



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Full Authority

AGENDA

Wednesday, 26 June 2024

10:30

**Wyre Forest House Council Chamber
Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House,
Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 7WF**

Wyre Forest House Location Map

SAT NAV: DY11 7FB

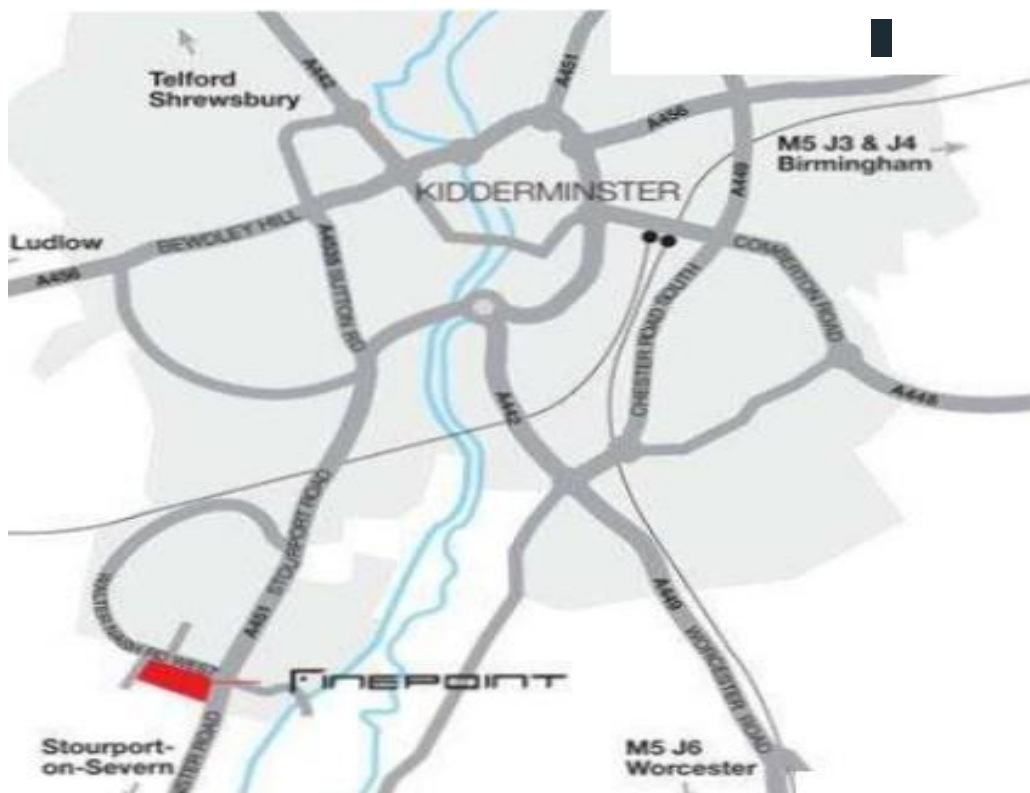
Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF
Reception at Wyre Forest House 01562 732101

From Stourport:

Head towards Kidderminster on the A451 Minster Road, passing Stourport High School and Stourport Sports Club on your left. When you reach the traffic lights at the crossroads, turn left into Walter Nash Road West (signposted Wyre Forest House). Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.

From Kidderminster:

From Kidderminster, follow the signs for Stourport and head out of Kidderminster on the A451 Stourport Road, this road becomes a dual carriageway. You will pass 24/7 Fitness and Wyre Forest Community Housing on your left. At the crossroads with traffic lights turn right into Walter Nash Road West (there is a dedicated right hand-turn lane), signposted for Wyre Forest House. Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.



ACCESS TO INFORMATION – YOUR RIGHTS. The press and public have the right to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. You have:

- the right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”;
- the right to film, record or report electronically on any meeting to which the public are admitted provided you do not do so in a manner that is disruptive to the meeting. **If you are present at a meeting of the Authority you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed or recorded by anyone exercising their rights under this paragraph;**
- the right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>);
- the right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees for up to six years following the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>); and
- the right to inspect background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.

Please note that when taking part in public participation, your name and a summary of what you say at the meeting may be included in the minutes.

A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public will be available at meetings of the Authority and Committees. If you have any queries regarding this agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of these rights of access to information please contact Committee & Members’ Services on 01905 368209 or by email at committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk.

WELCOME AND GUIDE TO TODAY’S MEETING. These notes are written to assist you to follow the meeting. Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are democratically elected representatives and they will be advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals. The Fire and Rescue Authority comprises 25 Councillors and appoints committees to undertake various functions on behalf of the Authority. There are 19 Worcestershire County Councillors on the Authority and 6 Herefordshire Council Councillors.

Agenda Papers - Attached is the Agenda which is a summary of the issues to be discussed and the related reports by Officers.

Chairman - The Chairman, who is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting, sits at the head of the table.

Officers - Accompanying the Chairman is the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authority who will advise on legal and procedural matters and record the proceedings. These include the Clerk and the Treasurer to the Authority.

The Business - The Chairman will conduct the business of the meeting. The items listed on the agenda will be discussed.

Decisions - At the end of the discussion on each item the Chairman will put any amendments or motions to the meeting and then ask the Councillors to vote. The Officers do not have a vote.



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 26 June 2024,10:30

Agenda

Councillors

Mr C B Taylor (Chairman), Mr R J Phillips (Vice Chairman), Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright-Greene, Mr D Boulter, Mr B Brookes, Mrs J Carwardine, Mr D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mr D Davies, Mr A Ditta, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mr J Kenyon, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Morris, Ms L Robinson, Ms D Toynbee, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

No.	Item	Pages
1	Election of Chairman To elect a Chairman of the Authority.	
2	Election of Vice Chairman To elect a Vice Chairman of the Authority.	
3	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	
4	Declarations of Interest (if any) This item allows the Chairman to invite any Councillor to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.	
5	Chairman's Announcements To update Members on recent activities.	

6	Public Participation	
	To allow a Member of the public to present a petition, ask a question or make a statement relating to any topic concerning the duties and powers of the Authority.	
	Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal Services in writing or by email indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation to be received no later than 2 clear working days before the meeting (in this case 21 June 2024). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.	
7	Confirmation of Minutes	1 - 28
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2024.	
8	Resource Review – Proposed Changes Following Consultation	29 - 43
	To provide the Authority with the responses from the Resource Review consultation process and to propose that the Authority decides upon the proposals being put forward in relation to the Resource Review.	
9	Appointment to Committees and Outside Bodies (LGA)	44 - 48
	To consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, the membership of those committees and appointments to outside bodies.	
10	Provisional Financial Out-turn 2023-24	49 - 63
	To receive provisional financial results 2023-24, to review Treasury Management activities and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code Indicators.	
11	Annual Service Review 2023-24	64 - 100
	To seek approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2023-24.	
12	Annual Service Plan 2024-25	101 - 118
	To seek approval for the draft Annual Service Plan 2024-25.	

13	His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Spotlight Report – Values & Culture Recommendations	119 - 131
	To update Members on the progress made against the recommendations from the 2023 HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Values & Culture in Fire and Rescue Services.	
14	Culture Statement of Intent	132 - 143
	To seek approval for the Culture Statement of Intent setting out the key ambitions for the Service’s (Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service - HWFRS) organisational culture.	
15	Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee	144 - 148
	To receive the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 17 April 2024.	
16	Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee	149 - 156
	To receive the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 6 March 2024 and 8 May 2024.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 13 February 2024, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Boatright-Greene, Mr D Boulter, Mr B Brookes, Mrs J Carwardine, Mr D Davies, Mr A Ditta, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mr J Kenyon, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Morris, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr C B Taylor, Ms D Toynbee, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

0466 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos, Cllr D Chambers, Cllr B Clayton, Cllr E Marshall, Cllr N McVey and Cllr J Monk.

0467 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 a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book).

0468 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman informed Members that the Resource Review was still on-going with the majority of comments received so far being very positive. Members were advised that any emails received from Union Representatives could be forwarded to the Chairman if they had any concerns.

[Cllr Tom Wells entered the meeting at 10.34am].

0469 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

0470 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that Cllr J Kenyon's name be added to the list of apologies for the meeting held on 12 December 2023 and that the minutes of that meeting otherwise be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0471 Budget and Precept 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25

The Treasurer presented the Budget and Precept 2024/25 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25.

Members were informed that at the time of writing the paper there were important pieces of information that remained unconfirmed which had now been provided. Members were therefore provided with an updated report at the meeting which included the Formula Grant Settlement, the Home Office Special Grants and the Business Rate Yields.

Members noted that there was an increase in the capital budget for new vehicle replacements due to the additional cost of electric vehicles now being introduced into the fleet.

With regard to Council tax, it was noted that the tax base had not increased as much as had been forecast (the new properties coming onto the tax base had slowed down as well as increases in the amount of Council tax support payable). The recommendation was that the precept be increased up to the referendum limit (2.99%) of £2.82, and thereafter it would be an assumption of 2% increase going forward.

Members thanked the Treasurer for a comprehensive report, particularly with the last minute information received.

