



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 14 October 2025, 10:30

**Chairman: Mr R Phillips**

**Vice-Chairman: Mrs H Robson**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr A Amos, Mr S Bastow, Mr D Boulter, Mr D Davies, Mr C McSweeney, Mr T Miller, Mr D Morehead, Mr R Phillips, Mrs J Shaw, Ms D Toynbee, Mr T Wells

### **0567 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Aubrey, Cllr A Bailes, Cllr D Boatright-Greene, Cllr J Carwardine, Cllr O Cleary, Cllr M Dunkley, Cllr B Hopkins, Cllr M Jones, Cllr E Kearsley, Cllr A Monk, Cllr Cllr H Robson, and Cllr R Udall.

### **0568 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), and Chair of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book).

### **0569 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman announced the following:

- Attended the official opening of the Redditch Police and Fire Hub with the Chief Fire Officer and the High Sherriff of Worcestershire.
- Attended the National Firefighters Memorial Service in Staffordshire with the Fire Minister.
- The former Chief Fire Officer Mark Yates had recently passed away. Members were asked to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect. Members were informed that the funeral was on Friday 24 October, further details of which could be provided.

*[Cllr D Morehead entered the meeting at 10.33am].*

**0570 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**0571 Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 25 June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

**0572 Changes to Allocation of Committee Seats**

The General Counsel, Clerk and Monitoring Officer presented a report to seek ratification of a change to the allocation of Committee seats as a result of Cllr Kenyon and Cllr Bastow swapping committees and to increase the Membership of the Appointments Committee.

Members were assured that the proposed changes were only of a very minor change which resulted in a revised political balance allocation, however this still was within the spirit of the rules on political balance.

***RESOLVED that:***

***i) the revised allocation of committee seats set out in Table 2 of Appendix 1 (whereby Cllr Kenyon has replaced Cllr Bastow on Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee) be approved; and***

***ii) the Appointments Committee be increased to 8 Members in order to accommodate Cllr Robson as Vice-Chairman.***

**0573 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-30 Outcome of Public Consultation**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the findings of the public consultation for the draft CRMP 2025-30 for Members' Scrutiny.

Members were reminded that a draft CRMP 2025-30 was produced and considered by the Fire Authority on 11 December 2024. A formal public consultation process was undertaken between 13 January and 7 April 2025 to gather the views of residents, staff and other stakeholders. This was done by gathering information through an open consultation questionnaire and two in-person focus groups with seldom heard residents (one with residents in very rural areas and one with people with learning disabilities). Two written submissions were also received: one from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and one from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

Members scrutinised the findings of the public consultation in detail, in particular taking note that the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that its water and flood rescue capabilities should be reviewed and developed, along with wildfire capability. That HWFRS should invest in understanding the risks in relation to existing and emerging technology and that HWFRS should invest in understanding the risks in relation to recycling processes and in a greater range of planning applications, together with lobbying for and support of the installation and maintenance of residential sprinklers in new housing developments. Finally that HWFRS should consider developing its road safety initiatives to a wider range of road users, subject to available resources and that the PCC also welcomed the focus on partnership-led interventions and dedicated risk-reduction road safety initiatives targeted at young drivers and other vulnerable road users.

*[Cllr T Wells entered the meeting at 10.41am].*

Members agreed that although the number of responses received was disappointing, all areas had been covered with focus groups as suggested by Cllr Wells during the Resource Review. The CRMP was clear and easy to understand and the direction seemed sensible, concentrating on the right issues.

Members accepted and approved the findings and noted that the responses received would be fed back into the CRMP.

***RESOLVED that having scrutinised the findings of the public consultation for the draft CRMP 2025-30, it be agreed that the findings are accepted and approved. In particular it be noted that:***

***i) In all the main proposals from the consultation process the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed.***

***ii) Almost four-in-five respondents (79%) agreed with HWFRS's overall approach to the draft CRMP 2025-30.***

***iii) Three quarters of respondents (75%) agreed that HWFRS's draft CRMP 2025-30 is clear and easy to understand.***

***iv) Both focus groups agreed that the direction of the CRMP seems sensible and that HWFRS is concentrating on the right issues.***

#### **0574 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-2030**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-2030 for Members to scrutinise the amendments made to the draft CRMP following the period of consultation.

