

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report of the Meeting held on 4 November 2010

West Midlands Regional Management Board

At its last meeting, held on 25 August 2010, the West Midlands Regional Management Board (the Board) agreed to recommend to each constituent Fire Authority in the Region that the Board be dissolved and that each Authority give delegated powers to its Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with its Chair, to take all necessary steps to achieve the dissolution of the Board at the earliest practical date, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State.

The Fire Authority has agreed unanimously with the recommendation and approval to dissolve the Board had now been received from the Secretary of State.

Meeting Schedule 2011/12

The Fire Authority has agreed the dates for its 2011/12 meetings and those of its Committees. The 2011/12 Meeting Schedule is attached as an appendix to this report.

Comprehensive Spending Review

Officers are currently analysing the detail of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcement, made on 20 October 2010, and its impact on the Fire Authority. Although no further information is available on the forthcoming Grant announcement, which will give specific details of individual grants, the Fire Authority is basing its budget planning for 2011/12 and future years on a 25% cut in Grant. In addition to the Grant reductions, a Tax Freeze Grant has also been announced, which would indicate a potential reduction of about £3 million over the next four years. The Fire Authority's base budget will be considered by its Strategy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 24 November 2010, for recommendation to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 15 December 2010.

Code of Corporate Governance 2010/11

The Fire Authority has approved and formally adopted its Code of Corporate Governance for 2010/11.

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy

The Fire Authority has adopted its latest Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, following the annual review conducted by officers.

FiReControl Project Update

The FiReControl Project was not mentioned in the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement. Fire Authorities within the West Midlands region have been advised (via the Regional Control Centre) that Ministers are keeping in close touch with the project and there are ongoing discussions with the main contractor EADS (now trading as Cassidian) regarding concerns about the delivery of the project.

Ministers believe that the contractor should have the opportunity to deliver the contract to time, cost and quality; but there will be no additional funding to 'bail out the contract'. The key milestone date for contractual deliverables is June 2011. All non-committed expenditure in implementation funding to joint project teams around the country has been cut by 11%, the grant to Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority has been cut by 5.2%.

Public Value Review Update

In total, 40 Public Value Review sessions have been held across Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service with around 95% of staff participating. The sessions have acted to raise awareness amongst staff of the complexities and likely impact of the recession upon both society and the Service. Moreover, the sessions have enabled staff to take an active role in determining the priorities of the Service and in influencing how the budget reductions might best be addressed without unduly compromising 'frontline' services to the community.

The outcomes of the Public Value Review are now being refined and aligned to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announcement, although further details of the Grant settlement are not expected until December 2010. At this stage, the speculative planning assumption of a 25% grant reduction appears to be consistent with the CSR announcement. Final recommendations from the Public Value Review will be presented to the Fire Authority for consideration and approval at its meeting on 15 December 2010.



Stuart West
Chair

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
November 2010

Appendix

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority 2011/12 Meeting Schedule

Background Papers

Agenda Papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority held on 4 November 2010

The agendas and reports (with the exception of exempt or confidential items) for all Fire Authority meetings and those of its Committees appear on the Brigade's website:

www.shropshirefire.gov.uk

To access reports go to the Authority's website. Click on Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority on the right hand side of the screen, then Committee Meetings, then Fire and Rescue Authority, then 4 November 2010 and the various reports and appendices will be listed.

If you have any difficulty with the website, please contact Lynn Ince, Management Support Officer, on 01743 260225.