



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

# Annual Improvement Report

## South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

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# About the Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General is independent of government and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. He leads the Wales Audit Office and is held accountable by the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly for the Wales Audit Office's work.

The Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales. He also appoints the external auditors of Welsh local government bodies, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. The Auditor General's appointed auditors are responsible for the annual audit of the majority of public money spent in Wales, including the £15 billion of funds that are voted to Wales annually by the Westminster Parliament. Nearly £5.5 billion of this funding is passed by the Welsh Government to local government in the form of general and specific grants. Local government, in turn, raises a further £2.1 billion through council tax and business rates.

As well as carrying out financial audit, the Auditor General's role is to examine how public bodies manage and spend public money, including achieving value in the delivery of public services. The Wales Audit Office aims to make public money count, by promoting improvement, so that people in Wales benefit from accountable, well-managed public services that offer the best possible value for money. It is also committed to identifying and spreading good practice across the Welsh public sector.

Huw Vaughan Thomas, Auditor General for Wales, was supported by Lisa Williams, Jackie Joyce and colleagues under the direction of Alan Morris in conducting the Improvement Assessment and producing this report.

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# Summary report

- 1 Each year, the Auditor General must report on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Drawing on the work of the Wales Audit Office and relevant Welsh Inspectorates, this report presents a picture of improvement over the last year. The report is in three main sections, which cover the planning, delivery and evaluation of improvement by South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).
- 2 Overall the Auditor General has concluded that the Authority has put good arrangements in place to deliver improvement and does well in the areas it focuses on; but planning, evaluation and reporting of performance is not sufficiently balanced or outcome based.
- 3 We found that the Authority is generally making good plans and putting appropriate arrangements in place to deliver improvement. We have concluded this because the Authority:
  - has arrangements in place to address priorities and respond to previous suggestions for improvement;
  - is well placed to address its financial challenges, although the scale of change required will continue to require clear leadership and direction;
  - information management is supporting improvement but there are some weaknesses in governance and performance;
  - current arrangements for developing, using and supporting technology are likely to support improvement but need stronger corporate focus and governance; and
- it is meeting its statutory obligation with regard to the Welsh Language Act.
- 4 We also found that the Authority has achieved much of what it set out to achieve in its identified priorities:
  - overall the Authority made good progress towards achieving its Improvement Objectives in 2010-11;
  - it is helping to prevent some fires and road traffic collisions; fatalities remain low but the number of people injured in fires has increased and deliberate fire setting remains a concern; and
  - the Authority is actively developing more innovative and efficient ways to respond to a wide range of events and incidents.
- 5 Finally the report sets out our views on the Authority's own assessment of its performance and arrangements. We have concluded that the Authority has mechanisms for monitoring performance but needs to become more balanced in the evaluation and reporting of performance and focus on improvement objectives. There are some shortcomings in the quality and accuracy of reported performance indicators and although the use of a web-based Improvement Plan means that the public can access information in a more flexible and interactive way the information itself needs to give a clearer picture of the Authority's progress against its improvement objectives.

# Proposals for Improvement

## Proposals for improvement

**P1** Continue to implement previous proposals for improvement including:

- broadening the diversity of the workforce;
- consistent use of the Performance Development Review process for both uniformed and support staff; and
- strengthen improvement objectives and associated performance measures and reporting to be more outcome focussed, identify the impact of its activity for its community, clearly show the Authority performs now, its targets and how it compares with other fire and rescue authorities.

**P2** Implement areas for improvement identified in our Information Management review.

**P3** Implement areas for improvement identified in our use of Technology review.

**P4** Address the accuracy and completeness of data issues arising from our performance information audit, particularly recording of fire deaths, treatment of 'over the border incidents' and compliance with Welsh Government timetables and guidelines.

# Detailed report



## Introduction

- 6 This report was prepared by the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General. On [page 2](#) you can find a brief explanation of what the Auditor General does.
- 7 Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), the Auditor General must report each year on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. [Appendix 1](#) provides more information about the Auditor General's powers and duties under the Measure. The Annual Improvement Report provides a picture of what each council or authority in Wales is trying to achieve and how it is going about it, drawing on the work of other inspectorates, including the Fire and Rescue Peer Assessment Team<sup>1</sup>, where appropriate. This report also sets out the progress the Authority has made since the Auditor General published his last Annual Improvement Report, taking account of the Authority's own self-assessment.
- 8 Throughout the Report, we set out what the Authority needs to do to improve its services. Given the range of services provided and the challenges facing the Authority it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
  - recommend to Ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way;
  - conduct a special inspection and publish the report with detailed recommendations;
- 9 We want to find out if this report gives you the information you need and whether it is easy to understand. You can let us know your views by e-mailing us at [wales@wao.gov.uk](mailto:wales@wao.gov.uk) or writing to us at 24, Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ.
  - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made the Authority must respond to that recommendation publicly within 30 days; and
  - make proposals for improvement – if we make proposals to the Authority, we would expect them to do something about them and we will follow up what happens.

<sup>1</sup> The Welsh Assembly Government introduced new arrangements for the assessment of fire and rescue authorities' operational performance in November 2006. The assessment process involves carrying out a self assessment against a centrally provided framework combined with a review by a peer assessment team comprising officers from other fire and rescue authorities.

