



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Monday, 04 September 2017, 11:00

## Minutes

**Members Present:** Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Ms K S Guthrie, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Dr C A Hotham, Mr J L V Kenyon, Mr P Middlebrough, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Dr K Pollock, Professor J W Raine, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall

**Substitutes:**

**Absent:**

**Apologies for Absence:** Mr B A Baker, Mr R I Matthews, Mrs J Potter, Mr S D Williams

### 146 Declarations of Interest (if any)

No interests were declared by any Members.

### 147 Confirmation of Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 27 June 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 148 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that:

- an itinerary for the Service Exercise on 16 September 2017 had been circulated to Members who had confirmed their attendance and Members were reminded to advise Committee Services from which location they required transport;
- all Members were invited to the Dying to Drive road safety event at

Worcester Fire Station on 27 September;

- drop in events would take place on 6<sup>th</sup> September and 20<sup>th</sup> September for any Members interested in using the myCMIS app on their mobile devices; and
- the full Authority meeting scheduled for 11 October 2017 had been cancelled.

## **149 Public Participation**

There was no participation by members of the public.

## **150 Analysis of West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner Initial Business Case**

The Chairman explained that the West Mercia PCC recently published his initial business case for taking on the role of governance of Shropshire & Wrekin and Hereford & Worcester fire and rescue services. In response, the leaders of the constituent authorities requested both fire authorities to commission an independent analysis of the PCC's initial business case in order to support their ability to respond to the PCC's consultation, which was due to end on 11 September 2017.

The Chairman introduced Mike Dearing and John Bonney from Ameo Alendi Consulting who had been commissioned to undertake the independent analysis of the PCC's initial business case. Mr Bonney explained that the independent analysis aimed to:

- examine the relevant financial and organisational information in relation to the business case;
- verify the facts, current positions and intentions through interviews and research; and
- provide a view on the PCC's proposals and alternative options.

Mr Bonney gave an overview and assessment of the governance options that had been identified in the initial business case and highlighted that there had been no examination of the representation model by the PCC, which could be seen as a missed opportunity as a number of other authorities were examining this model and developing innovative approaches.

As the business case put forward by the PCC had adopted the Treasury's "five case" model, Mr Dearing and Mr Bonney had adopted the same structure (including a sixth section around implementation) for their

analysis which incorporated the following elements:

1. Strategic
2. Economic
3. Commercial
4. Finance
5. Management and Implementation

Mr Dearing and Mr Bonney informed the meeting of their findings in each of the areas set out above, which included:

- a lack of clarity in the business case as to how corporate decision making in a command alliance would work in practice;
- little explanation in terms of how the proposed efficiencies achieved by ICT provision and information sharing would materialise across the three organisations;
- a focus on community fire safety in the business case which was interpreted to align closely with the police role in community safety. However, in reality the police and fire community safety roles were significantly different with the police focussing on crime prevention whereas the driver for fire was to reduce the vulnerabilities that can lead to fire risk;
- a lack of detailed financial information to underpin the key financial elements of the business case, the only information available by the PCC's Office were some overarching assumptions which had been overlaid with existing cost structures; and
- an apparent lack of understanding that many so-called "enabling services" including senior managers and training functions were carried out by staff who also had operational responsibilities. The inclusion of such roles within any proposed savings would therefore also reduce operational frontline staff.

Mr Bonney then explained the possible opportunities and options for the Authority, which included:

- closer examination of collaboration between local fire and rescue services;
- a regional Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP);
- potential reduction in the size of local fire authorities; and
- a combined fire alliance to provide a single voice for fire and rescue at a regional level.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and during the ensuing discussions the following issues were raised:

- the proposals in the PCC's business case could reduce local representation;
- the Authority should take the opportunity to review its own governance arrangements and a locally agreed process for any

- future changes would be needed;
- the work to be undertaken by West Mercia Police on its alliance with Warwickshire Police had not yet been completed and any additional collaborative work with fire and rescue may drive up costs and reduce capacity;
- the Authority was already involved in a good deal of collaboration with partners, including the police;
- it was important for fire and rescue to remain a risk based service to ensure that demand did not increase.

Following suggested amendments by Members **it was RESOLVED that:**

***i) the report be submitted to the Leaders of Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council in order to support their decision making process in responding to the consultation on the initial business case;***

***ii) the report forms the basis of the Fire Authority's response to the consultation on the initial business case; and***

***iii) the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Authority enter into further discussions with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority, the leaders of the four constituent authorities and the Police & Crime Commissioner to explore, and subject thereto Officers to bring back a further report on, implementation of the principles identified in the analysis report including:***

- ***reviewing the size and governance of the Fire Authority;***
- ***implementation of the 'representation model' (PCC as a voting member of the Fire Authority); and***
- ***creation of a joint board with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority to oversee future collaboration.***

The Meeting ended at: 12:30

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman