for tendering, submission to building control and construction. Building systems are finalised, a detailed design programme produced, and all technical information prepared.

Meetings between the statistics and risk team and sustainability team have been ongoing with progress made on developing a dashboard of metrics on BMIS to demonstrate change on a granular level. This will be fine-tuned before being made live.

#### **7.4 Consider how our activities impact on the environment**

The design team have returned to site for better understanding of the limitations of the proposed rainwater harvesting and grey water harvesting system at HQ. The outcome of the revised design and potential costs and savings will determine the next steps.

We are developing open dialogue with staff on our carbon reduction position and the challenges we face. The intranet page has been made live and is a work in progress. This allows messages to be communicated to all staff members and provides contact details of the sustainability team as well as a link to the innovations scheme for any suggestions from staff members.

Plans for station sustainability champions have been made with enthusiastic individuals from a station level being asked to volunteer time. Quarterly meetings will be chaired by the Sustainability Officer. Call to arms has been drafted for circulation across the Service.

#### **7.5 Reduce the amount of waste produced**

The new waste contract has been awarded and all but three unitary authorities, due to the notice required on contract, are on the new programme. Bridgend County Borough Council stations will join the new waste contract in January 2024 and Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire will join in April 2024.

Education and engagement work to communicate new recycling legislation requirements to the workforce continues including a presentation to Station Commanders, information going on intranet page and direct contact with station personnel. From 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024, all non-domestic premises in Wales will need to separate recyclable materials from other waste.

## ST08 – Continuing to work effectively

### 8.1 Be clear and publicly accountable

Risk Reduction are implementing appropriate departmental procedures in relation to future legislative changes in Wales to ensure the department, as a regulatory body, is consistent in the application of fire safety requirements in Wales. Additional letters and paragraphs produced in response to FSA2001. Preparations underway for future implementation of [Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022](#).

Work is progressing to set up a training assurance team. There are discussions ongoing from an all-Wales basis to implement an aligned assurance metric system. This work is ongoing and will take several months to implement. The Operational Development and Review Team (ODRT) recently visited Bedfordshire FRS to view their system, which they have offered to share with us. ODRT are looking to integrate an Ops Assurance system with the pdrPRO system for ease of use.

Information, regarding implementing the national McCloud Pension Reform Exercise, is being provided for those that are retiring from the Service but the whole remedy exercise is yet to be commenced for all other staff. Both Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC) and SWFRS are experiencing resourcing issues, which may impact on our ability to continue to deliver services to the standard that we would normally expect. Since April 2022 65% of all retirements are Immediate Detriment (ID) cases. Full remedy exercise data was received in May 2023, however we are currently unable to commence this piece of work due to ABS workloads. We will shortly be advertising for an additional resource, until then progress with this exercise will be slow.

We have continued to process Firefighter Pension tapering arrangements Category 1 cases which allow people to access their pension as though Remedy is in place. We have reviewed our resourcing model and will be increasing establishment levels on a temporary basis within the Pensions Team. This will allow us to be better prepared for the implementation of McCloud from October 2023.

Home Office and WG have now published their consultation documentation relating to the changes in legislation linked to the Matthews/O'Brien exercise. Closing dates for responses was May 2023. This exercise is not anticipated to commence until at least Oct 2023, with an 18-month window for implementation and review. The Local Government Association (LGA) have initiated early discussions with FRSs and SWFRS Pensions team have analysed the information and written out to those that do not meet the given criteria for remedy. The LGA are in discussions with GAD to provide FRAs with a calculator to assist with this exercise from October. Given contract start dates now go back to the 1960s the challenge for GAD will be to provide FRAs with useable pay figures.

All data has now been submitted to RCTCBC for Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) members and a review of the information is underway. Awaiting confirmation that this exercise is now fully complete.

We are in the process of making minor changes to the Incident Recording System (IRS) data validation quality assurance process which will improve the quality of incident data. We also continue to engage with the Home Office working group reviewing the existing system in preparation for replacement of IRS in 2024.

Developing an IG&C framework and methodology and scheduling IG&C audits continues. Security Risk Group members have been asked to consider and submit to IG&C potential questions to add to site security questionnaire. These will be reviewed and included on the next site security questionnaire response which will inform a future audit program.

IG&C continue discussions with Property Services and Sustainability regarding deployment of confidential waste bins to all stations. Initial guidance on what should be being disposed of via confidential waste has been drafted and shared with Sustainability to be issued with wider guidance on waste disposal. Work continues bringing Archive into compliance with currently stated retention periods.

Updates to IG&C webpages have been submitted to the Deputy SIRO for review before they can be submitted to be deployed to the website. Discussions continue with Media and Communications on creating a Disclosure Log for publication of information requests with the Publications Library on the website.

