

**Non-Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
held in the Oak Room, Headquarters
on Wednesday, 12 October 2022, at 2.00 pm**

Present

Members

Councillors Burchett, Carter (Chair), Evans, Hignett, Jhawar, Lea, Offland, Overton, Price and Thompson

Officers

Rod Hammerton	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Simon Hardiman	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support)	ACFO (SS)
Dan Quinn	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Delivery)	ACFO (SD)
Richard Phillips	Deputy Clerk to the Fire Authority	Clerk
James Walton	Treasurer	Treasurer
Jan Morris	Head of Transformation & Collaboration	HoTC
Germaine Worker	Head of Human Resources and Administration	HHRA
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Officer	ESO

External

Marc Bayliss	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, West Mercia Police	DPCC
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The Chair welcomed Marc Bayliss, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, West Mercia Police to the Fire Authority meeting

Before the meeting agenda was considered, the Chair informed the Fire Authority that a team of six Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service employees were currently transporting two of the Service's end of life appliances to Poland. The appliances will then be deployed to areas in Ukraine. The Chair stated how proud he was of the Service's contribution and the Fire Authority agreed with this. The Fire Authority also agreed that a formal letter of thanks should be sent to the employees concerned from the Chair.

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Aldcroft, Hartin, Minnery, Pardy and Wynn

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3 Public Questions

None

4 Fire Authority Minutes

4a 23 February 2022

Resolved that the minutes of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting, held on 23 February 2022, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4b 22 June 2022

Resolved that the minutes of the Annual Fire Authority meeting, held on 22 June 2022, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4c 2 August 2022

Resolved that the minutes of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting, held on 2 August 2022, 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 21 September 2022, be noted and the recommendations at item 6 of those minutes, as given below, be agreed

Item 6 – Financial Performance to July 2022

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget;
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested; and
- c) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2022/23.

6 Standards, Audit and Performance Committee Minutes

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the minutes of the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee meeting, held on 30 September 2022.

7 Annual Review 2021/22

This report presented the draft Annual Review (also known as the Annual Statement of Assurance) for 2021/22 and asked the Fire Authority to consider the document and approve it for publication.

The HoTC presented the report and gave a high-level overview of the Annual Review. Areas that were highlighted included the Service's Voices Group; the HMICFRS outcomes of good in all areas, with the Service aiming to achieve outstanding in future inspections; the risks across the county; the staff survey; and the Service's performance against its Corporate Performance Indicators.

Referring to the figure of 1500 false alarms in the incident breakdown for 2021/22, Members asked if these were hoax calls. The CFO explained that this figure relates to automatic fire alarm (AFA) activations rather than malicious calls. The ACFO (SD) added that AFAs are a key area of audit for the Service, so the policies and procedures related to AFAs have been reviewed and amended as necessary. The Service does specify the most at-risk premises within the county and a pilot scheme is being undertaken to see if the number of AFAs can be reduced. The CFO reassured Members that the number of malicious calls received is relatively low and all malicious calls that are received are challenged by Fire Control.

RH commented that the Service is obliged to publish the Annual Review and assured Members that the things that should go up, are and the things that should go down, are.

The Chair commented that he was pleased that the document reflects the EC widening remit of the Fire Authority

In response to a question from Members, the CFO explained that Service's Prevention work will be more focused on the impacts of the colder weather and the cost of living crisis over the coming months.

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) Have considered the Annual Review 2021/22; and
- b) Approve the Annual Review 2021/22 for publication.

8 Fire Alliance Update

The Chief Fire Officer gave the following verbal update on progress with the Fire Alliance between Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

The Alliance was created in 2018 as a fire, rather than a strategic, alliance, with the aim of achieving capacity and resilience, and some cost savings, across both Fire Services. A four-year strategy was initially put into place which covered Community Risk Management Plans (CRMP), ICT, Procurement and Fire Control and the strategic objectives of this plan have largely been achieved

The original aim of the ICT workstream was to create one ICT department across both Services but this was found to not be achievable, and the focus has instead changed to aligning work practices and the purchasing of the same systems and products across both Services.

Procurement was included in the Alliance Strategy as it was known that there was a Government expectation for Fire Services to collaborate on this. The Service undertakes due diligence to ensure that it can prove it has done all it can in relation to procurement. This includes a strategy of looking at purchasing at the national, alliance and local level, with most fire specific savings being realised at the national level. Procurement savings within the Alliance are achieved more from sharing research and evaluation rather than actual purchases.

The purpose of the Fire Control workstream was to identify a way of working that would address issues with peak and/or spate conditions etc in order to give resilience and feedback across both Services. The aim of this project is still to have a virtual Control Room with one mobilising system across the two services which can join when needed e.g., in spate, with the primary focus being a new cloud-based Control system. This Service's Control Room does more than call handling and mobilising, so this is a big project for the Service.

The focus for the Fire Alliance over the next three to four years is therefore the Fire Control project; the other areas of the Alliance Strategy have now become operational 'business as usual'. A closedown report and a new three-to-four-year Alliance Strategy, with focus on Fire Control will now be written and brought to the Fire Authority for consideration in due course.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the update given.

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 and 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

10 Brigade Managers Employment Panel Exempt Minutes (Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3)

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the exempt minutes of the Brigade Managers Employment Panel meeting, held on 1 September 2022.

11 Industrial Action Briefing (Paragraph 4)

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the Briefing on Industrial Action as given by the Executive Officers.

The meeting closed at 3.25 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....