## **The Authority has put good arrangements in place to deliver improvement and does well in the areas it focuses on; but planning, evaluation and reporting of performance is not sufficiently balanced or outcome based**

- 10 This report sets out the Auditor General's view of the performance of the Authority in discharging its statutory duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. This view has been informed by the work of the Wales Audit Office, KPMG LLP and the Fire and Rescue Peer Assessment Team.
- 11 We do not undertake a comprehensive annual review of all authority arrangements or services. Our work has focused on the main objectives that the Authority has set itself for the financial audit year 2010-11. It builds upon earlier audit feedback and reports issued to the Authority and tracks the progress made by the Authority in responding to earlier audit findings. The conclusions in this report are based on our cumulative and shared knowledge and the findings from work undertaken this year.
- 12 Our overall conclusion reflects the Authority's progress in making arrangements to secure continuous improvement and the progress that it has made in delivering against its key focus areas and Improvement Objectives.
- 13 In addition to having effective arrangements in place to plan for and deliver improvement it is important that the Authority has a good understanding of the extent of progress and improvement it is making. We found that the Authority has mechanisms for monitoring performance but this does not currently translate into a balanced evaluation and reporting of performance. This shortcoming largely stems from a reliance on selected national strategic indicators rather than a full suite of balanced measures to assess achievement of Improvement Objectives and a lack of narrative explanation for performance (good or bad).
- 14 The Auditor General has determined that the Authority has discharged all of its duties in relation to publishing improvement information and has acted substantially in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.



## The Authority is generally making good plans and putting appropriate arrangements in place to deliver improvement

15 This section of the report sets out our assessment of the Authority's improvement objectives which are listed in **Appendix 4** and how the Authority is planning and managing its business to maintain and improve services. This section of the report also highlights the Authority's response to issues raised in previous reports.

### The Authority has appropriate arrangements in place to address its priorities and to respond to previous suggestions for improvement

16 The *Corporate Assessment Update* letter, issued by the Auditor General to the Authority in July 2011, reported a number of strengths in the Authority's arrangements to secure improvement. These strengths included well-embedded business planning arrangements that are comprehensive and outcome focussed, as well as leadership that is driving change.

17 The *Corporate Assessment Update* highlighted that, in relation to its corporate arrangements, the Authority's priorities for the coming period should be to improve public accountability and undertake an evaluation of the recent changes to the performance development and review system, particularly for support staff.

18 The Authority has either made plans or already taken action to improve public reporting. The Authority needs to further build on this action by strengthening the focus on outcomes. The next planning cycle (for 2012-13) provides an opportunity for the Authority to establish an outcome focused framework to ensure that publicly reported information is clear about the difference that it is making for people, rather than focusing on what the Authority is doing. The Authority has also commenced work to review the changes made to its performance development and review system.

19 The Authority is starting to change the way it does things with the aim of improving its efficiency. It has made progress to implement new control room resilience, adopt new ways of working with owners of commercial property and businesses (to discharge its legislative fire safety obligations), streamlined sickness absence processes and changed its approach to tackling wildfire. It is also putting in place arrangements to better target home fire safety checks for those most at risk. Many of these changes include working in partnership with other organisations including unitary authorities, the health service and various voluntary sector bodies.

20 The Auditor General has identified a number of areas for improvement for the Authority in his reports over the last two years. The *Corporate Assessment Update* letter (July 2011) noted that the Authority is working to address the previously identified areas for improvement and the table below provides an update on actions taken to address all previous proposals for improvement.

Proposal for improvement	Update 2012
<b>Preliminary corporate assessment (August 2010)</b>	
<p>Improve public accountability and engagement by providing more information for the public about its operation such as agendas and minutes for key meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All minutes and agendas are now available on the Authority's updated website.</li> <li>• The web based Improvement Plan means the public can access key information in a flexible and interactive way.</li> </ul>
<p>Consider its engagement and consultation processes to encourage wider participation eg, Facebook and Twitter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook and Twitter used.</li> <li>• 'BERNIE' campaign to raise awareness of wildfire.</li> </ul>
<p>Seek to broaden the diversity of its workforce by fully evaluating the impact of initiatives it has taken to date to meet associated targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach activities have been undertaken during 2010-11 but limited recruitment has hampered the Authority's ability to make changes to the diversity of its workforce.</li> </ul>
<p>Identify how the Performance Development Review process can be more consistently used across the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised processes introduced in some areas of the organisation.</li> <li>• Uniform staff are generally positive about the changes made but there is a view amongst support staff representative bodies that the Performance Development Review process is inconsistently applied for support staff.</li> <li>• The Spring 2011 reassessment for the Investor's in People accreditation made some suggestions for improving the Performance Development Review process which the Authority is continuing to do.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop further its approach to workforce engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant improvements in workforce engagement was widely acknowledged by almost all of the staff we interviewed who also recognise the effort that senior managers are making to explain Risk Reduction Plan proposals.</li> </ul>

Proposal for improvement	Update 2012
Annual improvement report (January 2011)	
<p>Develop improvement objectives and associated performance and outcome measures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enable it to identify the impact of its activity for its community; and</li> <li>• show how the Authority performs now, its targets and how it compares with other fire and rescue authorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority has set Improvement Objectives for 2011-12 that include descriptions of the actions it is planning, how it will know if it has been successful and what outcomes communities should expect as a result.</li> <li>• The Authority is using Results Based Accounting to further develop its improvement objectives and associated performance and outcome measures for 2012-13 and we will review these as part of the next corporate assessment.</li> </ul>
<p>Prioritise changes to processes within the Legislative Fire Safety department along with action to address weaknesses in the management information available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes prioritised and the Authority has commenced tendering for new computer system to provide enhanced management information.</li> </ul>

**The Authority is well placed to address its financial challenges, although the scale of change required will continue to require clear leadership and direction**

21 The Authority has recently revised its medium term financial plan for 2011-2014, which is based on clear priorities that reflect its strategic plans (for Assets, People, and Risk Reduction). By reviewing its medium term financial plan and associated assumptions and plans, the Authority has taken an effective medium term approach to financial management and ensured that its revenue and capital resources are applied to its priorities.

22 The Authority has managed its budget well in recent years and is currently forecasting an under-spend of £1.3 million for the current financial year (2011-12), primarily due to savings from planned reductions in staff costs. This effective management places it on a sound footing going forward into a period of significant change and financial cuts as it has a good track record of making sure its services are delivered within the resources that it has available.