IG&C series on the top 12 tips to prevent some common data breaches launched. Work continues on drafting an information governance and compliance training and awareness plan.

A preliminary review of the existing Register of Processing Activities has been undertaken along with initial discussions in relation the structure of an Information Asset Register.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) guidance will be reviewed, updated, and published once the review of the DPIA procedure has been completed.

Occupational Health are considering information governance and compliance support required. A programme of information governance and compliance surgeries in collaboration with Joint Fire Control and Occupational Health yet to be formalised.

Discussions continue regarding work required to implement policies identified during the data knowledge review and meet the Data Management Framework, will progress in accordance with priorities and available resources.

A safeguarding board has been established and meets on a quarterly basis. A new process has been developed to manage [Safeguarding Wales Section 5](#) professional concerns which places a duty on the manager of employee relations to own the process. This has already provided an opportunity to learn and enhance our risk assessment process when managing concerns. Group one training for all staff is being made available on electronic learning systems to ensure all staff receive the appropriate level of understanding for their role.

Implementation of a new Accident and Near Miss Reporting process is in progress. New forms have been devised and are set to be released at the end of October following accident investigation training.

The design and implementation of a dashboard within BMIS to monitor the complaints procedure and provide a quarterly report is progressing well with Business Support and Statistics and Risk.

The [Cyber Assessment Framework \(CAF\)](#) assessment was carried out with the Specialist Assessors onsite and submitted - we are awaiting the final report from the supplier and any summary guidance from WG we will then determine if a submission for [Cyber Essentials](#) will be made in this year.

*CAF provides a systematic and comprehensive approach to assessing the extent to which cyber risks to essential functions are being managed by the organisation responsible.*

*Cyber Essentials is an effective, Government backed scheme that helps to protect organisations against a whole range of the most common cyber attacks.*

We continue to work with the WG Cymru Security Operations Centre (SOC) initiative to deliver the needed in house systems and process to make effective use of these tools for SWFRS and to benefit the wider public sector by shared intelligence. Regular attendance at related Cymru SOC meetings and briefings are undertaken. The needed actions to join as soon as we can are also underway including seeking the additional funding we will need to implement a full Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution.

*WG Cymru SOC is described as a first of its kind solution to cyber resilience in taking a 'defend as one' approach for a joined up public sector stance. It will initially take in local authorities and fire and rescue services, working with the Welsh Government, National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and a managed service provider to collectively detect and respond to threats and engage in shared incident handling.*

*SIEM is a solution that helps organisations detect, analyse, and respond to security threats before they harm business operations.*

We are conducting a [Fire Standards](#) gap analysis and benchmarking exercise. With support from HoS and SMT, progress is being made with governance leading to SMT sign off and BMIS development.

## **8.2 Maximise value for money**

Head of T&D, Head of Finance and Procurement and the Strategic Property Manager are working together on the long-term management of the Real Fire Training Facility (RFTF). Discussions on contract management will inform our course of action and recommendations for approval by SMT.

Review of standard licences and leases is complete, agreements have been reviewed and standard documents created. Property Management are to provide a standard charging mechanism and then these will be shared with our partner agencies. Licences updated from legal position. Awaiting finance data and then can be rolled out.

ORM and Procurement are working through the programme of events in relation to the tender specification for the all-Wales next generation of corporate wear. The original timeline was impacted by issues out of our control, new timeline in place to track progress.

## **8.3 Develop new ways of working**

The development of the organisational filing system has not been progressed - the exact requirements of this action will become clearer as the implementation of Office 365 progresses.

Initial work to collate required information and evidence that we will need to design and implement a project methodology and documentation to be utilised at project initiation has not progressed due to vacancy in PPR Team. A new PPR Officer has recently joined the team providing capacity for this task to progress.

The hand back of tasks, previously undertaken by JFC Protection and Prevention Team, as part of the outcomes of the JFC Review is progressing. There has been some progress with safeguarding but no progress with sickness for MAWWFRS. Discussions ongoing for on-call processes with MAWWFRS.