RESOLVED that:

i) The Capital Strategy be approved;

ii) The Capital Budget and Programme (Appendix 1) be approved;

iii) The Core Net Revenue Budget of £43,587,600 (Appendix 10) be approved;

iv) The Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix 11) be approved;

a. Under the provisions of the relevant sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), in relation to the year 2024/25 the Authority calculates, as set out in Appendix 12, that:

i. S42A(2)(a): the aggregate expenditure it will incur will be £43,663,400.00.

ii. S42A(3)(a): the aggregate income it will receive will be £15,062,324.56.

iii. S42A(2)(c): the amount to be transferred to financial reserves will be £0.00.

iv. S42A(3)(b): the amount to be transferred from financial reserves will be £260,057.05.

v. S42A(10): the net Collection Fund surplus is £129,705.54.

vi. S42A(4): the net amount of its Council Tax Requirement will be £28,211,312.85.

vii. S42B: the Basic Amount of Council Tax will be £97.22 (Band D).

viii. S47: the proportional tax-bands will be:

- Band A £64.81***
- Band B £75.62***
- Band C £86.42***
- Band D £97.22***
- Band E £118.82***
- Band F £140.43***
- Band G £162.03***
- Band H £194.44***

ix. S48: the precept demands on the individual Billing Authorities are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>• Bromsgrove</i> | <i>£3,694,136.35</i> |
| <i>• Herefordshire</i> | <i>£6,999,836.99</i> |
| <i>• Malvern Hills</i> | <i>£3,212,843.88</i> |
| <i>• Redditch</i> | <i>£2,558,548.43</i> |
| <i>• Worcester</i> | <i>£3,208,454.40</i> |
| <i>• Wychavon</i> | <i>£5,144,320.40</i> |
| <i>• Wyre Forest</i> | <i>£3,393,172.40</i> |

v) The Reserves Strategy (Appendix 13) be approved;

vi) The Investment Strategy be approved;

vii) The fees and charges for 2024-25 (Appendix 7) be approved; and

viii) The Statement of Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue

Provision Policy (Appendix 8) as amended be approved.

0472 Pay Policy Statement

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the Pay Policy Statement for 2024-2025 and explained the legal requirement for the Authority to publish such a statement prior to the start of each financial year.

RESOLVED that that the Pay Policy Statement for 2024-2025 be approved and published on the Authority's website.

0473 Fire Alliance Update: Fire Control Project

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress of the Fire Alliance Fire Control Project.

Members were pleased to note that the development of the new joint fire control system had commenced and that the contract allowed for additional Fire Services to join the hub, if they wished. This could potentially provide greater cost savings as well as further enhance resilience with the addition of compatible Fire Service partners.

The Chief Fire Officer praised the work of Area Commander Maxine Laugher who had run this project with her excellent knowledge resulting in a very resilient tried and tested system that was already being used in the UK.

RESOLVED that Members noted the update, confirming the development of a new joint fire control system in partnership with Shropshire FRS, Cleveland FB and County Durham & Darlington FRS project had commenced.

0474 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan 2024-25

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the proposed actions relating to each area for improvement following receipt of the 2023 Inspection Report.

Members noted in particular that:

- Of the eleven assessment areas, the Service had achieved four ratings of 'good' and seven ratings of 'adequate'.
- There were no areas rated as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'.
- The report identified eleven Areas for Improvement.
- The Improvement Plan set out actions to address the Areas for

Improvement.

RESOLVED that the draft Improvement Plan in response to the Areas for Improvement highlighted in the HMICFRS inspection report 2023 be approved.

0475 Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25

The Head of Legal Services presented a proposal to increase the allowances paid to Members for 2023/24 in accordance with the previous decision that increases be linked to the National Joint Council annual pay award for 'Green Book' staff.

RESOLVED that:

i) the existing basic and special responsibility allowances paid to Members be increased by 3.88% for 2024/25, in line with the increase to additional allowances agreed as part of the NJC pay award for 'Green Book' Staff for 2023;

ii) the Dependent Carers' allowance be increased to £11.44 per hour in line with the national living wage; and

iii) the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 be approved.

0476 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee presented the minutes from the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 17 January 2024.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 17 January 2024 were received and noted.

0477 Announcements by the Chief Fire Officer

- Members were informed that following the recent cultural issues in South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Welsh Assembly had disbanded the South Wales Fire Authority and replaced its functions with 4 Commissioners.
- Members were also informed that a letter of condolences was sent from the Authority following the death of West Midlands Fire Service's

Chief Fire Officer.

The Meeting ended at: 11:26

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024**Capital Programme to 2026/27**

Col/ Row		(2) Approved Programme Feb 2023 £	(3) P&R Approved Changes £	(4) Approved Programme Nov 2023 £	(5) New Schemes £	(6) Proposed Realloc -ations £	(7) Balance Available 2024/25 £	(8) Expend- iture to 22/23 £	(9) Approved for Expd to 24/25 £	
Vehicle Programme										
1	Replacement Pumps (5)	20/21	1,332,563	1,332,563		(223,484)	1,109,079	1,109,079	0	
2	Replacement Water Carriers (2)	20/21	412,000	412,000		(412,000)	0		0	
3	Replacement RAV (1)	20/21	202,579	202,579		728	203,307	203,307	0	
4	Compact Appliance (1)	20/21	202,579	202,579		728	203,307	203,307	0	
5	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (2)	20/21	27,800	27,800		15,795	43,595		43,595	
6	Ancillary Fleet - Small Vans (2)	21/22	29,000	29,000		20,369	49,369		49,369	
7	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (2 now 3)	21/22	29,000	29,000		36,392	65,392		65,392	
8	Additional Van - Prevention (EMR)	22/23	26,000	26,000		(148)	25,852		25,852	
9	Replacement 4x4 (Pick-ups) (7)	22/23	210,000	210,000		(210,000)	0		0	
10	Lease buy out 4x4 (Pick-ups) (7)	23/24				53,540	53,540	53,540	0	
11	Replacement 4x4 (Argocat) (1)	22/23	35,000	35,000		(35,000)	0		0	
12	Replacement Response Vehicles (30)	22/23	1,165,000	99,191	1,264,191		1,264,191	1,264,191	0	
13	Incident Welfare Vehicles	22/23	80,000	80,000		119	80,119	80,119	0	
14	On-Call Recruitment Vans (EMR)	22/23	75,000	75,000		(6,508)	68,492	68,492	0	
15	Replacement Pumps (6)	23/24	1,747,000	1,747,000			1,747,000		1,747,000	
16	Replacement USAR crew-bus (1)	23/24	92,000	92,000		(92,000)	0		0	
17	Replacement 4x4 (LR) (2)	23/24	109,000	109,000		(109,000)	0		0	
18	Replacement Response Vehicles (6)	23/24	233,000	(99,191)	133,809		53,480		53,480	
19	Ancillary Fleet - BA Maintenance (1)	23/24	95,000	95,000			95,000		95,000	
20	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (11)	24/25	0	0	176,000	110,000	286,000		286,000	
21	Ancillary Fleet - Small Van (1)	24/25	0	0		26,000	26,000		26,000	
22	Ancillary Fleet - Small Vans (7)	24/25	0	0	112,000	70,000	182,000		182,000	
			6,102,521	0	6,102,521	288,000	(834,798)	5,555,723	2,982,035	2,573,688
Major Buildings Schemes										
23	Hereford FS - Preliminaries		250,000	335,510	585,510		585,510	337,912	247,598	
24	Wyre Forest Hub		7,273,000	(7,273,000)	0		0		0	
25	Redditch FS - Preliminaries		506,183	(506,183)	0		0		0	
26	Broadway FS		58,947	1,637,053	1,696,000		1,696,000	295,221	1,400,779	
27	North Herefordshire STF - Preliminaries		19,000	122,916	141,916		141,916	103,586	38,330	
			8,107,130	(5,683,704)	2,423,426	0	0	2,423,426	736,719	1,686,707
Major Equipment										
28	C&C Replacement - Residual	18/19	249,911	(249,911)	0		0		0	
29	MDT Replacement (from Reserve)	20/21	340,000	(340,000)	0		0		0	
30	BA Replacement (from Reserve)	23/24	0	1,250,000	1,250,000	50,000	1,300,000		1,300,000	
31			589,911	660,089	1,250,000	0	50,000	1,300,000	0	1,300,000
Minor Schemes (SMB allocation)										
32	Allocated	All	2,437,138	528,783	2,965,921		(53,699)	2,912,222	949,070	1,963,152
33	Un-allocated	22/23	166,211	(166,211)	0		0		0	
34	Un-allocated	23/24	600,000	(339,442)	260,558		53,699	314,257		314,257
35	Additional	23/24	115,000	(115,000)	0		0		0	
36	Un-allocated	24/25	0	0	600,000		600,000		600,000	
37			3,318,349	(91,870)	3,226,479	600,000	0	3,826,479	949,070	2,877,409
Future Buildings Provision: Individual scheme sums approved by Fire Authority, but not currently disclosed as contracts subject to tender etc.										
38	Other Building Schemes		12,757,334	(4,125,396)	8,631,938		8,631,938		8,631,938	
39			12,757,334	(4,125,396)	8,631,938	0	0	8,631,938	0	8,631,938
40	CAPITAL BUDGET		30,875,245	(9,240,881)	21,634,364	888,000	(784,798)	21,737,566	4,667,824	17,069,742
New Schemes 2024/25										
41	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (11)	24/25	176,000		176,000	(176,000)	0		0	
42	Ancillary Fleet - Small Vans (7)	24/25	112,000		112,000	(112,000)	0		0	
43	Un-allocated Minor Schemes	24/25	600,000		600,000	(600,000)	0		0	
			888,000	0	888,000	(888,000)	0		0	
New Schemes 2025/26										
44	Replacement Pumps (3)	25/26	927,000		927,000		927,000			
45	Replacement Pumps (additional 3)	25/26	0		0	927,000	927,000			
46	Replacement Water Carrier (1 now 3)	25/26	253,000		253,000	422,000	675,000			
47	Replacement ISV (1)	25/26	110,000		110,000	(110,000)	0	now 30/31		
48	Replacement EPU (1)	25/26	120,000		120,000		120,000			
49	Ancillary Fleet - Large Van (1)	25/26	30,000		30,000		30,000			
50	Ancillary Fleet - Small Van (1)	25/26	16,000		16,000	(16,000)	0			
51	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (7 now 2)	25/26	114,000		114,000	(58,800)	55,200			
52	Replacement USAR crew-bus (1)	25/26	0		0	97,600	97,600			
53	Replacement 4x4 (Argocat) (1)	25/26	0		0	38,200	38,200			
54	Un-allocated Minor Schemes	25/26	600,000		600,000		600,000			
55			2,170,000	0	2,170,000	0	1,300,000	3,470,000		
New Schemes 2026/27										
56	Ancillary 4x4 (Pick-ups) (7)	26/27				258,500	258,500			
57	Replacement Pumps (3)	26/27				955,000	(955,000)		0	
58	Replacement 4x4 (LR) (2 now 3)	26/27				49,200	98,300		147,500	
59	Ancillary Fleet - Cars (5)	26/27					142,000		142,000	
60	Replacement Response Vehicles (30)	26/27				1,383,800	1,383,800			
61	Replacement Pumps (7)	26/27				2,228,300	2,228,300			
62	Replacement ALPS (2)	26/27				1,792,000	1,792,000			
63	Hydraulic Rescue Equipment	26/27				1,100,000	1,100,000			
64	Un-allocated Minor Schemes	26/27				600,000	600,000			
65			0	0	0	8,108,300	(456,200)	7,652,100	to 24/25 17,069,742	
								25/26 3,470,000		
								26/27 7,652,100		
66	TOTAL APPROVED PROGRAMME		33,933,245	(9,240,881)	24,692,364	8,108,300	59,002	32,859,666	28,191,842	

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024**Revenue Budget 2024/25**

Col Row	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	
	Core Budget £	Financing £	from TIG Grant Reserve £	to Capital Projects Reserve £	to/(from) Bud Red. Reserve £	£	
1	2023/24 Approved Feb 2023	39,396,800	(40,114,700)	(46,000)	289,900	474,000	0
2	Adjustment agreed P&R Committee - May 2023 #	575,000	15,300			(590,300)	0
3	2023/24	39,971,800	(40,099,400)	(46,000)	289,900	(116,300)	0
4	Provision for April 2024 pay award	310,600					
5	Full Year Effect of Jul 2023 pay award	285,000					
6	Provison for Jul 2024 pay award (3%) - PYE	630,300					
7	General Inflation Provision	623,400					
8	Impact of new Fire Standards	65,000					
9	Increase in FFPS contribution rates	1,234,700					
10	Revised Audit Fees - new national contract	60,000					
11	Capital Programme	181,000					
12		3,390,000					
13	2023/24 Core Budget	43,361,800					
	Funding						
14	(RSG) Revenue Support Grant	(4,086,410)	to be confirmed				
15	(BRTUG) Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3,537,923)	to be confirmed				
16	S31 - under indexation of multiplier	(1,210,237)	to be confirmed				
17	Services Grant	(36,196)	to be confirmed				
18	Funding Guarantee Grant	(968,516)	to be confirmed				
19	(RSDG) Rural Services Delivery Grant	(148,984)	to be confirmed				
20	S31: 2024/25 Pension Grant	(1,160,000)	to be confirmed				
21	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - New Dimensions	(824,200)	to be confirmed				
22	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - Firelink	(91,000)	to be confirmed				
23	Council Tax Precept - with 3% increase	(28,211,313)					
24	Council Tax Collection Fund	(129,706)					
25	Business Rates baseline	(2,608,900)	awaiting data				
26	Local Forecasts (to NNDR1)	128,600	awaiting data				
27	S31 - Business Rate Reliefs	(671,200)	awaiting data				
28	Business Rate Collection Fund	50,000	awaiting data				
29	2023/24 Core Funding	(43,505,985)					
30	Balance	(144,185)					
31							
32							
33	To/(From) Budget Reduction Reserves	144,185					
34		0					

Adjustment agreed P&R Committee - May 2023 was to meet costs of final pay settlement agreed just after the Authority meeting and to account for late changes to business rate information, also notified after the Authority meeting and some time after the statutory deadline for data to be provided.

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Revenue Budget Allocation 2024/25

Col. Line	(2) 2023/24 Original Allocation £	(5) 2023/24 P&R May 2023 £	(3) 2023/24 P&R to Nov-23 £	(4) 2023/24 Base Allocation £	(5) 2024/25 Funding Changes £	(6) 2024/25 Appendix 2 Changes £	(7) 2024/25 Total Allocation £
1	14,056,500		1,071,700	15,128,200		942,100	16,070,300
2	4,145,900		435,700	4,581,600		292,600	4,874,200
3	915,700		100,100	1,015,800			1,015,800
4	4,929,000		435,600	5,364,600			5,364,600
5	90,000			90,000			90,000
6	1,035,000			1,035,000			1,035,000
7	25,172,100	0	2,043,100	27,215,200	0	1,234,700	28,449,900
8	107,600		1,100	108,700			108,700
9	55,300		6,900	62,200			62,200
10	41,100		(600)	40,500			40,500
11	47,000		(7,500)	39,500			39,500
12	289,700		700	290,400			290,400
13	679,800		(81,300)	598,500			598,500
14	1,149,300		233,500	1,382,800			1,382,800
15	650,600		32,900	683,500			683,500
16	2,379,100		(117,500)	2,261,600			2,261,600
17	461,500		(7,000)	454,500			454,500
18	(99,700)		1,500	(98,200)			(98,200)
19	2,091,900		128,500	2,220,400			2,220,400
20	81,600		3,300	84,900			84,900
21	48,200		200	48,400			48,400
22	513,400		111,600	625,000		65,000	690,000
23	59,200		(900)	58,300			58,300
24	39,000		700	39,700			39,700
25	447,100		9,500	456,600			456,600
26	140,700		1,000	141,700			141,700
27	88,200		3,400	91,600		60,000	151,600
28	9,270,600	0	320,000	9,590,600	0	125,000	9,715,600
29	2,833,000			2,833,000		181,000	3,014,000
30	2,833,000	0	0	2,833,000	0	181,000	3,014,000
31	281,100		(281,100)	0			0
32	674,800	485,000	(1,159,800)	0			0
33	243,000	90,000		333,000			333,000
34	602,200		(602,200)	0			0
35	0			0		285,000	285,000
36	0			0		310,600	310,600
37	0			0		630,300	630,300
38	320,000		(320,000)	0			0
39	0			0		623,400	623,400
40	2,121,100	575,000	(2,363,100)	333,000	0	1,849,300	2,182,300
41	39,396,800	575,000	0	39,971,800	0	3,390,000	43,361,800
42	(2,361,600)			(2,361,600)	(1,724,810)		(4,086,410)
42	(3,401,700)			(3,401,700)	(136,223)		(3,537,923)
42	(1,005,100)			(1,005,100)	(205,137)		(1,210,237)
42	(220,900)	(9,100)		(230,000)	193,804		(36,196)
42	(114,000)	22,600		(91,400)	(877,116)		(968,516)
42	(114,500)	(13,500)		(128,000)	(20,984)		(148,984)
42	(1,568,000)			(1,568,000)	408,000		(1,160,000)
42	0			0	0		0
42	(820,000)	(4,200)		(824,200)	0		(824,200)
42	(136,500)			(136,500)	45,500		(91,000)
42	(27,216,300)			(27,216,300)	(995,013)		(28,211,313)
42	(29,700)			(29,700)	(100,006)		(129,706)
42	(2,498,800)			(2,498,800)	(110,100)		(2,608,900)
42	101,700	19,700		121,400	7,200		128,600
42	(634,100)	(9,100)		(643,200)	(28,000)		(671,200)
42	(95,200)	8,900		(86,300)	136,300		50,000
58	(40,114,700)	15,300	0	(40,099,400)	(3,406,585)	0	(43,505,985)
59	(717,900)	590,300	0	(127,600)	(3,406,585)	3,390,000	(144,185)
60	(46,000)			(46,000)	46,000		0
61	289,900			289,900	(289,900)		0
62	0			0		144,185	144,185
63	243,900	0	0	243,900	(243,900)	144,185	144,185
64	(474,000)	590,300	0	116,300	(3,650,485)	3,534,185	0

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Medium Term Financial Forecasts

Col Row	(2) 2024/25 Budget	(3) 2025/26 Forecast	(4) 2026/27 Forecast
1		2.00%	2.00%
2		2.00%	2.00%
3	0.65%	1.06%	1.06%
4	2.99%	1.99%	1.99%
5	£ 39,971,800	£ 39,971,800	£ 39,971,800
6	310,600	310,600	310,600
7		119,200	119,200
8			121,500
9	285,000	285,000	285,000
10	630,300	843,500	847,900
11		324,600	432,800
12			331,100
13	623,400	930,000	1,245,500
14	65,000	65,000	65,000
15	1,234,700	1,259,400	1,284,600
16	60,000	60,000	60,000
17		(40,000)	(40,000)
18	181,000	381,000	581,000
19			170,000
20	43,361,800	44,510,100	45,786,000
	Funding		
21	(4,086,410)	(4,168,100)	(4,251,500)
22	(3,537,923)	(3,608,700)	(3,680,900)
23	(1,210,237)	(1,234,400)	(1,259,100)
24	(36,196)	(36,900)	(37,600)
25	(968,516)	(987,900)	(1,007,700)
26	(148,984)	(152,000)	(155,000)
27	(1,160,000)	(1,160,000)	(1,183,200)
28	(824,200)	(824,200)	(824,200)
29	(91,000)	(46,000)	0
30	(28,211,313)	(29,077,600)	(29,976,500)
31	(129,706)	0	0
32	(2,608,900)	(2,661,100)	(2,714,300)
33	128,600	131,200	133,800
34	(671,200)	(684,600)	(698,300)
35	50,000	50,000	50,000
36	(43,505,985)	(44,460,300)	(45,604,500)
37	(144,185)	49,800	181,500
38	0	0	0
39	(144,185)	49,800	181,500
40	144,185	(49,800)	(181,500)
41	0	0	0

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024 Medium Term Financial Forecasts - Potential Impacts

Col Row	(2) 2024/25 Budget £	(3) 2025/26 Forecast £	(4) 2026/27 Forecast £
1	(144,185)	49,800	181,500
	Potential for Investment		
	The MTFP is based on increasing Council Tax by 1.99% in 2025/26 and 2026/27 as was indicated to be the referendum limit. Indications are that this limit will rise to 2.99%		
2		(296,500)	(305,600)
3			(308,600)
4	(144,185)	(246,700)	(432,700)
	But Potential Cost Risks		
5		164,000	390,600
6		59,500	62,600
7	(144,185)	(23,200)	20,500

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024 Council Tax Requirement Calculation 2024/25

	2024/25 Expenditure	2024/25 Income	
Core Budget	£43,437,600.00	(£75,800.00)	£43,361,800.00 Core
Less: Formula/Support Grants:			
(RSG) Revenue Support Grant		(£4,086,410.07)	
(BRTUG) Business Rate Top Up Grant		(£3,537,922.77)	
Services Grant		(£36,196.12)	
Funding Guarantee Grant		(£968,516.00)	
S31: Under-indexation of multiplier		(£1,210,231.66)	
Less: Other Grants			
(RSDG) Rural Services Delivery Grant		(£148,984.00)	
S31: Fire Revenue Grant (New Dimensions)		(£824,200.00)	
S31: Fire Revenue Grant (Firelink)		(£91,000.00)	
S31: 2024/25 Pension Grant		(£1,160,000.00)	
Less: Retained Share of Business Rates (1%)			
Business Rates baseline		(£2,602,892.02)	
Local Forecasts (to NNDR1)		£122,592.02	
S31 - Business Rate Reliefs		(£671,200.00)	
Business Rate Collection Fund		£50,000.00	
	£43,437,600.00		£43,437,600.00 S42A (2)(a)
		(£15,240,760.62)	(£15,240,760.62) S42A (3)(a)
Reserves Movements			
to/(from) budget reduction reserve	£144,185.00		<i>Balancing item until final figures known</i>
	£144,185.00		£144,185.00 S42A (2)(c)
		£0.00	£0.00 S42A (3)(b)
GROSS PRECEPT			£28,341,024.38
Less: Collection Fund Deficits/(Surpluses)			
Bromsgrove		(£17,875.34)	
Herefordshire		£0.00	
Malvern Hills		£0.00	
Redditch		(£33,705.20)	
Worcester		(£5,062.00)	
Wychavon		(£106,247.00)	
Wyre Forest		£33,184.00	
Total Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus)			(£129,705.54) S42A (10)
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT			£28,211,318.84 S42A (4)
Tax-base : Band D Equivalent			
Bromsgrove		37,997.70	
Herefordshire		71,999.97	
Malvern Hills		33,047.15	
Redditch		26,317.10	
Worcester		33,002.00	
Wychavon		52,914.22	
Wyre Forest		34,902.00	290,180.14
Precept - Band D Equivalent			£97.220019
Band D (rounded to 2 decimal places)			£ 97.22 S42B
Equivalent to Tax at Band (Ratio to Band D)	2023/24	increase	2024/25
A 6/9	£ 62.9300	2.99%	£ 64.8100 S47
B 7/9	£ 73.4200	3.00%	£ 75.6200 S47
C 8/9	£ 83.9100	2.99%	£ 86.4200 S47
D 9/9	£ 94.4000	2.99%	£ 97.2200 S47
E 11/9	£ 115.3800	2.98%	£ 118.8200 S47
F 13/9	£ 136.3600	2.98%	£ 140.4300 S47
G 15/9	£ 157.3300	2.99%	£ 162.0300 S47
H 18/9	£ 188.8000	2.99%	£ 194.4400 S47
Total Precept on Billing Authorities S48			
Bromsgrove			£3,694,137.14 S48
Herefordshire			£6,999,838.48 S48
Malvern Hills			£3,212,844.56 S48
Redditch			£2,558,548.97 S48
Worcester			£3,208,455.08 S48
Wychavon			£5,144,321.49 S48
Wyre Forest			£3,393,173.12 S48
			£28,211,318.84
			£0.00

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Reserves Strategy

Col	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Row		Actual at	Probable	Budget	MTFP	MTFP	MTFP	Estimate at
		31-Mar-23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	31-Mar-28
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
	<u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u>							
1	Capital Projects Reserve	3.388	(0.872)	(1.645)	(0.870)			0.001
2	C&C Reserve	1.448	(0.473)	(0.643)				0.332
3	ICT Replacements Reserve	1.239	(0.464)	(0.419)	(0.061)	(0.023)	(0.045)	0.227
4	ESMCP Reserve	1.032					(1.032)	0.000
5	RPE Reserve	1.000	(0.261)	(0.700)	(0.039)			0.000
6	On Call Recruitment Reserve	0.671	(0.463)	(0.090)	(0.090)	(0.025)		0.003
7	Organisational Excellence Reserve	0.558	(0.292)	(0.200)	(0.014)			0.052
8	Property Maintenance Reserve	0.534	(0.090)	(0.148)	(0.148)	(0.148)		0.000
9	Pension Tribunal Reserve	0.400						0.400
10	Development Reserve	0.310	(0.056)	(0.056)				0.198
11	Sustainability Reserve	0.286	(0.286)					0.000
12	Pensions Reserve	0.244	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.039)	0.000
13	Protection Grants Reserve	0.228	(0.012)	(0.195)	(0.021)			(0.000)
14	Fire Prevention Reserve	0.157	(0.123)	(0.034)				0.000
15	Equipment Reserve	0.189						0.189
16	Safety Initiatives Reserve	0.138			(0.144)	0.006		0.000
17		11.822	(3.441)	(4.181)	(1.439)	(0.243)	(1.116)	1.402
	<u>Other Specific Reserves</u>							
18	Operational Activity Reserve	0.600						0.600
19	Insurance Excess Reserve	0.130						0.130
20		0.730	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.730
	<u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u>							
21	Budget Reduction Reserve	1.732	(0.116)					1.616
22	TIG Reserve	0.046	(0.046)					0.000
23		1.778	(0.162)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.616
24	Total Earmarked Reserves	14.330	(3.603)	(4.181)	(1.439)	(0.243)	(1.116)	3.748
25	General (Un-earmarked) Reserves	1.538						1.538
26	Total Reserves	15.868	(3.603)	(4.181)	(1.439)	(0.243)	(1.116)	5.286
	<u>Earmarked Reserves</u>	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-26	31-Mar-27	31-Mar-28	
27	This MTFP	14.330	10.727	6.546	5.107	4.864	3.748	
28	MTFP - Feb 2023	14.142	9.103	4.695	4.622	3.563	n/a	

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Fees & Charges for 2024/25

		2023/24		
		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Attendance by pumping appliance (inclusive of crew)		£ 275.00	£ 55.00	£ 330.00
Attendance by special appliance (inclusive of crew)		£ 365.83	£ 73.17	£ 439.00
Attendance by ancillary vehicles		£ 92.50	£ 18.50	£ 111.00
High Volume Pump (HVP) deployment and recovery		£ 1,367.50	£ 273.50	£1,641.00
And per hour		£ 430.83	£ 86.17	£ 517.00
Attendance by personnel: (per hour)				
- Firefighter, Crew and Watch Commander		£ 41.67	£ 8.33	£ 50.00
- Station Commander		£ 48.33	£ 9.67	£ 58.00
- Officers above Station Commander		£ 55.83	£ 11.17	£ 67.00
- Others, support staff, mechanics		£ 20.83	£ 4.17	£ 25.00
Interviewing officers x rate of role				
Costs of travel and subsistence incurred		£ 190.83	£ 38.17	£ 229.00

		2024/25		
		NET	VAT	TOTAL
	Increase			
Attendance by pumping appliance (inclusive of crew)	7.0%	£ 294.17	£ 58.83	£ 353.00
Attendance by special appliance (inclusive of crew)	6.8%	£ 390.83	£ 78.17	£ 469.00
Attendance by ancillary vehicles	7.2%	£ 99.17	£ 19.83	£ 119.00
High Volume Pump (HVP) deployment and recovery	7.0%	£1,463.33	£292.67	£1,756.00
And per hour	6.8%	£ 460.00	£ 92.00	£ 552.00
Attendance by personnel: (per hour)				
- Firefighter, Crew and Watch Commander	8.0%	£ 45.00	£ 9.00	£ 54.00
- Station Commander	6.9%	£ 51.67	£ 10.33	£ 62.00
- Officers above Station Commander	6.0%	£ 59.17	£ 11.83	£ 71.00
- Others, support staff, mechanics	8.0%	£ 22.50	£ 4.50	£ 27.00
Interviewing officers x rate of role				
Costs of travel and subsistence incurred	7.0%	£ 204.17	£ 40.83	£ 245.00

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority **Statement of Prudential Indicators & Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy**

Introduction: Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to provide a code of practice to underpin the system of capital finance embodied in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Prudential Code supports a system of self-regulation that is achieved by the setting and monitoring of a suite of Prudential Indicators that directly relate to each other. The indicators establish parameters within which the Fire Authority should operate to ensure the objectives of the Prudential Code are met.