23 The Authority has been aware for some time that it needs to make sure it uses the resources it has as effectively as possible. The Authority continues to make sensible preparations and its Finance Working Group considers all possible financial and service options. Its budget for 2012-13 is being considered and will be finalised in February

2012. The Authority has previously pursued a strategy of matching, if not bettering, the amount of funding constituent councils receive from Welsh Government in its own requirement from the councils. For 2012-13 the Authority is planning to reduce its budget by 0.8 per cent, even though constituent councils are increasing by 0.4 per cent. In doing this the Authority is setting itself a more challenging target than that faced by the councils themselves. The Authority has also considered the likely budget settlements for 2013-14 and 2014-15, as they indicate further real-term reductions in the Authority's revenue funding.

- 24 The auditor appointed by the Auditor General gave a qualified opinion on the Authority's 2010-11 accounts. The transfer to International Financial Reporting Standards in 2010-11 requires that the Statement of Financial Position includes the preceding two years as comparatives. A qualified audit opinion was given for 2010-11 due to the disagreement over the interpretation of the statutory framework at that time regarding the holding of opening balance reserves in the 2008-09 accounts. This will not be the case for 2011-12 and [Appendix 3](#) gives more detail.

**The Authority's information management is supporting improvement but there are some weaknesses in governance and performance**

- 25 Due to the increasing financial pressure on the public sector there is a need to maximise and exploit the information held to deliver and plan for quality services effectively. Our review of the way the Authority manages information concluded that:

- The Authority's arrangements and plans for information management are supporting improvement and it is generally aware of the issues it needs to address.
- There are some weaknesses in governance. For example: the Authority does not have a developed Information Strategy; and it does not have formalised management forum tasked with bringing the strands of information management together; and staff are not fully trained on information management issues including information security.
- The Authority has appropriate electronic security in place, but is less robust in its approach to disposing of information it no longer needs and to managing e mail.

**The Authority's current arrangements for developing, using and supporting technology are likely to support improvement but need stronger corporate focus and governance**

- 26 Effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) is essential for transforming the delivery of public services, improving outcomes for citizens and delivering efficiency savings. Our review found that the Authority understands how technology can help it secure sustainable, effective use of technology, deliver efficiencies and transform service delivery, it has focused on using technology to support frontline operations. A stronger corporate focus with strengthened governance arrangements are needed to:



- develop clearer strategic plans to exploit technology which supports the delivery of the Authority's improvement objectives;
  - establish sound and transparent arrangements for identifying and agreeing technology priorities; and
  - effectively manage the growth in demand for technology.
- 27 The Authority uses many different back office systems and databases and there is duplication of functions and data, which causes inefficiencies and compromising data integrity. Technology standards are informal and not documented with the exception of the control room.
- 28 The key areas for improvement are:
- to develop the ICT governance role and strategy linked to Medium Term Financial Plan;
  - standardise business processes and procedures, consolidating and integrating applications to ensure that information is stored and updated in a single place;
  - documenting, publishing and promoting technology standards and policies;
  - ensure that the Authority has capacity in terms of the specialist ICT skills to support and develop its technology without impacting on the quality of service provided;
  - set out plans to consolidate and rationalise the ICT infrastructure; and
  - develop a comprehensive suite of management to monitor and measure the effectiveness and impact of technology and service user satisfaction.

### The Authority is meeting its statutory obligations with regard to the Welsh Language Act

- 29 The Welsh Language Board (the Board) praised the Authority for the quantitative and qualitative data gathered through its comprehensive Monitoring Strategy to ensure the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme across the entire organisation. The Board also praised the Authority for the work carried out to ensure that 97 per cent of the Authority's workforce has now received Language Awareness Training. However, the Board noted that the Authority had failed to report on the Welsh language skills of its workforce. In response, the Authority has committed to undertake a comprehensive review of Welsh language skills, so that training may be targeted to achieve the maximum value for money. The Board has welcomed this decision and will review the outcomes.

## The Authority has achieved much of what it set out to achieve in its identified priorities

- 30 This section of the report sets out our assessment of the Authority's performance in:
- achieving the improvement objectives it set for itself for 2010-11;
  - helping to reduce the likelihood and impact of fires and road traffic collisions through its prevention and protection activities; and
  - responding to fires and other threats to safety.

### Overall the Authority made good progress towards achieving its Improvement Objectives in 2010-11

- 31 Fire and rescue authorities did not set Improvement Objectives under the Local Government Measure (2009) (the Measure) for 2010-11 but rather restated existing corporate objectives (as this was the first interim year prior to full implementation of the Measure). The Welsh Government requires all fire and rescue authorities to publish their plans for improving their services by the end of October prior to the year that they relate to. In October 2009, the Authority had published its plans for the year 2010-11, and published improvement objectives for 2011-12 and 2012-13 in the required timescales. The objectives are based on five key themes which are supported by numerous aims and a collection of Performance Indicators.
- 32 **Appendix 4** provides information about the actions to support the improvement objectives for 2010-11 and 2011-12. Overall the Authority made good progress towards achieving its Improvement Objectives in 2010-11 and this is summarised in the table below:

Theme/ Improvement Objective	Progress
<p><b>Our communities:</b> reduce deaths and injuries from fires and road traffic collisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the number of fire deaths stayed the same as 2009-10 and did not reduce during 2010-11 the total number of fire deaths per 100,000 population reduced. There were no deliberate fire deaths in 2010-11.</li> <li>• Although the total number of fire injuries (and those sustained in accidental fires) worsened the number of injuries in deliberate fires per 100,000 population reduced.</li> <li>• The Authority has taken actions to identify and target vulnerable groups for home fire safety checks and develop its approach to ensuring that adequate fire safety measures are in place in commercial properties and businesses (legislative fire safety).</li> <li>• There were fewer road traffic collisions attended during 2010-11. Latest statistics show fewer fatalities and serious accidents occurred in the Authority's area and there were fewer casualties and deaths in 2010 compared with previous years.</li> <li>• The effectiveness of existing community safety partnerships is currently being assessed by the newly appointed evaluation officer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our people:</b> attract, retain, develop and maintain the health and well being of our people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment processes for whole time and the retained duty system reviewed and aligned where possible.</li> <li>• Parity of terms and conditions remains under review because of the scale of the differences in entitlement but some progress made in respect of annual leave and bank holiday entitlements.</li> <li>• The Authority has completed its People Strategy and strengthened its workforce planning to support the better identification of the skills needed for the future.</li> <li>• The Executive Leadership Programme was introduced to better equip future leaders following its development with the University of Warwick.</li> <li>• It has maintained its Investors in People accreditation and is working towards implementing the recommendations made in the re-assessment report (spring 2011).</li> <li>• There were fewer personnel injured whilst 'on duty' in 2010-11 than the previous year and sickness absence has reduced significantly.</li> </ul>