Members noted that following careful consideration of all feedback, HWFRS had undertaken to include additional sections in the main CRMP on the Service's response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiries and preparedness for a pandemic. HWFRS had also ensured that the Service's role in the Local Resilience Forum was referenced clearly in relevant areas of the main document.

The CFO confirmed to Members that there had been no changes since it was originally written except for the three points in the recommendation. He assured Members that he was comfortable and satisfied that risk and resources were in the right place, with regional and national resources available should we need. Nothing had been identified as a risk in both counties that could not be dealt with. The Chairman agreed that the CRMP was fit for the future, it set out the guidelines and managed the risk.

Officers and staff were thanked for all the work in producing a CRMP that they were proud of.

The CRMP was therefore agreed and approved.

***RESOLVED that the final version of the CRMP 2025-2030, incorporating the changes suggested during the consultation process, be agreed and approved. In particular it be noted that additional sections in the main CRMP had been added following consultation:***

- ***our response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiries;***
- ***our preparedness for a pandemic; and***
- ***our role in the Local Resilience Forum.***

## **0575 Resource Review Update Report**

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report to allow Members to scrutinise and approve the benefits and outcomes of the Resource Review.

Members were pleased to note that by reallocating existing funding from some of the fire engines with low average availability and low number of incidents, the Service had increased crewing and resilience on its busier front-line engines, improved the support for On-Call fire engines and reduced overtime costs. In addition, the Resource Review reinvestment programme improved the longer-term sustainability of the On-Call duty

system and explored new ways of working, which was evident by the use of crew carriers.

Members noted that most changes were now in place and in the next 12-18 months the final elements would be implemented to provide even greater resilience, performance and availability at two On-Call fire stations (Leominster and Bromyard in North Herefordshire) when a new blended crewing model during the daytime of Wholetime and On-Call staffing goes live.

It was explained that the new model would not only improve daytime availability at these locations, but it should also speed up the local response times, deliver higher levels of prevention and protection in those areas and support other On-Call station availability with any spare capacity. It would also improve the support, risk management (Intel) and training for the On-Call staff at those locations which were all key elements of the Response Strategy 2021-2025.

***RESOLVED that the Fire Authority note the benefits and outcomes of the Resource Review. In particular that by reallocating existing funding from some of the fire engines with low average availability and low number of incidents, the Service had:***

- **Increased crewing and resilience on its busier front-line fire engines;**
- **Improved the support for On-Call fire engines;**
- **Reduced overtime costs;**
- **Improved the longer-term sustainability of the On-Call duty system; and**
- **Continued to explore new ways of working (crew carriers).**

**0576 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Q1 Update 2025-26**

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention presented Members with an opportunity to scrutinise the HMICFRS Improvement Plan and the progress made on actions during Quarter 1 2025-26, following the inspection report dated 29 November 2023.

Members noted the progress that had been made up to the end of June 2025 (Q1) in delivering the HMICFRS Improvement Plan of which 11 areas for improvement had resulted in 32 actions. 75% had currently been completed and progress continued to discharge the remaining actions.

Members were pleased to note that all actions would be completed by quarter 4 of this year and were assured that there were no areas of particular concern.

The next HMICFRS inspection would commence in February 2026, the document request and staff survey would be given to HWFRS in the week commencing 5 January 2026. Work was ongoing to ensure that the Service was prepared for the inspection.

***RESOLVED that the Fire Authority note:***

- ***The progress made on the actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan and that further progress has been made up to the end of June 2025 (Q1); and***
- ***That the next HMICFRS inspection will commence in February 2026 and that preparations are underway.***

**0577 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee**

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 9 July 2025.

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 July 2025 be received and noted.***

The Meeting ended at: 11:57

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman