

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Strategy and Resources Committee
held in the Oak Room at Headquarters, Shrewsbury
on Thursday, 15 March 2018 at 2.00 pm**

Present

Members

Councillors Hartin (Vice-Chair), Murray, Phillips and Wynn

Officers

Rod Hammerton	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Andy Johnson	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	DCFO
Dave Myers	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	ACFO
Joanne Coadey	Head of Finance	HoF
Germaine Worker	Head of HR and Administration	HoHRA
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Officer	ESO

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Carter, Pardy and Roberts and James Walton, Treasurer

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3 Public Questions

None

4 Minutes

Councillor Phillips requested that paragraph 3 on page 4 of the minutes be amended to show the comments made as being attributed to him. The ESO undertook to make the amendment.

Resolved that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 1 February 2018, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record

5 Committee Work Plan 2018/19

This report reviewed progress against the Strategy and Resources Committee 2017/18 Work Plan and put forward a 2018/19 Work Plan for consideration and approval by Members.

Resolved that the Committee:

- a) Note progress made against the Strategy and Resources Committee 2017/18 Work Plan; and
- b) Approve the Work Plan for 2018/19, attached as the appendix to the report, with / without amendment.

6 Committee Terms of Reference

This report proposed some minor amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Fire Authority, following the annual review conducted by officers.

Resolved that the Committee having considered the proposed amendment to its Terms of Reference, as set out at section 4 of the report, agree to recommend the changes to the Fire Authority for approval.

7 Review of Member Role Descriptions

This report asked Members to review the Role Descriptions for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee and for the Chair of the Strategy and Planning Working Group.

Resolved that the Committee having reviewed the Role Descriptions for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee and for the Chair of the Strategy and Planning Working Group, do not recommend any changes to the Fire Authority

8 Service Targets 2018/19

This report presented the proposed Service targets for 2018/19.

The DCFO presented this report and highlighted the proposed increase to target 4a – fire and heat damage emanating from accidental fires in domestic dwellings and regulated business will be confined to the room of origin on not less than 89% of occasions. The DCFO also advised that the Service was likely to just miss meeting target 2a – all accidental fires will be reduced to not more than 490 fires during 2017/18 and target 2b – accidental dwelling fires to be reduced to not more than 211 during 2017/18. Despite this, officers propose that stretch targets in line with the Authority's 5-year Service Plan be maintained for these targets.

Members queried the direction of travel in relation to the Service targets. The DCFO explained that the direction of travel has roughly progressed as predicted but officers will need to look at the work needed to meet future targets as performance is beginning to level off.

With regard to the deliberate fires target as set out on page 4 of the report, Members asked if there were many deliberate fires. The DCFO explained that, to date, there have been 430 deliberate fires in 2017/18. The target is based on incident numbers in the five years prior to 2015 which indicates that the occurrences of deliberate fires used to be a lot greater. The CFO explained that this target is also affected by external environmental factors such as the economy which are beyond the Service's control. The Service therefore needs to focus its efforts on areas which will give the most gains, for example domestic fire reduction. The DCFO further explained that with regard to deliberate fires, when there is a spate in a locality, the Service's Fire Crimes Officer, works with other authorities such as the Police to address the issue and this is proving to be successful.

In relation to education regarding deliberate fires, the DCFO explained that there is an ongoing programme of education for young people including Crucial Crew and the recently developed video. There is also the Fire Setters Programme which provides one-to-one engagement with young people who have displayed firesetting tendencies.

The Committee praised the Service and Officers for their target development which has produced clear, focussed targets. Members requested if an accompanying dashboard could be provided to show the Service's contribution to the achievement of targets. The CFO explained that output measures could be provided but it has been shown at both a local and national level that it is difficult to provide correlation to targets.

The DCFO further clarified that performance against the Service targets is reported to and monitored by the Audit and Performance Management (A&PM) Committee. The A&PM Committee receives regular reports and officer presentations to enable it to drill down into the factors affecting performance. Members recognised this as being in line with the separation of roles within the Authority's Committee structure but requested that a high level summary of outcomes and factors affecting performance be included in future target setting papers. The DCFO undertook to do this in future reports.

With regard to target 4a, Members asked what learning had come from this and the stretch target set for it. The DCFO advised that this target is a conglomeration of Service activities and a report is being prepared for the A&PM Committee meeting in April which collates the Service's activities and sets out national trends in performance against this indicator. The CFO further explained that this target was developed as a quality measure and does not measure a single issue. There are many vagaries and inaccuracies that can affect the performance against this target and the Service needs to get many things right to improve performance against this target.

Resolved that the Committee agree the proposed Service targets for 2018/19.

9 Update on Collaboration and Potential Opportunities for Closer Working with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

This report sought approval to examine formalised collaborative working options with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (H&WFRS) to provide long-term capacity and resilience for both organisations.

The CFO presented this report and explained that the Policing and Crime Act 2017 had introduced a statutory duty for emergency services to collaborate. There is also an expectation on services to demonstrate collaboration and its benefits. There is also a financial aspect to collaboration especially as it is predicted that some predictions forecast a 10% reduction in grant following the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2020. Historically, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service has undertaken collaboration on an opportunistic basis and the CFO explained that he hoped to bring a more planned and coherent approach to future collaboration. The CFO also advised that while there was already general support from H&WFRS but there had not been the opportunity to fully discuss the proposal with their Fire Authority members. The CFO explained that collaborative working is currently reviewed through the Service's partnership register but more needs to be done in relation to being able to demonstrate a commitment to collaboration and to document its outcomes.

The Committee questioned how the actions proposed in the report sat with the current situation with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Business Case. There was concern amongst Members as to what may happen in the future and that Officers may be tasked to undertake work that is not required. The CFO responded that as shown in the Service's Risk Register, the effect of not knowing the outcome of the Business Case presents more of a risk than knowing either way and reassured the Committee that these are areas of work that would be undertaken regardless of the governance arrangements in place.

The CFO asked the Committee to consider an amendment to recommendation d) in the report so that it now read as follows. The Committee agreed unanimously that this was a sensible amendment.

- d) Agree that the Strategic Programme Business Case is available for consideration initially by the Strategy and Planning Working Group and then by the full Fire Authority meeting in June 2018.

Referring to section 4 of the report which states that Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and H&WFRS have a history of successful collaboration, Members commented that this appeared presumptive and asked to see a more rigorous analysis of previous collaborative work. This would enable identification of strengths and weaknesses which may inform decision making.

The CFO advised that there is a comprehensive database detailing the collaborative projects which have been undertaken and this information will be brought to the Strategy and Planning Working Group.

Resolved that the Committee

- a) Note how the Service has been meeting the statutory duty to collaborate to date;
- b) Give approval for officers to examine the strategic options for formalised collaborative working within the region and nationally, but more specifically an alliance with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service;
- c) Agree the production of a Strategic Programme Business Case for consideration by both Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire Authorities, to include initial areas of collaborative focus and appropriate governance arrangements; and
- d) Agree that the Strategic Programme Business Case is available for consideration at the full Fire Authority meeting in June 2018.

The meeting closed at 2.37 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....