Theme/ Improvement Objective	Progress
<p><b>Our resources:</b> ensure that our assets are utilised effectively to support service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managed budget under-spend for 2010-11 also anticipated for 2011-12.</li> <li>• The Authority has updated its Medium Term Financial Plan, which is supported by the Asset Management Strategy. Both are reviewed by the Asset Management Working Group prior to consideration by the Finance Audit and Performance Management Committee and approval by the full Fire Authority.</li> <li>• The new ICT Strategy is progressing.</li> <li>• Appointments have been made to the newly created Major Projects and Property Department.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our organisation:</b> improve internal service delivery ensuring the most effective use of both financial and people resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects identified and set up during 2010-11 for progression in 2011-12 to review how services are delivered including flexible crewing, level of fire cover, location and use of second pumping and special appliances, provision of tactical managers and middle managers.</li> <li>• Alternative options for station crewing levels and shift patterns have been developed and implementation of the new working patterns began in 2011-12.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability:</b> to promote sustainable local communities through our activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority is taking steps to achieve level 3 of the sustainable procurement assessment framework and is making progress on the waste disposal tender to adopt more environmentally acceptable methods of disposal.</li> <li>• Premises that present the highest risk of environmental harm if a fire broke out are prioritised in its inspection process for commercial properties and businesses.</li> </ul>



**The Authority is helping to prevent some fires and road traffic collisions, fatalities remain low but the number of people injured in fires has increased and deliberate fire setting remains a concern**

**There were fewer dwelling fires attended than the previous year but the number of fatalities and injuries increased**

- 33 The Authority undertakes a range of activities designed to prevent fires happening and to minimise the impact when they do. In 2010-11, the Authority developed a more targeted approach to its home fire safety checks programme. It developed vulnerability criteria and service level agreements are being developed with partner agencies to deliver these checks in the future. It is not possible to identify whether the home fire safety checks undertaken are actually targeted at the most vulnerable, as this data is not collected. The newly created role of Evaluation Officer should provide more data on the effectiveness of these actions in the future.
- 34 The number of dwelling fires attended reduced by nine per cent during 2010 11 compared with the previous year (from 992 attendances in 2009-10 to 904 in 2010 11). This reduction is a better performance than the Welsh average of four per cent reduction for the same period.
- Dwelling fires started accidentally reduced by six per cent during 2010 11 compared with the previous year (from 801 in 2009-10 to 751 in 2010 11). This reduction compares well with the Welsh average reduction of two per cent reduction for the same period.

- The number of dwelling fires started deliberately also reduced by 20 per cent (from 191 in 2009-10 to 153 in 2010-11) which compares well with the Welsh average reduction of 13 per cent for the same period.

- 35 Four people died in dwelling fires during 2010-11 (one more than 2009-10) and the number of injuries sustained in dwelling fires increased by 18 per cent (from 105 in 2009 10 to 124 in 2010-11). This increase in injuries is lower than the 23 per cent increase seen across Wales for the same period.
- 36 There is evidence to suggest that free smoke alarms provided as part of its home fire safety checks work are reaching those at risk, including:
- fewer dwelling fires attended in properties that has no smoke alarm fitted (from 53 per cent in 2009-10 to 47 per cent in 2010-11), although this proportion is still higher than the Welsh average of 38 per cent for 2010-11;
  - more dwelling fires attended where fire detection equipment had been actuated (from 36 per cent in 2009-10 to 42 per cent in 2010-11), although this proportion is still lower than the average of 48 per cent across Wales for 2010 11; and
  - slightly more dwelling fires attended had detection equipment fitted which did not actuate (from 10 to 12 per cent) and this is better than the Welsh average of 15 per cent for 2010-11.

**There were fewer non domestic premises fires attended than the previous year and, although there were no fatalities, the number of injuries increased**

- 37 The number of non domestic premises fires attended reduced by 19 per cent during 2010 11 compared with the previous year (from 569 attendances in 2009-10 to 460 in 2010 11) which is better than the Welsh average of 10 per cent reduction for the same period.
- 38 No people died in non domestic premises fires during 2010-11 (the same as 2009-10). The number of injuries sustained in such fires increased by 27 per cent (from 11 in 2009 10 to 14 in 2010-11) which compares well with a Welsh average increase of 41 per cent for the same period. However, these numbers are small and each incident can have a significant impact on the year on year comparison. Over a longer time period the trend is the same; since 2004 05 the Authority has seen these types of injuries increase by 17 per cent compared with a Welsh average reduction of 47 per cent.
- 39 The Authority is required to enforce the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that adequate fire safety measures are in place in commercial properties and businesses. They can also provide advice and take enforcement action when considered necessary for example if a serious risk exists and is not being managed.
- 40 During 2010-11, the Authority improved its business processes to introduce a risk based inspection programme designed to target commercial properties which present the

highest risk if a fire occurs. It further developed existing partnerships to promote awareness and understanding of the Fire Safety Order amongst commercial property owners and businesses and is pro-actively working with Fire Safety partnerships.

- 41 The Authority has adopted the Chief Fire Officers Association's national guidance on the reduction of false alarms and unwanted fire signals. The number of false alarms attended has reduced by one per cent during 2010-11 compared with 2009-10 (from 3,809 to 3,787) which is lower than the Welsh average reduction of nine per cent for the same period.