Introduction: Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

This is the amount charged every year to provide for the repayment of long-term loans used to finance capital assets.

Under provisions of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Amendment) Regulations 2008, the FRA is required to “determine an amount of MRP which is considered to be prudent”.

The Fire Authority has a statutory requirement to determine an MRP policy prior to the start of the financial year.

In considering a prudent MRP policy the Fire Authority needs to take into account the statutory guidance provided by government, and the issue of affordability. The guidance states that “provision for the borrowing which financed the acquisition of an asset should be made over a period bearing some relation to that over which the asset continues to provide a service” – the “Asset Life” method.

Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Indicators for which the Fire Authority is sets limits are as follows:

1. Net Borrowing and the Capital Financing Requirement

This Prudential Indicator provides an overarching requirement that all the indicators operate within and is described in the Prudential Code as follows:

“In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years”.

The Treasurer reports that the Fire Authority had no difficulty meeting this requirement since 2002/03, nor are any difficulties envisaged for the current or future years. This view considers all plans and commitments included in the 2024/25 Budget and MTFP.

2 Capital Expenditure

The actual amount of capital expenditure that was incurred since 2023/24, and the estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years that are proposed in the 2024/25 Budget and MTFP are:

	2023/24 Estimate £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Capital Expenditure	3,270	8,870	7,985	6,636

2. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Financing Costs include the amount of interest payable in respect of borrowing or other long term liabilities and the amount the Fire Authority is required to set aside to repay debt, less interest and investments income.

The actual Net Revenue Stream is the ‘amount to be met from government grants and local taxation’ taken from the annual Statement of Accounts, and the estimated figure is the Fire and Rescue Authority’s budget net of any transfers to or from the balances.

The prediction of the Net Revenue Stream in this Prudential Indicator for future years assumes increases in the Fire Authority’s funding from government and the local taxpayer consistent with expectations in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This is indicative only and in no way meant to influence the actual future years funding or in particular the funding from Precepts.

The indicator only requires that the costs associated with capital expenditure are measured in this way. However, the Fire Authority has used, and may continue to use Operational Leasing as a cost-effective method of acquiring vehicles. At the current time these leasing costs are minimal. In the spirit of the Prudential Code these costs are included for comparative purposes.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Financing Costs	2,583	3,014	3,214	3,584
Net Revenue Stream	40,115	43,506	44,460	45,606
Ratio	6.44%	6.93%	7.23%	7.86%

3. Capital Financing Requirement

The capital financing requirement (CFR) is a measure of the extent to which the Fire Authority needs to borrow to support capital expenditure. It does not necessarily relate to the actual amount of borrowing at any one point in time. The Fire Authority arranges its treasury management activity via the arrangement with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) which has an integrated treasury management strategy where there is no distinction between revenue and capital cash flows and the day to day position of external borrowing and investments can change constantly.

The capital financing requirement concerns only those transactions arising from capital spending, whereas the amount of external borrowing is a consequence of all revenue and capital cash transactions combined together following recommended treasury management practice.

Estimates of the end of year capital financing requirement are shown below.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£000	£000	£000	£000
CFR at 31st March	19,952	20,873	22,949	26,834

4. Authorised Limit

The Authorised Limit represents an upper limit of borrowing that could be afforded in the short term but may not be sustainable. This limit includes a risk assessment of exceptional events taking into account the demands of revenue and capital cash flows. The Authorised Limit gauges events that may occur over and above those transactions which have been included in the Operational Boundary.

These limits are higher than set in previous years to reflect the decisions taken by the Fire Authority to switch from leasing to more cost effective borrowing for the acquisition of operational vehicles.

The Fire Authority should note that the Authorised Limit represents the limit specified in section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003 (Duty to determine affordable borrowing limit).

The following Authorised Limits for external debt, excluding temporary investments are recommended:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Authorized Limit	£000	£000	£000	£000
External Borrowing	27,000	28,000	30,000	34,000

5. Operational Boundary

The Operational Boundary represents an estimate of the most likely, prudent, but not worst case scenario and provides a parameter against which day to day treasury management activity can be monitored.

The Treasurer reports that procedures are in place to monitor the Operational Boundary on a daily basis and that sufficient authorisation is in place to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that, in line with the Treasury Management Strategy, the cash flows of the Fire Authority are managed prudently.

Occasionally, the Operational Boundary may be exceeded (but still not breach the Authorised Limit) following variations in cash flow. Such an occurrence would follow controlled treasury management action and may not have a significant impact on the prudential indicators when viewed all together.

Both the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary include an element relating to debt restructuring where, for the short term only, external borrowing may be made in advance of the repayment of loans. In this circumstance External Borrowing is increased temporarily until the replaced loans are repaid. The converse can also apply where loans are repaid in advance of borrowings.

The following limits (shown overleaf) for each year's Operational Boundary, excluding temporary investments are recommended:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Operational Boundary	£000	£000	£000	£000
External Borrowing	23,000	24,000	27,000	31,000

6. Actual External Debt

The Fire Authority's actual external debt as at 31 March 2023 was £9.046m; comprising only actual External Borrowing and no Other Long Term Liabilities. During 2023/24, £0.211m of borrowing will be repaid.

7. Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions on Council Tax

This indicator identifies specifically the additional cost to the taxpayer of the **new** capital investment proposed in the 2024/25 to 2026/27 Capital Programme. As the indicator deals only with new investment the impact of the previously approved programme was included in the equivalent report provided to the Fire Authority in Feb 2023.

The incremental impact identifies transactions that will occur **over and above** what has already been provided for in the 2023/24 revenue budget and projected in the MTFP and assumes the funding available in 2023/24 will be carried forward in the future year's base budgets.

The incremental impact has been calculated using forward estimates of funding consistent with expectations in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The impact on the revenue budget, and therefore the Council Tax, is felt by a combination of the following: debt costs of the new borrowing, the amount set aside from revenue to repay the principal element of external borrowing (Minimum Revenue Provision) and the revenue impact of a capital project

It should be noted that borrowing itself does not fund capital expenditure since the loans have to be repaid eventually. The actual funding comes from the Minimum Revenue Provision which is statutorily charged to revenue each year.

The estimate of the incremental impact of the capital investment detailed in the 2024/25 Budget on the Council Tax is as follows:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2025/27
Incremental Impact on Band D	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 0.82

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR TREASURY MANAGEMENT

8. Treasury Management Code of Practice

The Fire Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA): Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.

The Treasury Management function is carried out on behalf of the Authority by Worcestershire County Council, who have also adopted the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

9. Fixed Interest Rate Exposures

It is recommended that the Fire Authority sets an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures as follows.

Upper limits for net principal sums outstanding at fixed rates

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	£000	£000	£000	£000
Upper Limit	27,000	28,000	30,000	34,000

This represents the position that all of the Fire Authority's authorised external borrowing may be at a fixed rate at any one time.

10. Variable Interest Rate Exposures

It is recommended that the Fire Authority sets an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures as follows.

Upper limits for net principal sums outstanding at variable rates

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26
Variable Interest Rate Exposure	£000	£000	£000	£000
Upper Limit	7,000	7,000	8,000	9,000

This is the maximum external borrowing judged prudent by the Treasurer that the Fire Authority should expose to variable rates.

11. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

It is recommended that the upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings are as follows:

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate.

Period of Maturity	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
	%	%
Under 12 months	25	0
12 months and within 24 months	25	0
24 months and within 5 years	50	0
5 years and within 10 years	75	0
10 years and above	95	25

12. Investments for longer than 364 days

It is recommended that the upper limits of total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days are £5 million for each year.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

To continue the policy previously adopted i.e.:

1. Vehicle Expenditure before 2008/09 – MRP on a proxy Asset Life basis using original cost, less cumulative MRP, over the remaining useful life of the individual vehicle types.
2. Expenditure before 2008/09, (other than vehicles) - MRP on a proxy Asset Life basis using original cost, less cumulative MRP over average asset life as above
3. All expenditure from 2008/09 onwards - MRP using an Asset life basis:
 - Buildings over 50 years – per depreciation policy (or a shorter period taking account of remaining useful life);
 - IT equipment over 5 years - reflecting average life
 - Other Equipment over 7 years – reflecting actual average usage within the FRS;
 - Vehicles – on actual estimated life of each vehicle type

This means that after a specified time (depending on the life expectancy of the individual asset) there will be no further charge to the Revenue Account for MRP in relation to these assets. For a significant proportion of pre-2008/09 assets this point had been reached by 2014/15, but a residual annual charge of £0.150m will be chargeable annually until 2057/58.

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Amended Revenue Budget 2024/25

Col Row	(2) Core Budget £	(3) Financing £	(4) from TIG Grant Reserve £	(5) to Capital Projects Reserve £	(6) to/(from) Bud Red. Reserve £	(7) £	
1	2023/24 Approved Feb 2023	39,396,800	(40,114,700)	(46,000)	289,900	474,000	0
2	Adjustment agreed P&R Committee - May 2023 #	575,000	15,300			(590,300)	0
3	2023/24	39,971,800	(40,099,400)	(46,000)	289,900	(116,300)	0
		Provisional		Change		Final	
4	Provision for April 2024 pay award	310,600				310,600	
5	Full Year Effect of Jul 2023 pay award	285,000				285,000	
6	Provison for Jul 2024 pay award (4%) - PYE	630,300				630,300	
7	General Inflation Provision	623,400				623,400	
7a	Additional Expenditure - Protection	0			146,200	146,200	X
7b	Potential Additional Pensions Admin Costs	0			79,600	79,600	X
8	Impact of new Fire Standards	65,000				65,000	
9	Increase in FFPS contribution rates	1,234,700				1,234,700	
10	Revised Audit Fees - new national contract	60,000				60,000	
11	Capital Programme	181,000				181,000	
12		3,390,000		0	225,800	3,615,800	
13	2023/24 Core Budget	43,361,800		0	225,800	43,587,600	
	Funding						
14	(RSG) Revenue Support Grant	(4,086,410)		0		(4,086,410)	
15	(BRTUG) Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3,537,923)		0		(3,537,923)	
16	S31 - under indexation of multiplier	(1,210,237)		0		(1,210,237)	
17	Services Grant	(36,196)		(3,515)		(39,711)	X
18	Funding Guarantee Grant	(968,516)		66,815		(901,701)	X
19	(RSDG) Rural Services Delivery Grant	(148,984)		0		(148,984)	
20	S31: 2024/25 Pension Grant	(1,160,000)		27,372		(1,132,628)	X
21	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - New Dimensions	(824,200)		24		(824,176)	X
22	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - Firelink	(91,000)		18,492		(72,508)	X
22a	S31 - One-Off Pension Admin Grant	0			(79,642)	(79,642)	X
22b	S31 - One-Off Protections Grant	0			(146,204)	(146,204)	X
23	Council Tax Precept - with 3% increase	(28,211,313)				(28,211,313)	
24	Council Tax Collection Fund	(129,706)				(129,706)	
25	Business Rates baseline	(2,608,900)		6,000		(2,602,900)	
26	Local Forecasts (to NNDR1)	128,600		29,700		158,300	
27	S31 - Business Rate Reliefs	(671,200)		94,000		(577,200)	
28	Business Rate Collection Fund	50,000		165,400		215,400	
29	2023/24 Core Funding	(43,505,985)		404,288	(225,846)	(43,327,543)	
30	Balance	(144,185)		404,288	(46)	260,057	
31							
32							
33	To/(From) Budget Reduction Reserves	144,185		(404,288)	46	(260,057)	
34		0		0	0	0	

Adjustment agreed P&R Committee - May 2023 was to meet costs of final pay settlement agreed just after the Authority meeting and to account for late changes to business rate information, also notified after the Authority meeting and some time after the statutory deadline for data to be provided.

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Amended Revenue Budget Allocation 2024/25

Col. Line	(7) 2024/25 Total Allocation £	(8) Late Funding Changes £	(9) 2024/25 Total Allocation £
1	16,070,300		16,070,300
2	4,874,200		4,874,200
3	1,015,800		1,015,800
4	5,364,600		5,364,600
5	90,000		90,000
6	1,035,000		1,035,000
7	28,449,900	0	28,449,900
8	108,700		108,700
9	62,200		62,200
10	40,500		40,500
11	39,500		39,500
12	290,400		290,400
13	598,500		598,500
14	1,382,800		1,382,800
15	683,500		683,500
16	2,261,600		2,261,600
17	454,500		454,500
18	(98,200)		(98,200)
19	2,220,400		2,220,400
20	84,900		84,900
21	48,400		48,400
22	690,000		690,000
23	58,300		58,300
24	39,700		39,700
25	456,600		456,600
26	141,700		141,700
27	151,600		151,600
27a	0	146,200	146,200
27b	0	79,600	79,600
28	9,715,600	225,800	9,941,400
29	3,014,000		3,014,000
30	3,014,000	0	3,014,000
33	333,000		333,000
35	285,000		285,000
36	310,600		310,600
37	630,300		630,300
39	623,400		623,400
40	2,182,300	0	2,182,300
41	43,361,800	225,800	43,587,600
42	(4,086,410)		(4,086,410)
43	(3,537,923)		(3,537,923)
44	(1,210,237)		(1,210,237)
45	(36,196)	(3,515)	(39,711)
46	(968,516)	66,815	(901,701)
47	(148,984)		(148,984)
49	(1,160,000)	27,372	(1,132,628)
50	(824,200)	24	(824,176)
51	(91,000)	18,492	(72,508)
51a	0	(79,642)	(79,642)
51b	0	(146,204)	(146,204)
52	(28,211,313)	0	(28,211,313)
53	(129,706)	0	(129,706)
54	(2,608,900)	6,000	(2,602,900)
55	128,600	29,700	158,300
56	(671,200)	94,000	(577,200)
57	50,000	165,400	215,400
58	(43,505,985)	178,442	(43,327,543)
59	(144,185)	404,242	260,057
62	144,185	(404,242)	(260,057)
63	144,185	(404,242)	(260,057)
64	0	0	(0)

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024 Amended Medium Term Financial Forecasts

Col Row		(2) 2024/25 Budget	(3) 2025/26 Forecast	(4) 2026/27 Forecast
1	Assumed Business Rate increase		2.00%	2.00%
2	Assumed Increase in funding Grants		2.00%	2.00%
3	Assumed Tax-base Increase	0.65%	1.06%	1.06%
4	Assumed Band D Tax Increase	2.99%	1.99%	1.99%
		£	£	£
5	2023/24 CORE BUDGET	39,971,800	39,971,800	39,971,800
6	Provision for April 2024 pay award	310,600	310,600	310,600
7	Provision for April 2025 pay award (2%)		119,200	119,200
8	Provision for April 2026 pay award (2%)			121,500
9	Full Year Effect of Jul 2023 pay award	285,000	285,000	285,000
10	Provison for Jul 2024 pay award (4%)	630,300	843,500	847,900
11	Provison for Jul 2025 pay award (2%)		324,600	432,800
12	Provison for Jul 2026 pay award (2%)			331,100
13	General Inflation Provision	623,400	930,000	1,245,500
14	Impact of new Fire Standards	65,000	65,000	65,000
15	Increase in FFPS contribution rates	1,234,700	1,259,400	1,284,600
16	Revised Audit Fees - new national contract	60,000	60,000	60,000
17	Ill Health Pension Charges reduction		(40,000)	(40,000)
17a	Additional Expenditure - Protection	146,200		X
17b	Potential Additional Pensions Admin Costs	79,600		X
18	Capital Programme	181,000	381,000	581,000
19	Capital Programme - additional costs of Hereford FS			170,000
20	GROSS BUDGET	43,587,600	44,510,100	45,786,000
	Funding			
21	(RSG) Revenue Support Grant	(4,086,410)	(4,168,100)	(4,251,500)
22	(BRTUG) Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3,537,923)	(3,608,700)	(3,680,900)
23	S31 - under indexation of multiplier	(1,210,237)	(1,234,400)	(1,259,100)
24	Services Grant	(39,711)	(40,500)	(41,300) X
25	Funding Guarantee Grant	(901,701)	(919,700)	(938,100) X
26	(RSDG) Rural Services Delivery Grant	(148,984)	(152,000)	(155,000)
27	S31: 2024/25 Pension Grant	(1,132,628)	(1,132,600)	(1,183,200) X
28	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - New Dimensions	(824,176)	(824,200)	(824,200)
29	S31: Fire Revenue Grant - Firelink	(72,508)	(35,000)	0 X
29a	S31 - One-Off Pension Admin Grant	(79,642)		X
29b	S31 - One-Off Protections Grant	(146,204)		X
30	Council Tax Precept - with 3% increase	(28,211,313)	(29,077,600)	(29,976,500)
31	Council Tax Collection Fund	(129,706)	0	0
32	Business Rates baseline	(2,602,900)	(2,655,000)	(2,708,100)
33	Local Forecasts (to NNDR1)	158,300	161,500	164,700
34	S31 - Business Rate Reliefs	(577,200)	(588,700)	(600,500)
35	Business Rate Collection Fund	215,400	50,000	50,000
36	PROJECTED RESOURCES	(43,327,543)	(44,225,000)	(45,403,700)
37	Balance	260,057	285,100	382,300
38	Potential to/(from) Use of Budget Reduction Reserve	(260,057)	(285,100)	(382,300) X
39		(260,057)	(285,100)	(382,300)

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Amended Medium Term Financial Forecasts - Potential Impacts

Col Row	(2) 2024/25 Budget £	(3) 2025/26 Forecast £	(4) 2026/27 Forecast £
1	260,057	285,100	382,300
	Deficit/(Surplus) from Appendix 4		
	Potential for Investment		
	The MTFP is based on increasing Council Tax by 1.99% in 2025/26 and 2026/27 as was indicated to be the referendum limit. Indications are that this limit will rise to 2.99%		
2		(296,500)	(305,600)
3			(308,600)
4	260,057	(11,400)	(231,900)
	But Potential Cost Risks		
5		164,000	390,600
6		59,500	62,600
7	260,057	212,100	221,300

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Amended Council Tax Requirement Calculation 2024/25

	2024/25 Expenditure	2024/25 Income	
Core Budget	£43,663,400.00	(£75,800.00)	£43,587,600.00 Core
Less: Formula/Support Grants:			
(RSG) Revenue Support Grant		(£4,086,410.07)	
(BRTUG) Business Rate Top Up Grant		(£3,537,922.77)	
Services Grant		(£39,710.75)	
Funding Guarantee Grant		(£901,700.99)	
S31: Under-indexation of multiplier		(£1,210,231.66)	
Less: Other Grants			
(RSDG) Rural Services Delivery Grant		(£148,984.00)	
S31: Fire Revenue Grant (New Dimensions)		(£824,175.81)	
S31: Fire Revenue Grant (Firelink)		(£72,507.87)	
S31: 2024/25 Pension Grant		(£1,132,628.22)	
S31: One-Off Pension Admin Grant		(£79,641.73)	
S31: One-Off Protections Grant		(£146,203.69)	
Less: Retained Share of Business Rates (1%)			
Business Rates baseline		(£2,602,892.02)	
Local Forecasts (to NNDR1)		£158,275.02	
S31 - Business Rate Reliefs		(£577,154.00)	
Business Rate Collection Fund		£215,364.00	
	£43,663,400.00		£43,663,400.00 S42A (2)(a)
		(£15,062,324.56)	(£15,062,324.56) S42A (3)(a)
Reserves Movements			
to/(from) budget reduction reserve	(£260,057.05)		
	(£260,057.05)		(£260,057.05) S42A (2)(c)
		£0.00	£0.00 S42A (3)(b)
GROSS PRECEPT			£28,341,018.39
Less: Collection Fund Deficits/(Surpluses)			
Bromsgrove		(£17,875.34)	
Herefordshire		£0.00	
Malvern Hills		£0.00	
Redditch		(£33,705.20)	
Worcester		(£5,062.00)	
Wychavon		(£106,247.00)	
Wyre Forest		£33,184.00	
Total Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus)			(£129,705.54) S42A (10)
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT			£28,211,312.85 S42A (4)
Tax-base : Band D Equivalent			
Bromsgrove		37,997.70	
Herefordshire		71,999.97	
Malvern Hills		33,047.15	
Redditch		26,317.10	
Worcester		33,002.00	
Wychavon		52,914.22	
Wyre Forest		34,902.00	290,180.14
Precept - Band D Equivalent			£97.219999
Band D (rounded to 2 decimal places)			£ 97.22 S42B
Equivalent to Tax at Band (Ratio to Band D)	2023/24	increase	2024/25
A 6/9	£ 62.9300	2.99%	£ 64.8100 S47
B 7/9	£ 73.4200	3.00%	£ 75.6200 S47
C 8/9	£ 83.9100	2.99%	£ 86.4200 S47
D 9/9	£ 94.4000	2.99%	£ 97.2200 S47
E 11/9	£ 115.3800	2.98%	£ 118.8200 S47
F 13/9	£ 136.3600	2.98%	£ 140.4300 S47
G 15/9	£ 157.3300	2.99%	£ 162.0300 S47
H 18/9	£ 188.8000	2.99%	£ 194.4400 S47
Total Precept on Billing Authorities S48			
Bromsgrove			£3,694,136.35 S48
Herefordshire			£6,999,836.99 S48
Malvern Hills			£3,212,843.88 S48
Redditch			£2,558,548.43 S48
Worcester			£3,208,454.40 S48
Wychavon			£5,144,320.40 S48
Wyre Forest			£3,393,172.40 S48
			£28,211,312.85
			£0.00

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Feb 2024

Amended Reserves Strategy

Col Row	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
		Actual at 31-Mar-23 £m	Probable 2023/24 £m	Budget 2024/25 £m	MTFP 2025/26 £m	MTFP 2026/27 £m	MTFP 2027/28 £m	Estimate at 31-Mar-28 £m
	<u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u>							
1	Capital Projects Reserve	3.388	(0.872)	(1.645)	(0.870)			0.001
2	C&C Reserve	1.448	(0.473)	(0.643)				0.332
3	ICT Replacements Reserve	1.239	(0.464)	(0.419)	(0.061)	(0.023)	(0.045)	0.227
4	ESMCP Reserve	1.032					(1.032)	0.000
5	RPE Reserve	1.000	(0.261)	(0.700)	(0.039)			0.000
6	On Call Recruitment Reserve	0.671	(0.463)	(0.090)	(0.090)	(0.025)		0.003
7	Organisational Excellence Reserve	0.558	(0.292)	(0.200)	(0.014)			0.052
8	Property Maintenance Reserve	0.534	(0.090)	(0.148)	(0.148)	(0.148)		0.000
9	Pension Tribunal Reserve	0.400						0.400
10	Development Reserve	0.310	(0.056)	(0.056)				0.198
11	Sustainability Reserve	0.286	(0.286)					0.000
12	Pensions Reserve	0.244	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.039)	0.000
13	Protection Grants Reserve	0.228	(0.012)	(0.195)	(0.021)			(0.000)
14	Fire Prevention Reserve	0.157	(0.123)	(0.034)				0.000
15	Equipment Reserve	0.189						0.189
16	Safety Initiatives Reserve	0.138			(0.144)	0.006		0.000
17		11.822	(3.441)	(4.181)	(1.439)	(0.243)	(1.116)	1.402
	<u>Other Specific Reserves</u>							
18	Operational Activity Reserve	0.600						0.600
19	Insurance Excess Reserve	0.130						0.130
20		0.730	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.730
	<u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u>							
21	Budget Reduction Reserve	1.732	(0.116)	(0.260)	(0.285)	(0.382)		0.689
22	TIG Reserve	0.046	(0.046)					0.000
23		1.778	(0.162)	(0.260)	(0.285)	(0.382)	0.000	0.689
24	Total Earmarked Reserves	14.330	(3.603)	(4.441)	(1.724)	(0.625)	(1.116)	2.821
25	General (Un-earmarked) Reserves	1.538						1.538
26	Total Reserves	15.868	(3.603)	(4.441)	(1.724)	(0.625)	(1.116)	4.359
	<u>Earmarked Reserves</u>	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-26	31-Mar-27	31-Mar-28	
27	This MTFP	14.330	10.727	6.286	4.562	3.937	2.821	
28	MTFP - Feb 2023	14.142	9.103	4.695	4.622	3.563	n/a	

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Resource Review – Proposed Changes Following Consultation

Purpose of report

1. To provide the Authority with the responses from the Resource Review consultation process and to propose that the Authority decides upon the proposals being put forward in relation to the Resource Review.

Recommendations

It is recommended that, following full consideration of the responses received as part of the Resource Review consultation process, the:

- i. Fire Authority authorises the removal of the following On-Call staffed fire engines at the identified locations:***
 - a. The third (On-Call) fire engine at Redditch.***
 - b. The fourth (On-Call) fire engine at Wyre Forest.***
 - c. The third (On-Call) fire engine at Worcester.***
 - d. The second (On-Call) fire engine at Droitwich.***
 - e. The second (On-Call) fire engine at Bromyard.***
 - f. The third (On-Call) fire engine at Hereford.***
 - g. The second (On-Call) fire engine at Leominster.***
- ii. Second (On-Call) fire engine at Malvern be retained, subject to a further review in two years' time based upon the usage and availability over that period.***
- iii. Third (On-Call) fire engine at Wyre Forest remains, but is required to be crewed at night time only and may recruit staffing from a wider area within an eight-minute response time radius of the fire station.***
- iv. Resources available as a result of these operational changes to be reinvested to provide:***
 - a. Additional Wholetime crewing to add resilience to the Wholetime duty system across the Service and to provide increased fire engine crew sizes, as often as possible, on the first fire engines at: Worcester, Wyre Forest and Hereford fire stations.***
 - b. Provide a contingent of Wholetime Firefighters at each of Leominster and Bromyard fire stations to improve the***

availability of those appliances and undertake additional fire prevention activities in those areas.

c. Provide 4x4 type vehicles (or similar alternatives) for the utilisation of additional available On-Call Firefighters to provide a more flexible way of deploying them to support operational incidents, at the following stations: Worcester, Hereford, Redditch, Wyre Forest, Bromyard and Leominster.

v. The implementation and timing of these changes be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer.

Introduction and Background

2. On 12 December 2023, the Fire Authority gave approval to commence consultation on the Resource Review. The Fire Authority also resolved to form a Task and Finish Group to consider all consultation responses.
3. The Resource Review aims to:
 - Improve resilience and staffing on the busier Wholetime crewed fire engines that will then release capacity to support On-Call fire engines.
 - Reduce the levels of overtime used to crew Wholetime fire engines.
 - Create a more sustainable On-Call duty workforce.
 - Develop new ways of working with On-Call staff.
 - Optimise the use of the available On-Call staff.
 - Increase the levels of prevention activity in some areas.
4. Consultation on the Resource Review was undertaken between 08 January and 04 March 2024 and conducted by independent consultants Opinion Research Services (ORS). In addition, the Service held 27 formal consultation sessions with 202 staff at the affected fire stations and numerous meetings with elected officials and stakeholders. ORS's report of findings was submitted on 19 April 2024.
5. At a meeting on 23 April 2024, the Task and Finish Working Group (Group Leaders from the Fire Authority) considered the breadth of consultation responses achieved and whether the report drafted by ORS reflected those responses. Having considered the responses, the Task and Finish Group confirmed that they were satisfied that the report properly reflects the breadth of consultation responses received.
6. It should be stressed that the Resource Review does not propose to close any fire station or to remove any 'first' fire engines, but intends to remove fire engines from fire stations with more than one fire engine, where these second, third or fourth fire engines are often not available and/or attend a very low number of incidents each year and most often as a supporting fire engine.

