

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report for Meeting held on 15 June 2011

Welcome to New Members

The Chair welcomed Councillors Carter, Murray and Thompson from Telford & Wrekin Council to their first Fire Authority meeting. The Chair thanked Councillor Dixon, who lost his seat in the recent elections, and Councillors Eade and Mason, who are no longer sitting on the Fire Authority, for their contribution.

Integrated Strategic Planning Process 2012/13 and the Medium Term Corporate Plan

The Service continues to align service, financial and improvement planning, the result of which will culminate in the 2012 / 13 budget, Medium Term Corporate Plan and the publication, in April 2012, of the 2012 / 13 one-year Service Plan.

Following recommendations from its Strategy and Resources Committee the Fire Authority has agreed its strategic planning timetable for 2011 / 12 and its Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group has been tasked with reviewing the key issues for the 2012 / 13 planning process.

Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

The Fire Authority has agreed both the composition of its Committees and the allocation of seats on its committees to political groups, following a change in the political balance, resulting from elections at Telford & Wrekin Council.

Member Training and Development Programme 2011-12

The Fire Authority has agreed its Member Training and Development Programme for 2011 / 12.

Fire Authority Treasurer

As its current Treasurer will retire in August, the Fire Authority has considered the options available to it and agreed to outsource the role of Authority Treasurer and Section 151 Officer to Shropshire Council. The Fire Authority's existing Finance Section will be reorganised to accommodate this change, whilst ensuring that there is no loss of financial control.

Statement of Accounts 2010/11

The Fire Authority has received a report, which sets out the key revenue issues that have arisen from work on the Statement of Accounts 2010/11, and it has agreed a number of virements to revenue budgets and reserves. These have been made with a view to maintaining service levels during a period of significant reduction in resources.

Information and Communications Technology Outline Business Case

The Fire Authority has approved proposals to enter into a shared services agreement for the provision of a Wide Area Network infrastructure with Shropshire Council and / or its contractors to secure improvements to the Service's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure. The shared service arrangement for a Wide Area Network infrastructure will make effective use of the previously agreed ICT reserve that underpins the Service's ICT Strategy for the next three to five-year period.

FiReControl Project

The Fire Authority has agreed a formal Memorandum of Understanding, which consolidates partnership arrangements with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority to set up a shared resilient control room infrastructure with common operating, technological and procedural standards/practices operated from two remote locations. In addition, the Fire Authority has agreed to expenditure to fund some costs of these control room arrangements, with a direction to officers to continue to bid for money from the Government for the costs involved in setting up a resilient mobilising function, following the collapse of the national fire control project.

Annual Report 2010/11

The Fire Authority has approved the draft contents and format of its Annual Report 2010 / 11, which outlines how the Authority has delivered against its stated aims and objectives over the previous twelve months via its improvement priorities. The Report also details progress against the Integrated Risk Management Plan / Public Value process and provides financial information, including the previous year's budget spend.

Fire Futures – Government Response

The Fire Futures review, instigated by the Fire Minister Bob Neill MP, provided everyone working within the fire sector with an opportunity to influence thinking about the future direction of the Fire and Rescue Service. The Government has now had time to analyse the reports emanating from the review and has responded in the document 'Fire Futures Reports Government Response', which can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firefuturesresponse>

The Fire Authority has noted that centrally removed bureaucracy is likely to lead to further responsibilities and costs for fire and rescue authorities. Also, the new National Framework, which is due to be published in 2012, may well set out, for the first time in fifteen years, a minimum response standard for all fire and rescue services.



Stuart West
Chair
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
June 2011

Background Papers

Agenda and papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 15 June 2011

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 Fire and Rescue Authority, then 15 June 2011 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.