

# Consultant's Report on Police and Crime Commissioner Initial Business Case

## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton,  
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### 1 Purpose of Report

This report asks the Fire Authority to consider the consultant's report on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Initial Business Case; to agree if the consultant's report should be disseminated to the constituent authorities and to decide if the consultant's report should form the basis of the Fire Authority's response to the Initial Business Case consultation.

### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Note and consider the findings and recommendations of the consultant's report on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Initial Business Case;
- b) Decide whether to endorse the report for submission to the Leaders of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils in order to support their decision making process in replying to the Initial Business Case consultation; and
- c) Decide whether the report should form the basis of the Fire Authority's response to the Initial Business Case consultation.

### 3 Background

The advent of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 placed emergency services under a statutory duty to collaborate. Along with this, the Act also enabled Police and Crime Commissioners to take on the role of governance of Fire and Rescue services where a local business case was made.

On 12 June 2017, following a period of development and engagement, the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia released an Initial Business Case (IBC) which set out proposals for the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (PCC) to take on the governance of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) with effect from April 2018

The PCC set a consultation period of 12 weeks from 12 July 2017 to 1 September 2017.

The statutory consultees to the IBC are the constituent authorities of the Fire and Rescue Authorities, the public and the representative bodies of the employees of any affected organisation. However the PCC has made it known that he would welcome a response from any stakeholder.

The Act defines that following the period of consultation the PCC should take account of comments and, if they choose to, put a case for change to the Government. If the case is locally supported, the Police and Fire Minister will consider it and, if it is clearly made, it will be supported. If the proposal receives local opposition it will be referred to an independent reviewer prior to any decisions being made by the Secretary of State.

## **4 Consultant's Report**

In July 2017 the Leaders of Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils asked their relevant Fire Authorities to commission an independent analysis of the PCC's IBC in order to support their ability to respond to the IBC consultation.

Following a competitive selection process Shropshire & Wrekin and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) contracted a collaboration of Alendi and Ameo consulting groups to undertake an analysis of the PCC's IBC with the requirement to provide answers to the following questions:

- Where the purported £4m of savings were likely to be found and what the most likely impacts on the ability of the FRS's to continue to function effectively and still deliver the same or better quality of services to the public (based on experience from other similar public sector outsourcing / collaborative approaches)?
- Whether this level of savings is feasible with recognition of transition costs?
- What the potential level of organisational disturbance and lost opportunity as capacity is channelled into service redesign and reorganisation?
- What the potential organisational and human impact on staff of adopting a shared services model across all 3 organisations having consideration of the different natures of the Police & Fire organisational delivery models?
- What other risks are associated with the intentions outlined in the IBC. For example loss of control of cost and quality of enabling services in what is essentially an "outsourced" model but without the benefits of being able to exploit the market?
- What elements of the business case make sound financial and operational sense regardless of a change in governance?

- What will the potential impact be on democratic and political representation across a diverse service area and what consequences might this have in respect to the ability for local communities to continue to successfully influence how one of their key local services is delivered and maintained?

Further to this there was a requirement to consider the relative merits of the PCC IBC against the ambitions of both FRAs to reform their existing governance arrangements to be more streamlined, better suited to the fire reform programme and able to provide overarching governance for a progressive alliance between the two Fire and Rescue Services.

The report was commissioned to be completed before the end of July 2017 in order to allow the FRAs to determine whether the report would be satisfactory to discharge their duty to undertake due diligence, and to ensure the scrutiny panels of the constituent authorities have time to consider it alongside the IBC prior to the deadline imposed by the consultation period.

At the time of writing this covering report, the final draft of the consultant's report had not been issued. The final version of the report will be presented to Members at the Fire Authority meeting by the consultants and hard copies of the report will be distributed.

## **5 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **6 Legal Comment**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report however further consideration may have to be given to legal implications following release of the consultant's report.

## **7 Initial Impact Assessment**

A full impact assessment will be required period to the implementation of any recommendations that are ultimately adopted. .

## **8 Equality Impact Assessment**

A full impact assessment will be required period to the implementation of any recommendations that are ultimately adopted. .

## **9 Appendices**

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## **10 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.