

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report of the Meeting held on 24 April 2019

Review of Fire Authority Governance Structure

At its February 2019 meeting, the Fire Authority tasked Legal Services with further exploring the recommendations of its Strategy and Planning Working Group that there be a small reduction in Member numbers (from 17 to 15 or 13 as a minimum) and a change in the Committee structure.

The Fire Authority received and considered the report which set out the final recommendations of the Strategy and Planning Working Group. The Authority resolved that the total membership of the Fire Authority be reduced from 17 to 15, along with the adoption of a two Committee structure. This will consist of a forward-looking 'Decision-making' Committee which will have responsibility for planning and preparing, for resourcing the Service and driving change across the Authority together with a backward-looking 'holding to account' Committee which will hold to account the delivery of the Authority's decisions by auditing and checking, reviewing and giving assurances.

In addition, the Fire Authority agreed an increase in virement levels from £50,000 to £100,000 which will allow officers to make operational decisions without unnecessary recourse to the Fire Authority. The Fire Authority also agreed that Hearings related to appeals involving disciplinary issues be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer as the Head of Paid Service, rather than being heard by a panel of the Fire Authority as is currently the case. Any appeal against a decision made by the Chief Fire Officer will still be open to escalation through a neutral employment tribunal.

Further reports setting out the specific details of these changes such as Terms of Reference for the Committees and representation on those committees will be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority in June 2019.

Annual Plan 2019/20

The Fire Authority received its Annual Plan 2019/20. This has been published on the Service's website and can be accessed via the following link.

<https://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/09-annual-plan-2019-20.pdf>

The Fire Authority agreed the outline format and contents of the Annual Plan 2019/20 at its meeting in February 2019. The Strategy and Resources Committee agreed the Service Targets 2018/19, which support the four Strategic Aims, at its meeting in March 2019.

Financial Performance to March 2019

The Fire Authority received a report on the financial performance of the Service up to March 2019 and has agreed virements to the revenue budget as requested. The report also set out the Service's performance against prudential indicators to date in 2018/19.

In addition, the Fire Authority also agreed a further increase to the Service's tariff for special service charges which were updated in February 2019 in line with firefighter pay.

The tariff has been further increased to ensure that the rates for fire investigation and reporting remain aligned with regional charges as determined by the West Midlands Fire Investigation Group.



Eric Carter
Chair
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
April 2019

Background Papers

Agenda and Papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 24 April 2019

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:

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

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

- Click on 'About Us' at the top of the page
- Click on 'Fire and Rescue Authority'
- Click on 'Meetings' in the list on the right hand side of the screen
- Click on '24 April 2019' 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.