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Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2013/14

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report summarises the progress made to date against the improvements contained in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Improvement Plan 2013/14.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress made against each of the improvements, contained in the AGS Improvement Plan 2013/14.

3 Background

The Fire Authority has delegated authority to the Audit and Performance Management Committee to consider and approve the Statement of Accounts for 2012/13. This was agreed at the September meeting of the Committee.

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 2013/14).

This Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress, which the Service makes against the Plan.

4   Monitoring Progress against the
         AGS Improvement Plan 2013/14

A copy of the AGS Improvement Plan 2013/14 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 are often subject to change. This can be due to 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 that there is control over any slippage, the officers responsible for delivering this work must obtain approval from the Service Management Team or Service Transformation Board, if variations to the current Plan are required. Such changes will in turn be reported to this Committee.

5   Progress to Date

The 2013/14 Improvement Plan contains six areas for improvement. The progress made against each of the work packages is detailed briefly in the appendix to this report.

6   Financial Implications

Any significant budgetary implications, brought about by the improvements proposed in the 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   Initial Impact Assessment

As this report sets out historical information, i.e. progress made in the six areas for improvement, an Initial Impact Assessment has not been completed.

9   Appendix

Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 Improvement Plan

10   Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Appendix to report 6 on
Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2013/14
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Audit and Performance Management Committee
14 November 2013

Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 Improvement Plan

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Progress to date	Completion date
Hereford and Worcester Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	1	Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authorities have now procured and implemented command and control systems from the same supplier. The MOU seeks to develop plans to fully align the two new systems, to create a single virtualised data system, which will be capable of being operated from control rooms located in Worcester and Shrewsbury. The deployment of a fully integrated solution with common operating procedures offers improved resilience and broader operational benefits to both Services.	Louise McKenzie (formerly Steve Worrall)	Work continues to progress between the two Services with support from the third party supplier. Regular meetings are programmed. Ongoing and extra activity is planned to support an effective handover due to management changes in Shropshire Progress against Milestones is being monitored.	April 2015
Service Transformation Programme (STP)	2	The first year of the Service Transformation Programme has included a series of reviews culminating in the development of an information management strategy and a roadmap for delivery. The second year of the programme will involve the implementation of a number of key systems to support the delivery of the strategy.	Ged Edwards	The introduction of the STP has enabled the Service to better co-ordinate activities and allow the programme board to make more informed decisions with a fuller understanding of the knock-on effect against other activities and projects with the programme.	Ongoing. Brought forward from the 2012/13 Improvement Plan

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Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Progress to date	Completion date
		This includes the introduction of a document management system and the upgrade of the people management and fire safety systems. The programme will aid in embedding and supporting appropriate systems to ensure the most efficient use of our resources.		The main focus over the coming months is the implementation of SharePoint, which will result in streamlining business processes and improving document management. Further development of existing information systems is being undertaken, following comprehensive reviews last year to ensure the Service is getting maximum benefits from those systems.	
Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)/ 20:20 Review	3	To ensure the Service is able to deliver the 20:20 process, which involves a series of reviews, consultations and decisions, it is being managed as a project, which will include: 1. Undertaking a thorough review of the Authority's Strategic IRMP; 2. Planning to meet the demands of a much reduced budget, by ensuring the Service's Public Value process looks further into the future; and 3. Meeting the requirements of the new Fire and Rescue Service National Framework Document	Andy Johnson	Phase 2 of the IRMP 2020 Process has now been launched. The 2 tools (one internal and one external) have gone live and results are starting to come in. The visits to all staff groups and some of the external 'public' meetings have been booked and are starting to be attended by Executive Officers and members of StRaP. Access to the 'tools' will close on 31 December, with analysis of the feedback being undertaken during January. IRMP risk analysis is continuing throughout this period, with an initial draft version of the 'risk analysis' results being ready for consideration in early January.	January 2014
ICT Network infrastructure	4	Following previous ICT internal audit reports the Service will continue to invest in its corporate infrastructure.	Sally Edwards		Ongoing throughout 2013/14

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Progress to date	Completion date
		1. To ensure the infrastructure is optimised for high availability 2. To improve and embed processes and procedures for preventative measures that prevent, mitigate and prepare for ICT emergencies 3. Enhance the infrastructure with scalable technologies that provide employees with better mobility and accessibility to systems while carrying out their duties.		1. Investment in the infrastructure continues and is assessed annually. A mini competition has just been completed for new network storage to improve capacity and performance. 2. The recommendations made by internal audit are used as the basis for making improvements to team processes. 3. A direct access solution has been implemented to support staff with mobile working and the next stage is the assessment of a wireless connectivity solution to be conducted in the next 3 months.	
Health and Safety Management	5	Implement the action plans following the review of the Health and Safety Executive consolidation report, based on the eight inspections completed in 2009/10	Andy Perry	All proposals are progressing and monitored through the use of Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) by the 'Competence Performance Management' and HR Committee meetings. Several projects have been implemented and are awaiting a period of time to enable monitoring and auditing to be conducted prior to the project being closed.	Ongoing. Brought forward from the 2012/13 Improvement Plan
Outcomes of Operational Assurance Assessment	6	Implement the outcomes of the 2012 Operational Assurance peer review report.	Andy Johnson (formerly Steve Worrall)	Responsibility for this improvement has now moved to ACFO Andy Johnson.	Ongoing throughout 2013/14

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Progress to date	Completion date
				Officers are planning to undertake a snapshot of the progress achieved to date, during November 2013. This will help to inform the Service's decisions on whether any aspects require further support and/or prioritising.	

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