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**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR  
FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2023/24**

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
As required	Audit Wales Reports	To advise Members of the conclusions of Audit Wales reports and to consider the implications for the Service	D	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	
As required	Internal Audit Progress Report & Audit Action Updates	To provide an updated position of work performed against the internal audit plan and to highlight any significant issues arising from the internal audit work performed	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
As required	Performance Report	To scrutinise specific issues of performance identified and referred by Fire Authority	I	ACFO SD  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
As required	Statistics Report	To scrutinise specific statistics or trends as identified and referred by the Fire Authority	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
24 July 2023	Revenue Outturn	To advise on total revenue expenditure for the year against the set revenue budget following the year end and to explain variations and impact on reserves	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Completed

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
24 July 2023	Capital Outturn	To advise on total capital expenditure for the year against the set capital budget following the year end and to explain variations	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Completed
24 July 2023	Audit Wales Audit Plan 2023	To advise Members of the work set out by Audit Wales to be undertaken during 2023	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Completed
24 July 2023	Treasury Management Monitoring Report	To updated Members on progress against Treasury Management activities of the first quarter of the financial year	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Completed
24 July 2023	Audited Statement of Accounts	To advise Members of the content of the Audited Statement of Accounts	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Completed
24 July 2023	Audit Accounts report (ISA 260 Report)	To advise Members of the content of the Auditor General's ISA 260 report including the final letter of representation, proposed audit opinion and corrections/recommendations	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	Deferred to 4 December 2024 following completion of the external audit process by Audit Wales

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
18 Sept 2023	Medium Term Financial Strategy Update, Reserves Strategy and Revenue & Capital Budget Setting Report	To update Members on the MTFS to inform and influence the budget setting process to meet the Service's requirements for the following financial year	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda
18 Sept 2023	Revenue Monitor	To provide an update on revenue expenditure against the revenue budget for the year	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda
18 Sept 2023	Capital Monitor	To provide an update on capital expenditure against the capital budget for the year	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda
18 Sept 2023	Treasury Management Outturn Report	To advise on performance against the treasury management policy and strategy following financial year end	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda
18 Sept 2023	Health Check of Priority Actions and Q1 progress against the Statutory PI's	To scrutinise progress of the Service's Priority Actions and statutory PI's as at the end of Q1	I	ACO CS & ACFO SD  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	On agenda
18 Sept 2023	Audit Wales Final Audit Letter	To advise on conclusion of financial audit	I	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
4 Dec 2023	Revenue Monitor	To provide an update on revenue expenditure against the revenue budget for the year	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 Dec 2023	Capital Monitor	To provide an update on capital expenditure against the capital budget for the year	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 Dec 2023	Revenue & Capital Budget Setting Update Report	To assist in determining the appropriate revenue & capital budget required to meet the Service's requirements for the financial year	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 Dec 2023	Treasury Management Interim Report	To update Members on treasury management activity during the year to date	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 Dec 2023	Audit & Plan Scheme Updates	To seek Members' views upon the progress of Audit & Plan Scheme Actions	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
4 Dec 2023	Annual Audit Plan Financial Audits	To advise Members of the proposed timetable for financial audits in the forthcoming audit year	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 March 2024	Treasury Management Strategy Report	To secure Members' approval to the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy for the following financial year	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
4 March 2024	Internal Audit Programme	To outline the planned internal audit coverage for the financial year and to seek comment and approval	D	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 March 2024	Revenue Monitor	To provide an update on revenue expenditure against the revenue budget for the year	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 March 2024	Capital Monitor	To provide an update on capital expenditure against the capital budget for the year	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 March 2024	Health Check of Priority Actions and Q3 progress against the Statutory PI's	To scrutinise progress of the Service's Priority Actions and statutory PI's as at the end of Q3	I	ACO CS & ACFO SD  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
4 March 2024	Internal Audit Annual Report	To provide an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes based on the internal audit work undertaken during the financial year. This will support the statement of internal control.	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
4 March 2024	Corporate Departmental Risk Register	To seek Members' views upon the Corporate Departmental Risk Register	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Wayne Thomas	

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information /Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
4 March 2024	Draft Annual Report of the Work of the FAPM Committee and the Discharge of the Terms of Reference of the Finance, Asset & Performance Management Scrutiny Group	To consider the draft report on the annual work of the Committee before its submission to the Fire Authority and to ensure the Authority has efficient use of resources and robust procedures in place to ensure and manage this	D	Chair of FAPM & ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	On agenda
4 March 2024	Register of Gifts and Hospitality	To advise Members of gifts and hospitality accepted and declined by Members and Officers during the year	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	

## AGENDA ITEM NO 13

**To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent  
(Part 1 or 2)**

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1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.	
3.	Chairperson's Announcements	
4.	To receive the minutes of;	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance, Audit &amp; Performance Management Committee held on 24 July 2023</li> </ul>	5
	<b>REPORTS FOR DECISION</b>	
5.	Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget Update Report	11
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7.	Capital Monitoring Report 2023/24	57
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10.	Performance Monitoring Report	153
11.	Health Check of Priority Actions and Q1 progress against the Statutory PI's	173
12.	Forward Work Programme for Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee 2023/2024	199
13.	To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent (Part 1 or 2)	205