

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS

1 Purpose of Report

This report presents the new 'Statement on Internal Control' (SIC) Improvement Plan 2006/07, which was due to be formally approved by the Fire Authority on 14 June 2006, for monitoring by this Committee.

2 Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of the Fire Authority's SIC Improvement Plan 2006/07; and
- b) Note that the Committee will receive regular progress reports on the SIC Improvement Plan.

3 Background

The Fire Authority will receive and consider the Final Accounts 2005/06 at its meeting on 14 June 2006. If agreed, the Final Accounts will be signed off by the Chair, the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer. The Chief Fire Officer will report verbally on the outcome of that item. The Final Accounts contain a statement as to how effective the Authority's various systems of internal control have been in controlling the risks, to which the Authority is exposed. This is known as the Statement on Internal Control, or the SIC. Areas of the system of internal control that had been identified as requiring improvement were listed in the SIC and an action plan was developed to ensure that these improvements are progressed during the coming year (the SIC Improvement Plan).

4 Monitoring progress with the SIC Improvement Plan 2006/07

A copy of the SIC Improvement Plan 2006/07 is attached as an appendix to this report for Members' reference. To ensure the Committee is able to meet its



responsibility for monitoring the SIC Improvement Plan; a progress report will be brought to all meetings.

5 Legal Comment

The SIC 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.

6 Appendix

SIC Improvement Plan 2006/07

7 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority:

14 June 2006, report 6, Statement on Internal Control 2005/06

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balance Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Equality and Diversity		Retained	
Efficiency Savings		Risk and Insurance	*
Environmental		Staff	
Financial		Strategic Planning	
Fire Control/Fire Link		West Midlands Regional Management Board	

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Andy Johnson, Head of Performance and Risk, telephone 01743 260287.



Statement on Internal Control Improvement Plan 2006/07

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Completion date
1. Corporate Governance	1.1	Awareness of the Authority's Code of Corporate Governance will be increased amongst staff.	Sharon Lloyd	Ongoing
	1.2	The Authority's partnership procedures will be further embedded.	Ged Edwards	April 2007
2. Performance Management	2.1	The Authority's performance management policies will be reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of the Authority.	Ged Edwards	December 2006
	2.2	The IT Strategy is to be reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements of Fire Service National Framework document and other local and national requirements.	Glyn Williams	April 2007
3. Risk Management	3.1	The Risk Management Protocol document will be reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements of the Authority's maturing risk management procedures.	Andy Johnson	July 2006
	3.2	Departmental Risk Registers will be created in collaboration with Heads of Departments	Andy Johnson/ Heads of Departments	July 2006
	3.3	All relevant staff will receive appropriate training in risk management.	Andy Johnson	Ongoing
	3.4	Additional information on risk identification in Partnership working will be included in Partnership Procedures.	Andy Johnson/ Ged Edwards	July 2006
	3.5	A Risk Management newsletter will be developed to raise awareness amongst all staff about risk management issues.	Risk Management Group	December 2006
	3.6	The ongoing work to integrate the Authority's risk management processes with its budgetary reserves planning processes will be completed.	Andy Johnson/ Joanne Coadey	February 2007
	3.7	Use of the corporate risk registers to capture and manage 'opportunities' will be further explored.	Andy Johnson	April 2007



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Completion date
4. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	4.1	Awareness of the Authority's Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies will be increased amongst staff.	Joanne Coadey	Ongoing
5. Code of Conduct	5.1	Code of Conduct will be developed for all staff.	Lisa Vickers	July 2006
	5.2	A Staff Handbook will be developed	Lisa Vickers	April 2007
6. Business Continuity	6.1	The Authority's Business Continuity Plan will be approved by the Authority.	Andy Johnson	July 2006
	6.2	The resilience of the information and communication technology back-up arrangements will be improved, including meeting the level of departmental business continuity requirements that is commensurate with the level of resources and finances made available.	Glyn Williams	December 2006
7. Assurance Framework	7.1	The various methods used to provide assurance in the Authority will be reviewed and an overarching assurance framework will be developed.	Risk Management Group	July 2006
8. SIC Improvement Plan	8.1	This Improvement Plan will be implemented and monitored, with progress being regularly reported to Policy Group and the Audit and Performance Management Committee.	Risk Management Group	Ongoing

