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Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report for the Meeting held on 3 May 2016

Localism Act 2011

Following notification from Chief Fire Officer John Redmond that he is to retire in July 2016, the Fire Authority agreed in principle to employ a Chief Fire Officer on a salary of over £100,000.

The Fire Authority has directed its Brigade Managers' Employment Panel to commence the recruitment process for a new Chief Fire Officer, reporting back to the Fire Authority with its recommendations for appointment

Integrated Risk Management Planning

In October 2014, the Fire Authority considered proposals for inclusion within the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2015 to 2020. As a result of these proposals, three major projects were identified. The Fire Authority received the findings of the IRMP Project Board in relation to these projects in order to make decisions on how to take these projects forward.

Project 1 Integrated Crewing Model

The Fire Authority tasked officers to undertake a project to identify all possible options that could reduce Wholetime Duty System staffing costs by approximately £400k per annum, whilst continuing to deliver a service matched to risk and ensuring that any resulting model matches resources to risk and is able to make use of the operational workforce as a whole.

The IRMP Project Board, working with departmental champions made up of volunteers from watch-based operational staff, undertook wide-ranging research into identifying potential alternative duty systems, which could be operated to optimise the availability of staff. The research identified 5 potential options, which were then explored with the staff concerned.

Direct consultation with staff was vital to this project to ensure that their views, on what would be the biggest change to their working conditions since the 1970s, were taken into consideration. An online survey tool was used to record and collate feedback during the consultation period. This enabled collection of statistical data regarding preferred options and the opportunity for staff to provide written feedback about their responses.

The Fire Authority's Strategic Planning (StraP) Working Group considered the findings of the consultation process, together with the response provided by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

The StraP Working Group asked the Fire Authority to support the recommendation that a new duty system for wholetime staff be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:

- A 4 watch flexible rostering duty system;
- Locally managed rostering;
- On a shift for shift basis; and
- With start and finish times of 0800 to 1800 and 1800 to 0800.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and delegated responsibility to the StraP Working Group to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, reporting progress back to the Fire Authority at its meeting in October 2016. The Fire Authority also agreed that a 12-month review of the new duty system would be undertaken, from the date of its implementation, and reported back to the Fire Authority.

Project 2 Fire Control Review

In October 2014, having undertaken extensive consultation on a proposal to consider merging the Service's fire control function with that of another Service, the Fire Authority agreed that the Service should suspend existing merger proposals and undertake a Fire Control review project. Officers were tasked with identifying alternative options for improving the cost-effectiveness of the Fire Control function by up to £300k per annum. The Fire Authority also agreed to maintain a watching brief on all collaborative opportunities and any that may arise in the future.

The IRMP Project Board undertook an identical programme of research and consultation for this project to that detailed for the Integrated Crewing Model. The initial research by officer and Fire Control departmental champions identified 4 potential options for alternative duty systems, which could be operated within Fire Control.

Fire Control staff then completed a similar online survey tool, which again enabled collection of statistical data regarding preferred options and the opportunity for staff to provide written feedback about their responses.

The Fire Authority's StraP Working Group considered the findings of the consultation process, together with the response provided by the FBU and asked the Fire Authority to support the recommendation that a new duty system for Fire Control staff be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:

- A self-rostering duty system;
- Locally managed rostering;
- Keeping the current start and finish times of 0800 to 1800 and 1800 to 0800; and
- Annualised hours.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and in addition noted the introduction into Fire Control of new internal workstreams, which are aimed at enhancing service delivery and firefighter safety, as well as improving the efficiency of this important function.

Responsibility was again delegated to the StraP Working Group to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, reporting progress back to the Fire Authority at its October 2016 meeting.

Project 3 Telford Central Review

Following investments into both the Shrewsbury Headquarters site and the Wellington Fire Station site, Telford Central Fire Station is the last of the Service's fire stations to require significant investment to bring it up to modern standards. For this reason, the project was included in the Fire Authority's IRMP 2015 to 2020. Officers were tasked with undertaking a project to identify the Service's requirements for the site for the next 30 to 40 years and then undertaking a feasibility study to look at the costs likely to be incurred in fulfilling those requirements.

Officers identified that the main priorities for the Telford Central Project were to replace the current fire station and Training Department facilities currently located there. An integral part of the project would also be the facilitation of the Fire Control function being fully integrated into the Operations Department. In addition to these internal opportunities, the Service was also keen to explore how the site could be used to support businesses; charities and other partner agencies across Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire.

Having considered potential opportunities for the site, the Service identified three possible options that could be explored, which were:

- the minimum required by the Service;
- making optimal use for the Service; and
- making maximal use for the Service and its partners.

Telford and Wrekin's Design and Planning Team (biT) were commissioned to undertake the feasibility study. The biT Team provided a report, which estimated the costs for two versions of each option. The one version assumes each option is delivered, based on a refurbishment of the current build, and the other, based on a complete rebuild.

Having considered the feasibility study and officers' recommendations that the Service would prefer to pursue the third option – making maximal use for the Service and its partners, the StraP Working Group recommended to the Fire Authority that officers progress the project to the tender process stage, undertaking a detailed exploration of the costs for this option of both the refurbishment and rebuild versions.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and the outline plan for the project will be presented to the Fire Authority at its next meeting in June. The Authority delegated responsibility for monitoring the Service's work on this project to its StraP Working Group up to the stage where tenders from building contractors have been received and a firm decision is required from the Fire Authority.

Annual Plan 2016/17

The Fire Authority has approved the final version of its Annual Plan 2016/17.

The forward-looking, Annual Plan supplements and underpins the Fire Authority's five-year strategy, which is set out in the Medium-Term Corporate Plan. The Annual Plan defines the Fire Authority's Strategic Aims and associated Service Targets and includes the Authority's purpose, core values and aims.

A copy of the Service Plan can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/annual-plan-2016-17>



**Stuart West
Chair
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
May 2016**

Background Papers

Agenda and papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 3 May 2016

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:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/>

To access reports go to the Fire Service's website and follow the steps below.

- Click on the Managing the Service icon at the top of the page
- Click on the Fire Authority icon
- Click on Meetings in the list on the right hand side of the screen
- Click on 3 May 2016 and the various reports and appendices will be listed.

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