**There were more deliberate fires attended during 2010-11 than the previous year but there were no fatalities and the number of injuries decreased**

- 42 The number of deliberate fires attended increased by 12 per cent during 2010 11 compared with the previous year (from 8,534 attendances in 2009-10 to 9,568 in 2010 11), which is broadly the same as the Welsh average increase of 11 per cent for 2010-11. The increase in deliberate fires attended can be attributed to grassland, woodland and crop fires along with loose refuse fires.
- 43 Some 81 per cent of all fires attended were started deliberately during 2010-11, which is slightly higher than 2009-10 (80 per cent) and significantly higher than the Welsh average of 69 per cent during 2010-11. No people died in deliberate fires during 2010-11 and the number of injuries sustained in deliberate fires reduced by 35 per cent from 34 in 2009-10 to 22 in 2010-11.

44 The Welsh Government funds the Arson Reduction Team and a number of projects within community safety to specifically tackle deliberate fire setting. Project Bernie is an Authority led campaign aimed at highlighting the dangers of deliberately set wildfires in four high risk areas during 2010-11, by active engagement with the communities affected.

**Road Safety initiatives have continued this year and there have been reductions in the number of road traffic collisions attended, fatal and serious accidents, deaths and casualties**

45 The Authority's aim is for communities with zero deaths and injuries from road traffic collisions. This aim is not only to make communities safer but also to reduce the wider socio and economic costs involved to families when someone is involved in such an incident. Successful road safety initiatives can also have an impact on reducing the economic cost to business of roads being closed, delays experienced or vehicles being involved in accidents.

46 The Authority undertook many initiatives designed to reduce the number of road accidents including;

- maintaining its partner role with the Road Safety Wales group;
- the Domino Effect (an education package for key stage 3 pupils to inform them of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour in vehicles);
- Operation Cruise (an engagement programme used by the Authority's Road Safety Manager to interact with 17 to 24 year old drivers); and

- the superbike project (to encourage riders to attend the police sponsored rider training courses which are currently operating with limited uptake).

47 There have been improvements regarding road safety within South Wales as demonstrated below;

- the number of road traffic collisions attended has decreased by 24 per cent during 2010-11 from 1,372 to 1,042; this reduction is greater than the reduction across the whole of Wales which was 20 per cent;
- fatal and serious accidents have reduced by 14 per cent between 2009 when 345 accidents occurred and 298 in 2010; this reduction is greater than the reduction seen across Wales which was 10 per cent;
- the number of people who died in road traffic collisions reduced from 47 in 2009 to 32 in 2010; and
- the number of casualties reduced by five per cent between 2009 when there were 4,129 casualties and 3,903 in 2010; this reduction is slightly greater than the reduction seen across Wales which was four4 per cent;
- 1,316 drivers aged 25 and under were involved in accidents in 2009 compared with 1,035 in 2010, a reduction of 21 per cent which is greater than the Welsh average of 14 per cent; and
- there were 189 motorcyclist casualties in 2010 compared with 212 in 2009, a reduction of 11 per cent which is greater than the Welsh average reduction of approximately one per cent.

## The Authority is actively developing more innovative and efficient ways to respond to a wide range of events and incidents

- 48 The Authority recognises the need to be ready to respond to a wide range of incidents from fires and road traffic collisions to flooding, other natural disasters and acts of terrorism. During 2010-11, some 47,600 calls were received by Fire Control resulting in approximately 23,500 incidents attended, which included 11,757 fires and 3,335 special service incidents (including road traffic collisions, rescuing people and animals).
- 49 In 2010-11, the Authority identified through its Risk Reduction Plan different ways of crewing that could be applied safely and cost less. From April 2011 flexible crewing arrangements have begun to operate in stations following extensive consultation with its staff and external parties. It is also continuing to review other aspects of its service provision including location and utilisation of second pumping appliances, special appliances, how more use can be made of intelligent mobilising to ensure response is timely therefore reducing the impact of fires and what information it provides to crews via standard operating procedures and tactical plans.
- 50 The Fire and Rescue Peer Assessment Team has recently reviewed response and call handling arrangements and will be reporting shortly.
- 51 The programme of health and safety audits at stations and departments has continued throughout the year. During 2010-11, there were 72 personnel injured, which is a small reduction on the previous year when there were 76. There was a reduction in the number of personnel injured whilst 'on-duty', with 30 in 2010-11 compared with 41 in 2009-10. However, there were increases in the numbers of personnel injured whilst on training (13 in 2010-11 compared with seven in 2009-10) and routine activities (29 in 2010-11 compared with 28 in 2009-10).
- 52 The number of days/shifts lost to sickness absence reduced significantly in 2010-11, by just over 1,000 days on the previous year to 8,660 days, a reduction of 11 per cent. The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (by all staff) in 2010-11 was the lowest achieved by the Authority since 2004-05 at 7.1 days. Non-operational staff have the highest rate of sickness absence at an average of 12 days (compared with 10 days in 2009-10), whole time operational staff had an absence rate of just over five days (compared with seven in 2009-10) and control staff nine days per full time equivalent, a reduction from 15 days in 2009-10.
- 53 The number of malicious calls that the Authority received decreased by five per cent during 2010-11 to 2,106 from 2,209 in 2009-10 which is better than the Welsh average reduction of eight per cent for the same period. As well as the decrease in the number of malicious calls received the number of malicious calls attended also decreased over the same period by nine per cent from 593 to 540 but at a lower rate than the Welsh average of 13 per cent for the same period. The Authority continues to undertake campaigns to raise awareness about the danger of malicious calls.



## The Authority has mechanisms for monitoring performance but needs to become more balanced in the evaluation and reporting of performance and focus on improvement objectives

- 54 This section of the report sets out our conclusion on how good the Authority's self assessment of its performance is. Fire and rescue authorities are not formally required to produce a performance assessment under the Measure for 2010-11 but they are expected to provide an assessment of how well they delivered their planned improvements. The assessment draws on findings from our Performance Indicator audit, our audit of the Improvement Plan 2011-12 and our review of improvement objectives.
- 55 Accurate self assessment is critical to the Authority's ability to:
- recognise the progress it is making;
  - take remedial action when performance is not reaching anticipated levels; and
  - report its performance to local citizens in a balanced way.
- 56 To assess the progress it is making, the Authority needs good performance information and robust monitoring of that information. The Authority has performance information based on a range of performance indicators that, combined with other information where performance indicators are not available or relevant, enable the Authority to make judgements on quality and performance.
- 57 We found from our audit work looking at the latest performance indicators and data that the quality and accuracy of reported information needs to be improved. Of the 12 National Strategic Indicators that the Authority is required to collect and report to the Welsh Government, we identified three that needed correction. We also identified inconsistencies in the number of fatalities recorded by the various systems used by the Authority's Fire Investigation Team and the Performance Management Unit. We propose that the Authority considers taking action to:
- improve the accuracy of reported information by ensuring that the Incident Recording System is always up to date;
  - record all fire deaths in accordance with the Welsh Government guidance;
  - collaborate with the other two Welsh fire and rescue authorities to learn from how they record deaths in fires;
  - improve communication between the Performance Management Unit and the Fire Investigation Team; and
  - consider the detailed findings of the PI audit in line with Wales Audit Office recommendations made in the Information Management Review to ensure that all data is managed effectively and that weaknesses in governance and performance are addressed.
- 58 The Authority recognises that some of its objectives are difficult to measure and are developing new indicators to do this. Last year we suggested that such indicators should include both qualitative and quantitative measures so that community outcomes can be identified and evaluated. This work needs to continue. Without a full suite of measures that can clearly show whether it has achieved its Improvement Objectives, the Authority will not be able to demonstrate whether it has achieved its objectives and made improvements for citizens.

- 59 A peer assessment report in 2010 noted that the Authority 'recognises there are gaps in their data gathering'. The Authority believes the future development of 'data observatories' will address this issue and a project is underway to review the best way forward.
- 60 Routine reporting of the Authority's performance information does not focus on progress to deliver its Improvement Objectives. The format of reporting during 2011-12 has not changed from that used in 2010-11 and is based on Welsh Government's National Strategic Indicators with a small number of local indicators. This approach means that members and senior managers are not able to monitor whether Improvement Objectives are being delivered throughout the year.
- 61 The most important means of reporting performance to local citizens is through the Authority's annual Improvement Plan which provides information about the previous, current and forthcoming years improvement activities. The use of a web-based Improvement Plan represents a significant innovation in the way that the Authority seeks to present and communicate the Improvement Plan so that stakeholders and the public are able to access key information, of interest to them, in a flexible and interactive way.
- 62 The Improvement Plan lacks a critical appraisal of how the Authority thinks it has done overall and what it is going to do differently as a result. The performance information appendix in the Improvement Plan shows performance for the previous years and selected comparator authorities to give an illustration of the progress made. The Improvement Plan lacks an overall assessment of the Authority's progress against its Improvement Objectives, and together with its lack of balanced assessment of its achievements and inconsistent use of comparisons, many citizens would find it difficult to come to an accurate conclusion of the Authority's progress in 2010 11 from reading the plan.

# Appendices



## Appendix 1

### Status of this report

This report has been produced by the Auditor General to discharge his duties under section 24 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure). The report also discharges duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether, as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17, he believes that the Authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

Improvement authorities are under a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'. Improvement authorities are defined as local councils, national parks, fire and rescue authorities.

The main piece of work for the Wales Audit Office, to enable the Auditor General to fulfil his duties, is an annual Improvement Assessment.

This will be informed by a forward-looking assessment of an authority's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It will also include a retrospective assessment of whether an authority has achieved its planned improvements in order to inform a view as to the Authority's track record of improvement.

The Auditor General may also in some circumstances carry out special inspections (under section 21), in respect of which he will provide a report to the relevant authorities and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22).

The Auditor General will summarise audit and assessment reports in this published *Annual Improvement Report* (under section 24). This will also summarise any reports of special inspections.

An important ancillary activity for the Wales Audit Office is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments, and this report describes the extent to which he has done so.

This report also summarises the Auditor General's conclusions on the Authority's self assessment of its performance.



## Appendix 2

### Useful information about South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

The Authority has to perform all the duties and responsibilities in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations. There are three important pieces of law relating to fire authorities:

#### The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Act requires all fire authorities to make provision for fire fighting, which means not only putting out fires but also protecting life and property in case of fire. It also makes provision for attending road traffic collisions and other emergencies as well as community safety activities.

#### The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) 2005

The Order came into force on 1 October 2006, and replaced over 70 separate pieces of fire safety legislation. The requirement for businesses to have fire certificates was abolished. The FSO applies to all non-domestic premises in England and Wales, including the common parts of blocks of flats and houses in multiple occupation. It gives responsibility to those who are best placed to address fire safety and ensure that risks are kept under review. Under the Order the Responsible Person<sup>2</sup> is required to carry out a fire risk assessment and put in place appropriate fire safety measures to minimise the risk to life from fire; and to keep the assessment up to date. The Order is enforced by Fire and Rescue Authorities who are expected to develop appropriate risk based inspection regimes.

#### Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The Act delivers a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. The Act is divided into two parts; Part 1 which defines the obligations of certain organisations to prepare for various types of emergencies and Part 2 which provides additional powers for the Government to use in the event of a large scale emergency.

Under the Act fire and rescue services are defined as Category 1 Responders and as such have six specific duties to deliver:

- assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
- put in place emergency plans;
- put in place Business Continuity Management arrangements;
- put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
- share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination; and
- co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency.

