

**Non-Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
held at Shrewsbury Town Football Club
on Wednesday, 9 October 2024, at 2.00 pm**

Present**Members**

Councillors Burchett, Davis, Evans, Hartin, Lea, Minnery (Chair), Overton (Vice-Chair), Pardy, Price and Wynn.

Officers

Simon Hardiman	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Sam Burton	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	DCFO
Jason Kirby	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Delivery)	ACFO (SD)
Karen Gowreesunker	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Corporate Services)	ACFO (CS)
Anthea Lowe	Clerk and Monitoring Officer	MO
Richard Phillips	Clerk and Monitoring Officer	Clerk
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Supervisor	ESS
Aleksandra Zydek	Executive Support Officer	ESO

The Chair welcomed ACFOs Gowreesunker and Kirby to the meeting. He also welcomed Fire Brigade Union representatives who joined the Public Gallery.

The Monitoring Officer reminded all those present that discussion should be focussed on agenda items only and confirmed that no public questions had been validly received.

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Aldcroft, Blundell, Cook and Hignett, Head of Finance, Head of HR and Administration and Treasurer.

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3 Public Questions

None

4 Fire Authority Minutes**4a 19 June 2024**

Resolved, with abstention from Councillor Burchett, that the minutes of the Annual Fire Authority meeting, held on 19 June 2024, be agreed, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4b 24 July 2024

Resolved that the minutes of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting, held on 24 July 2024, be agreed, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5 Strategy And Resources Committee Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2024, be noted and the recommendations at item 7 of those minutes, as given below, be agreed

Item 7 – Financial Performance to June 2024

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) note the position of the revenue budget
- b) approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested;
- c) note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2024/25.

6 Standards, Audit and Performance Committee Minutes

6a 10 July 2024

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the minutes of the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee meeting, held on 10 July 2024.

6b 2 October 2024

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Fire Authority.

7 Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 Emerging Priorities

This report outlined the development and emerging priorities of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2025-onwards. It highlighted key areas such as adapting to climate change, responding to new energy technologies, addressing demographic shifts, and improving operational competence in high-risk areas such as flood response and rescues from height.

The ACFO CS presented this report and noted that the report proposes to move to a three-year CRMP plan duration, aligning it with NFCC guidance, which emphasises the importance of CRMP being periodically reviewed and updated to stay responsive to evolving community risks and national standards. She added that a three-year period ensures the CRMP remains

agile and adaptable, allowing the Service to reassess risk management strategies, incorporate new data, and adjust operational priorities without being outdated.

The ACFO CS reported that the CRMP 2025-28 outlines the strategic priorities for the Service based on a comprehensive analysis of emerging risks and evolving community needs. She added that the key priorities are organised under three main themes:

- The Use of Innovative Technology to meet changing community needs
- Climate/ Environmental Impact and the Service preparedness to adapt to effects of climate change like wildfires and floods
- Operational Excellence which includes competence, meeting the challenges of New Energy systems and attendance standards.

The ACFO CS noted that the Service will enter a period of formal public consultation to ensure the CRMP reflects the views and needs of the community and operational personnel. She added that the support and engagement from the Fire Authority will be invaluable. ACFO CS informed Members that the consultation will go live in November and will last for 8 weeks. She noted that updates will be provided to Members as often as possible during that period. ACFO CS reported that CRMP will then be brought to the February 2025 Fire Authority Meeting for approval.

Members questioned what opportunities there are for Members to be involved in the public consultation. They wanted to know if the Service plans to hold any public meetings at the fire stations. ACFO CS the Transformation and Collaboration Team is working with external organisation to arrange survey and local consultation events that will take place on the stations. The schedule of those will be shared with Members in due course.

Members asked if they will be cited on the consultation results. ACFO CS confirmed that the results will be brought to Fire Authority.

Members questioned that in one part report states that the SWAT analysis was completed, and, in another part, it states that the SWAT analysis in progress. The ACFO CS clarified that the broad SWAT was undertaken and currently SWAT analysis for individual departments are taking place. Members wanted to know if Fire Authority will be required to do a SWAT analysis. The ACFO CS confirmed this is the case.

Members noted they would like to know more details about the consultation. The ACFO CS confirmed that there is a possibility for Members to be briefed by the Area Manager Transformation and Collaboration whose team is working on details of the consultation.

Members expressed concern that large portion of Shropshire may not be able to access online survey and questioned if the Service has a provision for those people. The ACFO CS responded that she would have to get back to Members about the specific arrangements. She assured Members that alongside consultation the team created a communication plan around it.

Members questioned if the service has plan for an information campaign relating to the cut in Winter Fuel Payments. The CFO advised that the is a sector wide prevention calendar the Service is following. He added that following the Cost of Living crisis the service continues to take proactive approach around various alternative sources of heat. The CFO noted that CRMP SWAT and PEASTLE analysis feed into this work.

Members wanted to know more on how the Service is meeting challenges of environmental impact, a specially around floods. They noted that flooding in Shrewsbury has impact on response times and to mitigate this the Service proposes to temporary relocate fire appliance to the West midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) site on western side of town. The CFO noted that there isa range of options for the Service to explore including relocation. He added the Service is working with partners in the area. The CFO added that as Shrewsbury continues to grow and with the development if the Northern Relief Road there will be increasing demand for emergency response western side of town.

Members questioned with increased prevalence of floods, most recently in Church Stretton, will the Service require more equipment to deal with those events. The ACFO CS noted that this is the key priority area the Service is looking at on continuous basis.

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) noted the report
- b) agreed the three-year plan duration of the next CRMP 2025-2028
- c) agreed the proposals for formal consultation.

8 Service Update

This report updated Members on key areas of progression within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. This report covered the Grenfell Phase 2 Recommendations report, HMICFRS Hot Debrief summary outcomes and the Services response to the HMICFRS consultation for inspections 2024-2027.

The ACFO CS presented this report and noted that the Service Update be used to inform Fire Authority of Service progress and emerging areas of work. The ACFO CS reported that on 4th of September 2024, the Grenfell Tower inquiry Phase 2 report was published. This overview is a non-exhaustive summary of areas of note and recommendations for the Service to consider. She reminded Members that Phase 1 of the inquiry focused on the factual narrative of the events on the night of 14th June 2017 and Phase 2 examines the causes of the fire. This includes how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed for the fire to spread. The 72 people who lost thir lives are at the forefront as we read and digest the report, and the Service will take time to consider the findings and give them thorough thought and consideration.

The ACFO Cs brought Members attention to key stakeholders and recommendations for the fire sector listed on page 2 of the report. She added that the Service is effectively managing and reviewing all of medium and tall

building stock and where appropriate, taking the right course of action. The Service currently reviewing the recommendations in detail which will provide an assessment of any gaps that exist in current practice. The Service will come back to Members in due course with action plan and timeline for addressing the recommendation.

Members requested a clarification on recommendation 7(2)d. The ACFO SS explained that Section 7(2)d of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a responsibility on fire and rescue services to gather information on risks in their areas. These are also known as 7(2)d visits and are designed to help the Service learn about the buildings in their area. The Service visits larger properties on their ground to look around the buildings to see what fire safety measures are in place, what firefighting equipment is installed and any immediate fire risks.

The ACFO CS reported that the Service has submitted a response to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Consultation 2025-27. She highlighted that the consultation covered areas listed on page three of the report.

The ACFO CS informed Members that hot debrief following HMICFSR Inspection took place on 16th August 2024 and provided a broad overview of the inspection outcomes. An initial implementation plan has been developed but it will be finalised once the Inspection report has been published for the Service which is expected to be in November 2024.

The ACFO CS highlighter positive feedback listed on page 3 of the report. She added that themes for the areas of improvement within the implementation plan mentioned above are:

1. Current CRMP and Strategy, ensuring the Service's direction of travel is based on up-to-date data and evidence, clear and understood.
2. Internal governance framework which promotes transparency of and scrutiny in decision making. This is governance at all levels to include Fire Authority reporting.
3. Performance, risk and assurance as part of the governance framework through a structured Portfolio Management approach, reflective across all priorities and aligned to CRMP expectations. Also, assurance of the impact of services delivered.
4. Service Delivery – Policy and Assurance, areas across PPR where policy/strategy and assurance processes need to be addresses. Some areas are AFIs from the previous inspection process.
5. People – Employee Lifecycle ensuring from recruitment through to development and career progression staff are supported to progress throughout the service.
6. People – Culture and Values promoting and enabling a supportive environment where staff feel safe and can thrive
7. D&D capacity and capability providing systems and data to build capacity and enable effective decision making.
8. Statutory Officer triangle – this was not a specific outcome of the inspection itself but is aligned to the 'governance framework'. Regular dialogue within this statutory officer triangle will enable collaboration

around decisions to be made ensuring the authority are provided relevant information and advice.

The ACFO CS noted that the Service operates a lean operating model, and investment will be required to ensure that the right skills and capacity can support the change needed to address areas for improvement from the HMICFRS outcomes as well as Grenfell recommendations.

Members asked if Fire Authority was consulted on response to HMICFRS Consultation for 2025-27. The Chair noted that he was cited on the Service response. Members expressed interest in being actively involved in the future.

The MO noted that Statutory Officers can meet separately to discuss matters of importance to the Service. They may need to engage with Members in a place where confidential conversations will take place.

Members question if there is a provision for them to submit questions prior to Fire Authority meetings be included on Fire Authority agenda. The MO advised provision for Members to ask questions is included within the Fire Authority constitution.

Members questioned if they can be provided with information around Local Resilience Forum (LRF) meetings outcomes. The CFO noted that he attends LRF meetings and pointed Members to West Mercia Local Resilience Forum Website. There they can find publicly available Community Risk Register that contains information on local risks.

Resolved that the Fire Authority noted the report and its contents.

9 Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3,4 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

10 Fire Authority Exempt Minutes

10a 19 June 2024 (Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

Resolved, with abstention from Councillor Burchett, that the exempt minutes of the Annual Fire Authority meeting, held on 19 June 2024, be agreed, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10b 24 July 2024 (Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5)

Resolved that the exempt minutes of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting, held on 24 July 2024, be agreed, and signed by the Chair as a correct record

11 Standards Audit and Performance Committee Exempt Minutes (Paragraph 4)

Resolved that the exempt minutes of the Standards Audit and Performance Committee meeting, held on 10 July 2024, be noted.

12 Strategy and Resources Committee Exempt Minutes (Paragraph 3)

Resolved that the exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting held on 10 September 2024 be noted.

The meeting closed at 2.50 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....