

## Statement on Internal Control Improvement Plan 2007/08

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report presents the new 'Statement on Internal Control' (SIC) Improvement Plan 2007/08, formally approved by the Fire Authority on 13 June 2007, for monitoring by this Committee.

### 2 Recommendations

Members are asked 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

It is anticipated that at a meeting on 13 June 2007, the Fire Authority's Final Accounts 2006/07 will be signed off by the Chair, the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer. The Final Accounts contain a statement as to how effective the Fire Authority's various systems of internal control have been in controlling the risks to which the Fire Authority is exposed. This is known as the Statement on Internal Control, or the SIC. Areas of the system of internal control, which have been identified as requiring improvement, are listed in the SIC and an action plan has been developed to ensure that these improvements are progressed during the coming year (the SIC Improvement Plan).



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

#### **4 Monitoring Progress with the SIC Improvement Plan 2006/07**

A copy of the SIC Improvement Plan 2007/08 is attached as an appendix to this report, for Members' reference. The Committee will receive a report on the progress made against the Plan at all future meetings.

#### **5 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 budgetary planning process or within each Department's business planning process.

#### **6 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.

#### **7 Equality Impact Assessment**

This report is purely a statement about the effectiveness of current internal controls within the Fire Authority and so the recommendations within the report have no impact on people. An initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

#### **8 Appendix**

SIC Improvement Plan 2007/08

#### **9 Background Papers**

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority  
13 June 2007 Report 12 - Statement on Internal Control



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.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	*
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	*
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*



**Appendix** to report on  
Statement on Internal Control Improvement Plan 2007/08  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority  
Audit and Performance Management Committee  
26 July 2007

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Completion date
Strategic Planning Process	1	The process by which the Authority identifies the stakeholders with whom it should consult is not clearly defined. Develop a Stakeholder Management Policy.	Steve Worrall	11/2007
	2	With no formal communication strategy in place, the Authority cannot be sure it is providing information to, and receiving feedback from, everyone that has a vested interest in the Service. A Communication Strategy will be developed following the guidance given in the Stakeholder Management Policy.	Steve Worrall	11/2007
Performance Management	3	Following a review of the Authority's Performance Management systems and processes, improvements to the Performance Management Framework have been identified and included in an Action Plan. The Performance Management Framework Action Plan will be implemented.	Steve Worrall	03/2008
	4	The Authority has provided the funds for a new Performance Management System. Having identified the most appropriate system and supplier, this system now needs to be implemented. The new Performance Management System will be implemented.	Steve Worrall	07/2007
Resource Management	5	The Authority needs to be able to demonstrate the benefit it accrues from its Capital Investment Programme. A review of all capital investment projects will be conducted, which will identify any learning outcomes. The review will also quantify the actual benefit to the public from the Authority's Capital Investment Programme.	Andrew Kelcey	10/2007
	6	The Authority needs to be able to demonstrate better how its assets comply with all relevant legislation and standards. The new Asset Management System (AMS) will be implemented.	Andrew Kelcey	09/2007
	7	The Authority wishes to be able to demonstrate that it complies with all relevant environmental legislation. The organisation will seek accreditation to ISO 14001.	Andrew Kelcey	12/2007



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Completion date
Human Resource Management and Training	8	The Rank to Role process needs to be completed across all ranks. Rank to Role process to be completed.	Louise McKenzie	03/2008
	9	With support staff induction training only being held twice a year, some staff have to wait several months before receiving their introduction to the Service. A review of support staff induction training will be undertaken to ensure it is able to meet the needs of all staff.	Louise McKenzie	03/2008
	10	Officer training records currently sit outside of the Training Department's administration system. Officer training records will be integrated into the system operated by the Development Department	Louise McKenzie	03/2008
	11	The Service needs to encourage all managers to be more involved in the new sickness absence procedures. Managers will be given additional training on the sickness absence procedures to ensure they are effectively implemented.	Louise McKenzie	03/2008
Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning	12	The Corporate Risk Register needs to have a procedural manual so that people, other than the Risk Manager, can undertake the recording and reporting procedures. A Risk Register procedural manual will be developed.	Andy Johnson	07/2007
	13	The recently published Business Continuity Manual needs to be tested to ensure it is fit for purpose. An initial test of the procedures detailed in the Manual is to be undertaken.	Andy Johnson	07/2007
	14	The Business Continuity Manual needs to be regularly tested. A programme of tests is to be developed.	Andy Johnson	12/2007
	15	The Business Continuity Manual needs to be subject to regular review to ensure that the information contained therein is current. An annual audit of all Departments' Business Continuity Plans to be conducted as part of the SIC Assurance Process.	Andy Johnson	04/2008
	16	If a significantly disruptive event occurred in the server room at headquarters, it is likely to have a significant impact on the availability of information technology and communication facilities to the whole Service. The ongoing work to develop a 'shadow site' at Telford Central will be completed.	Glyn Williams	03/2008



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Completion date
Health and Safety Management	17	Whilst there is a Member Champion for Risk Management and Audit, their responsibility does not specifically cover the health and safety function. Explore the possibility of either having a specific Member Champion for Health and Safety, or having this as a role within one of the existing positions	Andy Johnson	03/2008
	18	The Retained Support Officer and District Support Officer roles are not currently included in the health and safety structure detailed in the Brigade Order No.1 Part 2. The Brigade Order will be reviewed to take account of new Brigade structures.	Andy Johnson	03/2008
	19	The health and safety training programme needs to be reviewed in light of the rank to role process the Brigade is currently going through. The health and safety training programme will be developed to take account of the new Role Maps.	Andy Johnson	03/2008
	20	Although the Brigade has gone through several audits of its health and safety function over the last few years, it is not included in the rolling programme of audits currently undertaken by Internal Audit. Consideration to be given to the inclusion of an audit of the Brigade's health and safety function within the next Internal Audit contract.	Andy Johnson	08/2007
Achievement of the Authority's Strategic Aims and Objectives	21	There are no clear instructions and/or guidance notes for the various office functions undertaken by the Level 2 Commanders, which causes potential problems when there are staff changes in the department. Procedural manuals will be developed for each of the key functions.	Martin Timmis	07/2007
	22	Operational resilience needs to be improved to ensure that the Authority is able to continue to deliver its frontline services during incidents that may in themselves cause severe disruption to our Service. An Improvement Plan to meet the requirements of the recently developed Operational Resilience Contingency Plan (ORCP) will be implemented according to a Policy Group approved timetable.	Martin Timmis	To be determined following Policy Group approval

