ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2018/19

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

For Approval

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable Members to approve the 2018/19 Annual Statement of Assurance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2018/19 detailed within Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members will be aware that the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 (the Framework) sets out the requirement for all fire and rescue authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and to show how they have due regard to the requirements included in the Framework and the expectations set out in authorities' own integrated risk management plans.

3.2 To demonstrate this, the Framework requires that each authority must publish an annual statement of assurance.

3.3 The Statement of Assurance is seen by Government as an important measure that will ensure that FRAs provide local scrutiny arrangements and access to a range of information to help communities influence, and be assured of the robustness of, local delivery arrangements.

3.4 The guidance also states that "the Statement of Assurance will be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State's biennial report under section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Act 2004".

4 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

4.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) introduced a requirement for all English Fire and Rescue Authorities to publish Statements of Assurance. It states:

> *'Fire and rescue authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in the Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual Statement of Assurance'.*
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> *Source: Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018*

4.2 One of the principal aims of the statement of assurance is to provide an accessible way in which communities, Government, local authorities and our partners may make a valid assessment of our performance. Where relevant information is already set out in a clear, accessible and user friendly way within existing documents, it is acceptable to include extracts or links to these documents within the Statement of Assurance.

4.3 The Statement of Assurance 2018/19, appended to this report, has been produced in line with the official recommended 'Light Touch' guidance that was published in May 2013 by the Department Communities and Local Government.

4.4 As required in the official guidance, Members of the Audit and Governance Committee on 15 November conducted a robust scrutiny of the proposed Statement of Assurance. Members of this committee indicated that the Statement of Assurance shows a true reflection of the Brigades operational, financial and governance arrangements and that the statement complies with the requirements detailed in the National Framework 2018 and recommended that it be forwarded on to the Executive Committee for approval.

4.5 Page four to five provides Members with a short summary of the Risk Profile of the Authority's area and how we approach our management of these risks through a balanced strategy of Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response.

4.6 Pages six to twelve of the attached document provides details and assurance on the Authority's Operational arrangements that address the risks and keep the residents and businesses of the area safe.

4.7 Pages thirteen to fourteen provide details and assurance on our financial arrangements including the Authorities arrangements for securing Value for Money.

4.8 Pages fifteen to eighteen provide assurance on the effectiveness of the Corporate Governance arrangements of Cleveland Fire Authority.

IAN HAYTON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

KAREN WINTER
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES