

Report of the Head of Corporate Services

Strategic Fire Alliance update

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on progress in delivering the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note progress to date and grant approval for Officers to prepare option appraisals.

Introduction/Background

2. On 12 September 2018, the Policy and Resources Committee approved a plan to create a Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services. The plan was also approved by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority at their meeting on 10 October 2018.
3. In endorsing the creation of the Alliance, both Fire Authorities directed Senior Officers from their respective Services to prepare a joint programme plan to achieve the aims of the Alliance.
4. Since then, good progress has been made in setting up governance arrangements and in identifying key priorities for action.

Update on progress

5. The inaugural meeting of the Strategic Alliance Board took place on 10 December. The Board provides the high level strategic governance for the Alliance and consists of the Chairs/Vice Chairs of both Fire Authorities and both Chief Fire Officers. At the meeting, the terms of governance, as set out in the Strategic Alliance Plan, were agreed. Three priority projects were also recommended:
 - a. Fire Control: scoping future requirements for ensuring a resilient Command & Control function,
 - b. IRMP/CRMP: reviewing options for aligning integrated risk management planning processes, and
 - c. ICT: developing organisational arrangements for provision of Information & Communications Technology functions.

6. At the time of writing, it is anticipated that these three priorities will be confirmed at the next meeting of the Strategic Alliance Board on 10th December.
7. Meetings of the Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board have also been held (24th September and 5th November). The Programme Delivery Board manages the overall programme of change and is led by the two Chief Fire Officers and supported by the Programme Manager. Over this period, the Programme Manager has visited Hampshire and Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services to review good practice in programme and project management.
8. The Programme Delivery Board will be exploring the options available for progressing the three priorities, and appropriate Project leads have been nominated to prepare options for appraisal by the Board.

Conclusion/Summary

9. The creation of the Strategic Fire Alliance is a major step towards collective resilience, capacity and sustainability for both Services into the next decade. In the last quarter, governance arrangements have been agreed and key priorities set out.
10. To progress this further, Members are requested to note developments to date and to give approval for officers to proceed with preparing option appraisals for the key priority projects.
11. A similar update report is also being presented to the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority to gain their authority for Officers to proceed. Further updates will be brought to Members as work progresses.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	There is a legal requirement for Governance consideration.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The proposals support 'Our Strategy' through: The effective use of resources and resourcing for the future.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Risk Assessments will be undertaken as part of any project management processes recommended.

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Other than publication of the Fire Alliance Strategic Plan 2018-2022, no further public or staff consultation has been carried out at this time.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken as part of any project management processes recommended.

Supporting Information

None

Contact Officer

Jean Cole, Head of Corporate Services
(01905 368329)
Email: JCole@hwfire.org.uk