<sup>2</sup> Communities and Local Government Fire Safety Law and Guidance documents for business states that the law applies if you are: responsible for business premises, an employer or self-employed with business premises, responsible for a part of a dwelling where that part is solely used for business purposes, a charity or voluntary organisation, a contractor with a degree of control over any premises, providing accommodation for paying guests.

There is an additional duty placed on local authorities to:

- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management. Local fire and rescue services can be called upon to assist in this role.

Category 2 organisations include organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive, transport and utility companies. Category 1 and 2 organisations form Local Resilience Forums (which are co-terminus with police areas) which will help co-ordination and co operation between responders at the local level.

The Authority is funded directly by its constituent local authorities based on the population forecasts in each area. It comprises 24 councillors from the 10 unitary authorities of South Wales (the number of representatives from each constituent authority is determined by the number of registered local government electors in each area).

The current Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Authority is Cllr Anthony Ernest.

The Authority acts as the main policy making body and governs the adoption of various working practices in line with statutory guidelines laid down by the Assembly Government. The Authority meets on a quarterly basis and its work is supported by three main committees, namely, Finance, Audit and Performance Management, HR and Equalities and Standards and a number of working groups. All of these groups meet regularly to consider issues within their areas of responsibility. Meetings of the committees are open to the public, and records of the Authority's transactions are available from the Authority's website.

The Service is led and managed by Huw Jakeway the Acting Chief Fire Officer supported by the corporate management team.

For more information see the Authority's own website at [www.southwales-fire.gov.uk](http://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk) or contact the Authority at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Forest View Business Park, Llantrisant, Rhondda Cynon Taf, CF72 8LX.

## Appendix 3

### Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter to the Members of South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

The auditor appointed by the Auditor General issued the following auditor's report on 30 November 2011.

As you will be aware the Auditor General will be issuing an *Annual Improvement Report* to each local authority by the end of January 2012 and some of the issues that were traditionally reported in the Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter will be included in that report. Therefore I have taken the opportunity to summarise the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities into this short letter which forms the *Annual Audit Letter*. The letter is designed to be a standalone document, but will also be presented to the Authority and the public as part of the *Annual Improvement Report* and therefore discharges my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

#### South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority complied with reporting requirements relating to its financial performance and use of resources

It is the Authority's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

On 30 September 2011, I issued a qualified audit opinion on the accounting statements. My audit opinion was qualified due to a disagreement over the accounting treatment for the Authority's general and earmarked reserves balances.

During the audit of the accounts for 2007-08, legal advice obtained by the Wales Audit Office confirmed that the Statutory Framework under which the Authority operates does not provide for the holding of reserves which have been accumulated from an excess of its constituent authorities' appropriate proportion of the net expenses of the Fire Authority in respect of each financial year. However, the Authority chose not to make an adjustment to the accounts to remove the balances previously held as reserves and reclassify the amounts as current liabilities (amounts held on behalf of constituent authorities). This led to a qualified audit opinion being given to the accounts due to a disagreement on the accounting treatment related to reserves.

The Authority continued its accounting treatment in 2008-09. A consultation process to amend the Combination Order in order to enable Fire Authorities to hold reserves is now complete and confirmed that the Fire Authorities can hold reserves from 1 December 2009. However, this amendment was not retrospective and therefore an uncorrected misstatement was identified in the accounts in relation to the opening balances held in reserves.

The transfer to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in 2010-11 requires that the Statement of Financial Position includes the preceding two years as comparatives. A qualified audit opinion is therefore being given for 2010-11 due to the misstatement in the opening balances of reserves in the 2008-09 accounts.

My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. A number of matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members in my Audit of Financial Statements report.

From 2010-11 local authorities in Wales are required to produce their accounts on the basis of IFRS. The introduction of these new standards imposed significant additional demands on the Authority's finance staff. Despite these additional pressures, the accounts were prepared by the statutory deadline. However there were a number of revisions to the draft accounts which put undue pressure on the timetable.

The following issues were identified regarding the accounts:

- The Annual Audit letter for 2009-10 stressed the importance of producing an opening balance sheet and a draft set of IFRS accounts as soon as possible. The number of missing disclosures and revisions to the Statement of Accounts indicates that the project timetable had slipped and there had been under-estimation in the amount of work involved. Finance teams need to ensure that they set aside sufficient time to complete a quality set of draft accounts for audit. This would allow the accounts to have been audited well in advance and prevent the pressure to meet the statutory deadline.
- The delays in production of the Statement of Accounts impacted the audit of the Whole of Government Account's (WGA) return, a revised WGA pack incorporating the amendments to the final statements was not received until 23 September. The Welsh Government's deadline for submission of audited returns, 30 September, was not met as there was insufficient time to complete the audit given the number of amendments made. The Authority should ensure that revised WGA are completed promptly and passed to the audit team together with supporting documentation in accordance with the agreed timetable.

My review of the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government Measure (2009). The main findings from this latter work will be set out in the Annual Improvement Report.

I issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed on 30 September 2011.  
The financial audit fee for 2010-11 is currently expected to be in line with those set out in the Annual Audit Outline.

Virginia Stevens

For and on Behalf of the Appointed Auditor



## Appendix 4

### South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's improvement objectives

<http://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/ENGLISH/HOME/Pages/default.aspx>

