

## Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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### 1 Executive Summary

This report summarises the progress made to date against the improvements contained in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Improvement Plan 2024/25.

### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress made on the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan.

### 3 Background

In accordance with authority delegated to it by the Fire Authority, the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee will consider the draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 which is likely at its March/April 2025 meeting.

The Statement of Accounts contains, as an appendix, a statement as to how effective the Authority's various systems of internal control have been in governing the risks, to which the Authority is exposed. This is known as the Annual Governance Statement or the AGS. Areas of the system of internal control that had been identified as requiring improvement were listed in the AGS and an action plan was developed to ensure that these improvements are progressed during the coming year (the AGS Improvement Plan 2024/25). This Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress, which the Service makes against the Plan.

## **4 Monitoring Progress against the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25**

A copy of the AGS Improvement Plan 2024/25 is attached as an appendix to this report; progress against each of the planned activities is also included in the appendix.

As is the case with most plans, the activities included within it are often subject to change. This can be as a result of changes in the external environment that guides the work, as well as the internal environment that dictates whether the Service has the capacity to achieve its stated objectives. To ensure there is control over any slippage, the officers responsible for delivering this work must obtain approval from the Service Management Team (SMT) or Service Programme Board (SPB), if they require any variations to the current Plan. Such variations will also be reported to this committee.

## **5 Conclusions**

The Committee is asked to note the progress made on the 2024/25 AGS Improvement Plan.

## **6 Financial Implications**

Any significant budgetary implications, brought about by the improvements proposed in the Improvement Plan, have already been considered, either as part of the Fire Authority's budget planning process or within each Department's business planning process.

## **7 Legal Comment**

The AGS is a legal requirement under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom and must be included in the Fire Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts.

## **8 Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

## **9 Appendix**

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25.

## **10 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.

## Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2024/25

Area of Review		Improvement Required	Lead Officers	Internal Board reported to	Progress to date
<b>People/ On-Call Sustainability</b>	1	Implement the actions identified in the On-Call Sustainability Review through the delivery of the On Call Sustainability Project.	Alec Thomas	New Ways of Working Board (NWOW)	<p>On-call sustainability project has been closed with any outstanding recommendations moving into BAU for Area Command. These have been incorporated into the 2025/26 Departmental Plan.</p> <p>End project report for Alerters has been presented and accepted at both SGG and Programme Board. Area Command will be responsible for the Post Implementation Review.</p> <p>New banded contracts for On-call staff were introduced on 01/01/2025. Area Command will complete the evaluation.</p>
<b>People</b>	2	Implementation of fitness support facilities via the refurbishment programme. Feasibility Study (station fitness provision) to be reviewed following the introduction of stand-alone facility at Baschurch.	Marc Millward Chris White	New Ways of Working Board (NWOW)	<p>New fitness equipment has been purchased for all stations.</p> <p>Evaluation of 'fitness pod' is being evaluated and discussions regarding the remaining 5 'fitness pods' are taking place with the interim Tech Services management team.</p>

<b>Process</b>	3	Through the Service Programme Board continue to replace paper-based processes with streamlined electronic workflows.	Sally Edwards	Systems Governance Group (SGG)	<p>Automation of processes is one of the Service Goals for the 2025-2028 planning period, aligned to the expectations of our CRMP. The development of the Digital and Data strategy in April 2025 will support this as a priority for all areas of the Service.</p> <p>The achievement of this improvement item will not only require the review of processes, but will also require investment in both skills development and systems to support more efficient and effective ways of working.</p> <p>As part of the structure review it is proposed that there is investment level of skills across the Service and in our ICT team, as well as investment in the systems to support it</p>
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<b>Systems/ Infrastructure</b>	4	<p>Continual improvement of network security to a standard for adopting the implementation of the Emergency Service Network that guards against cyber threats and minimises disruption to daily operations.</p> <p>Enhance the workflows in Fire Service Rota (FSR) to incorporate as many pay elements as possible so that manual processes are removed.</p>	Sally Edwards	Service Management Team (SMT)	<p>A managed detection and response (MDR) approach to cyber incidents has been fully evaluated over the past few months following the proof of concept of a Security Operations Centre (SOC) to enhance protection against cyber risks and threats.</p> <p>We have now implemented an MDR solution that gives us access to a 24/27 Security Operations Centre (SOC).</p>
<b>Building Facilities</b>	5	<p>Deliver the property capital schemes.</p> <p>Introduce improvements to station access and security at all SFRS sites.</p>	Martin Guyler  Martin Guyler  Sally Edwards	New Ways of Working Board	<p>Quotations have been obtained to complete window and door security works across the estate. Specifications are being reviewed following further break-ins, and the works will be co-ordinated with the access control project.</p> <p>Engagement with contractors this week to look again at project continuation with a view to complete project within the next 3 months. All other capital schemes are being reviewed as part of a site visit schedule with work commencement soon as confirmation is gathered.</p>

		Review training facilities across the estate and consider feasibility study outcomes.	Mark Price	Systems Governance Group  Service Programme Board	<p>A presentation has been delivered to Programme Board and this was followed with a report presented to SMT. A report will next be delivered to Fire Authority to seek funding approval.</p> <p>A review of the previous training needs assessments is being conducted to establish future training needs in line with the new CRMP. Once this is completed, a full review of previous plans and future scoping will be undertaken through a Project Initiation Document.</p>
<b>Appliances/ Equipment</b>	6	Deliver the fleet and equipment strategy to include the introduction of new pumping and specialist appliances.	Scott Hurford / Martin Barclay	Operations Board	<p>A comprehensive resource review has been completed, covering wildfire, flood, and lithium battery response, with recommendations to improve appliance use.</p> <p>Proposals include reducing specialist aerial appliances from two to one, with an accompanying specialist resource ensuring capability for safe, two-story height-access operations. Additionally, a reduction in pumping units from three to two and increased investment in water carriers are recommended. Formal consultation with staff and the public are underway, with final recommendations pending SMT review to ensure alignment with strategic aims.</p>
<b>Collaboration</b>	7	Oversee the replacement of the new Command and Control (C&C) system.	Jason Kirby / Sam Burton	C&C Project Board	<p>The current estimated go live is now scheduled for March 2026 which has moved from September 2025 (last reported date), this is likely to be delayed further but we are awaiting revised dates from Motorola. The delay is due a delay in required DNSP replacement. Current instability in the Motorola infrastructure has contributed, with all non-essential changes paused while they work through critical work to improve the current customer infrastructure.</p>

					<p>Initial configuration has been completed, and the system has been through factory testing with the project now moving onto integrations.</p> <p>Resource for ICT for the project still needs to be considered but currently limited resources are available.</p> <p>Revised Incident types have been shared with key stakeholders and on-going work now taking place to refine mobilising PDAs and actions</p> <p>The MDT terms and conditions have been completed with project kick off meetings due imminently.</p> <p>Contract change notices are currently being reviewed by Motorola to amend integrations to FaRDaP for IRS data and Modas MDT's. Motorola are also completing a Contract change notice for the EWL which is the replacement for the DNSP connection.</p>
<b>Operations</b>	8	Undertake an operations resource and capability review to support the next Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which will come into effect in 2025.	Scott Hurford	SMT	<p>The CRMP formal consultation involving staff, partners and the community concluded on the 27 December.</p> <p>Following consultation evaluation, the CRMP was launched and published on April 1<sup>st</sup> and is supporting strategic planning for 2025- 2028 with the below priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Innovative use of technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meeting the challenges of a changing community</li> </ul> </li> <li>•Climate environmental impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adapting to the effects of climate change</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Meeting the challenges of climate change and expansion in Shrewsbury</li><li>•Operational Excellence<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Competence</li><li>○ Meeting the challenges of New Energy Systems</li><li>○ Fire Service Attendance Standard</li><li>○ Strategic Aerial Appliance Capability</li></ul></li></ul>
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