2010-11 Improvement Objectives	2011-12 Improvement Objectives
<b>Objective 1</b> To reduce deaths and injuries from fires and road traffic collisions.	<b>Objective 1</b> To reduce deaths and injuries from fires and road traffic collisions.
<b>1</b> Identify and target vulnerable groups for HFSCs.	<b>1</b> Working proactively both individually and in collaboration with other organisations in order to further reduce deaths and injuries from fires and road traffic collisions.
<b>2</b> Research and evaluate the effectiveness of existing community safety partnerships.	<b>2</b> Utilising Fire Service Emergency Cover risk modelling and the MOSAIC system data in order for areas of high risk based on dwellings and demographics to be identified and enable more effective targeting of safety initiatives to maximise resources most efficiently.
<b>3</b> Develop closer working with partner agencies.	<b>3</b> Utilising any increased capacity for community safety initiatives.
<b>4</b> Maintain our partner role with the Road Safety Wales group.	<b>4</b> Expanding our partnership arrangements to work with other agencies across Wales to target our home fire safety activities at the most vulnerable groups in our communities.
<b>5</b> Continue to develop our Legislative Fire Safety processes, to make best use of our resources and improve safety within the South Wales business communities.	<b>5</b> Implementing the outcomes of the Legislative Fire Safety business process review.
<b>6</b> Pro-actively develop existing Fire Safety partnerships within business and commerce via the Business Continuity Liaison Team to promote understanding and awareness of the Fire Safety Order.	<b>6</b> Utilising more intelligent mobilising.
	<b>7</b> Supporting the initiative that all new housing will be built with domestic sprinkler systems.
	<b>8</b> Reviewing our suite of standard operating procedures and tactical plans.

<b>2010-11 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 2</b> Attract, retain, develop and maintain the health and well being of our people.	
<b>1</b>	Develop a comparative effective attraction and recruitment process for whole time and retained fire-fighters.
<b>2</b>	Seek parity of terms and conditions of service between operational and non-operational staff.
<b>3</b>	Continue to develop our staff including identifying future leaders.
<b>4</b>	Put in place high potential schemes, succession planning and workforce planning.
<b>5</b>	Develop a people strategy that contributes effectively to the strategic priorities of the Service.
<b>6</b>	Continually improve on the reduction of accidents and time lost accidents by encouraging a proactive approach to health, safety and welfare.

<b>2011-12 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 2</b> To continue to develop a responsive and creative workforce who practice our values.	
<b>1</b>	Implementing our People Strategy.
<b>2</b>	Utilising our workforce creatively to ensure we have continuity of business.
<b>3</b>	Engaging widely with the public and with our current workforce.
<b>4</b>	Implementing our Members' Charter.

<b>2010-11 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 3</b> To ensure the Service's assets are utilised effectively to support service delivery.	
<b>1</b>	Develop the remaining lead strategies namely the Medium Term Financial Strategy and People Strategy.
<b>2</b>	Develop and implement management plans for each asset group, namely Fleet, Land and buildings, Plant and equipment, Minor assets and ICT.
<b>3</b>	Strive for improvement in operational performance by seeking to exploit technology.
<b>4</b>	Maintain an efficient, effective and economic operational fleet of vehicles.
<b>5</b>	Appoint to the Major Projects and Property department.
<b>6</b>	Implement an Asset Management Working Group to ensure effective member scrutiny of this objective.

<b>2011-12 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 3</b> To ensure that our resources and assets are utilised effectively to support service delivery.	
<b>1</b>	Maximising assets by implementing more effective management through the vehicle replacement programme and asset tracking.
<b>2</b>	Progressing the reactive property maintenance programme.
<b>3</b>	Taking forward the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2010/2014.
<b>4</b>	Carrying out a high level review of the contribution to public and Firefighter safety made by each station and to identify those areas where more in depth analysis should be conducted.
<b>5</b>	Exploring the effectiveness and future need of each second pumping appliance including the location, incident data, call rate and crewing arrangements.
<b>6</b>	Exploring the effectiveness of each special appliance including the location, incident data, call rates and crewing arrangements.

<b>2010-11 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 4</b> To improve internal service delivery ensuring the most effective use of both financial and people resources.	
<b>1</b>	Undertake relevant change management training for managers and staff.
<b>2</b>	Ensure that the relevant joined up strategies are prepared.
<b>3</b>	Take forward the actions identified from the evaluation of 2009/10 improvement workshops.
<b>4</b>	Establish baseline service delivery requirements.
<b>5</b>	Consider alternative options for baseline service delivery and review efficiency and effectiveness.
<b>6</b>	Review the allocation of funding and people against the baseline service delivery requirements and align accordingly.
<b>7</b>	Undertake scoping work for specific improvement projects, detailed within our Risk Reduction Plan 2011/12.
<b>8</b>	Re-engineer and improve all of the business processes within the Legislative Fire Safety Department; build on existing partnerships with business and commerce to promote awareness and understanding of the Fire Safety Order.

<b>2011-12 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 4</b> To improve internal service delivery ensuring the most effective use of both financial and people resources.	
<b>1</b>	Reviewing and streamlining our head office support services systems and processes to identify where efficiency savings can be made.
<b>2</b>	Training our middle managers in the systems thinking model to enable them to have the tools and mechanisms to drive through change and improvement in their areas.
<b>3</b>	Identifying and releasing efficiency savings that may arise through challenges to organisational structures and internal services.
<b>4</b>	Scoping a major ICT review.

<b>2010-11 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 5</b> To promote sustainable local communities through our activities.	
<b>1</b>	Achieve level 3 of the sustainable procurement assessment framework.
<b>2</b>	Ensure that we comply with new International Financial Reporting Standard.
<b>3</b>	Reduce our waste and adopt more environmentally acceptable methods of disposal.
<b>4</b>	In accordance with our Risk-Based Inspection Programme, target the commercial properties which present the highest risk of environmental harm if a fire broke out in order to reduce that risk.

<b>2011-12 Improvement Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective 5</b> To promote sustainable local communities through our activities.	
<b>1</b>	Undertaking community education initiatives with youth groups and vulnerable adults.
<b>2</b>	Amending all necessary documents to ensure they incorporate level 3 of the sustainable procurement assessment framework.
<b>3</b>	Reviewing our Land and Buildings Plan.
<b>4</b>	Increased intelligent mobilising to ensure we respond in a timely manner thus reducing the impact of fires.
<b>5</b>	Increased working with partner organisation to achieve joint objectives and ensure safer communities.
<b>6</b>	Targeting HFSCs to areas of identified risks.
<b>7</b>	Implement the Asset Management Plan so that fire stations become safe and sustainable places to work and in appropriate situations also a facility for community use.





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