7. Members should also note that these proposals align to a much wider national issue that nearly all Fire Services with On-Call staffing are currently facing. Many FRSs are facing the challenge of declining availability of On-Call fire engines, predominantly due to the inability to recruit and retain On-Call firefighters 24/7. This is leading to many other FRSs to also consider the need to potentially reduce the number of On-Call fire engines and/or staff, and increase Wholetime staffing. Examples of similar recent proposals can be seen in Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, East Sussex, Gloucestershire and, most recently, across 350 fire stations in Scotland. The proposals in this Resource Review appear much less impactful on the community than are apparent elsewhere and demonstrate a pragmatic, sympathetic and progressive approach to modernising and making HWFRS more efficient and effective.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

8. In the most recent State of Fire Report May 2024 it clearly recognises that On-Call staffing is a significant national concern for the sector, highlighting the acute challenges around the On-Call duty system. It shows that most FRSs are experiencing difficulties in maintaining On-Call availability, the recruitment and retention of On-Call firefighters, the effects of increased training times and the need to maintain competency requirements. It stated that a system-wide and constructive response is required to meet this challenge.
9. In HWFRS most recent HMICFRS report (November 2023) it is clearly stated that the Service should continuously look for ways to improve our effectiveness and efficiency. This includes transforming some of the ways we work and where possible improve value for money. The Service should have robust spending plans that reflect future financial challenges, take efficiency opportunities and invest in better services for the public.
10. The Inspectorate also noted that HWFRS is aware that the second and third fire engines, at some fire stations, are not often used to attend emergencies, and noted that HWFRS plans to carry out a Resource Review (before the next CRMP), to assure itself that it is deploying its fire engines and response staff to manage risk efficiently.
11. HMICFRS have a clear position on the need of an FRS to be efficient, effective and productive. Therefore, maintaining eight On-Call fire engines with poor availability, very low usage and no reasonable long-term prospect of improving would not be demonstrating an efficient and effective FRS.

Public and Staff Consultation on the Resource Review

12. The Resource Review was published in December 2023 and proposed to remove eight On-Call fire engines allowing savings to be reinvested in other, busier, fire engines to improve resilience and crewing levels and support more prevention work within some communities. The fire engines identified for removal were:
 - Fourth fire engine at Wyre Forest Station.
 - Third fire engine at Redditch Station.
 - Second fire engine at Bromyard Station.
 - Second fire engine at Malvern Station.
 - Second fire engine at Leominster Station.
 - Third fire engine at Hereford Station.
 - Second fire engine at Droitwich Station.
 - Third fire engine at Worcester Station

13. In addition, there was one proposed cover change:
 - Third fire engine at Wyre Forest – night cover only and Firefighters be allowed up to 8 minutes to get to the station.

14. ORS hosted an online questionnaire and three public focus groups. Notice of the consultation was sent to all Fire Authority Members and it was widely publicised through the Service website, social media, the internal Bulletin, through press releases and it was communicated to all local authorities, including parish councils, local organisations and other stakeholders.

15. In addition to this, every potentially affected Watch/Station was visited by the Chief Fire Officer or Principal Officer and engagement sessions were held with all the employee representative bodies.

16. In total there were 49,352 views of social media posts across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. 3,000 people visited the consultation web page.

17. ORS have provided a report to summarise their findings related to the consultation on the Resource Review (Appendix A). The report confirms that the level of engagement with staff, representative bodies, councillors and members of the public was in their view, extensive over the consultation period:
 - 1,122 responses were received to the online consultation questionnaire.
 - Three public focus groups were attended by 28 residents.
 - 202 members of staff were spoken to as part of the staff engagement process.

- There were eight written submissions from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Fire and Rescue Services Association (FRSA), Leominster Town Council, Malvern Town Council, Redditch Borough Council, two individual town/county councillors and one firefighter – see Appendix A.
 - Where required full and detailed responses were individually sent to these submissions above, by the Chief Fire Officer – see Appendix A.
 - Three BBC news and radio interviews.
 - Responses to 20 social media enquiries.
 - 49 meetings with MP's, other CFOs and stakeholders.
 - Attendance at two Town Council Meetings.
 - Meeting with HMICFRS.
18. A key theme that emerged from most of the consultation groups (online, focus groups, meetings with stakeholders, politicians and staff) was that an initial reaction to the loss of eight fire engines was met with some concern and or rejection, in principle, usually aligned to a deeper concern about the degrading of key public services. However, when the listener or reader had the opportunity to understand better the wider context of the Resource Review and the reinvestment programme, many then changed their position and supported the proposals. This particularly of note in regard to the Focus Group meetings led by ORS and conducted with members of the public from across both Counties.
19. The conclusions drawn from the consultation period are that:
20. Resident Focus Groups
- a. Almost all focus group participants across the three groups ultimately supported Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's (HWFRS) proposed approach, considering the overall package of proposals to be considered, creative and logical.
 - b. Several people from the focus groups said their views had changed during the discussion, and that their initial reservations about the proposals had been addressed and they left the session more reassured about the proposals and their potential implications.
21. Open Questionnaire
- a. The results from the questionnaire show a lower level of support for the Resource Review, with higher levels of disagreement with each proposal and around a third agreeing overall that HWFRS should change the way it uses its resources to address current challenges.
 - b. Table 15, on page 46 of Appendix A, summarises the level of support for each proposal.

c. Analysing the questionnaire responses by respondent demographic showed that the level of agreement varied between separate groups. The differences by question are reported in Chapter three of ORS report, but in general terms, those:

- Who work for HWFRS or another FRS were significantly more likely to agree with the proposals.
- Living in Herefordshire or another area (i.e., outside Herefordshire and Worcestershire) and those aged 45-54 were also significantly more likely to agree with most of the proposals.
- Living in Worcester or Malvern Hills, those aged under 35 years, those who are female and those who have a disability, were also more likely to disagree with most of the proposals.

d. ORS stress that it should be remembered that open questionnaires are not surveys or a referendum and are, therefore, not a representative sample of a given population – they are more likely to be completed by motivated people or groups.

22. The Report of findings from ORS, attached as Appendix A, includes a full analysis of comments received along with a demographic profile of respondents.

Additional Data to Emerge during the Consultation

23. In responding to some queries during the consultation period additional data was produced. It is useful to note that during the year 2023, across the whole of Herefordshire and Worcestershire combined, the 41 fire engines attended 7,774 incidents, of which:

- 84% were attended by one fire engine only.
- 13% were attended by two fire engines.
- 3% were attended by three or more fire engines.

24. Responses to specific queries raised by individuals and groups during the consultation period were also produced and these can be found in full in Appendix A from page 65. A summary of a selection can be found below:

Worcester High-Rise Buildings

25. It is no surprise that following the Grenfell Tower tragedy in London in 2017, that the public may harbour concerns about fires in other high-rise buildings within the UK. It should firstly be made clear that HWFRS has very few high-rise buildings and that they are constructed differently to Grenfell Tower, which are comparatively much smaller and have a very low level of serious incidents.

26. Having reviewed data specifically relating to high-rise buildings in Worcester during the last five years (01 Jan 2019 to 31 Dec 2023), the Service attended 248 incidents (approximately 50 per year), at the three high-rise buildings in Worcester, with only 1% of these being very (minor) small fires.
- 227 of these incidents are classed as False Alarms (92%).
 - 18 Special Services (7%). These are incidents other than a fire such as lift rescues or gaining entry.
 - 3 of these incidents were classed as Fires (1%). On average this equates to 0.6 Fires per year.
27. The third fire engine at Worcester has only attended 54 of the 248 incidents (22%) in the past five years and was not available to attend an additional 83 out of 248 (33%). This was due to not having a crew available. Therefore, on every other occasion, the role of the third fire engine has been safely undertaken by the next nearest fire engine available.
28. Even though the high reach Aerial Ladder Platform is mobilised when it is available, it attended none of the incidents in the high-rise buildings in St. Johns during the past five years.

Droitwich – General Concerns by Employees and Residents

29. Combined, the two fire engines at Droitwich Spa attended an average 273 incidents per year within their station ground (or 820 in total over a three-year period).
30. 97% of incidents in the Droitwich area only required only one fire engine to attend.
31. The second fire engine from Droitwich attended a total of 137 calls over the three-year period analysed, an average of only 46 calls per year or less than 1 call per week, and of the 137 calls over three years, 51 of these calls were false alarms.
32. The second fire engine at Droitwich attends just 16.5% of Droitwich's total calls. The second fire engine was only available on average of 27% of the time over the three-year period.

Redditch – General Concerns raised by Local Council

33. Between April 2022 and March 2023, the third fire engine at Redditch has only been available 2.74% of the time during the day and 21.25% of the time during the night. This means the fire engine is not available to respond to emergencies for the majority of time. This has been the situation for some considerable time despite repeated attempts at recruitment in the area.

34. The third fire engine at Redditch has very low operational usage and even if it was available 100% of the time, it would still not be used very often. Having analysed data over a three-year period, the third fire engine at Redditch attends an average of only 31 incidents per year. Of these, 28 are inside its own station ground and only 3 are outside of its station ground. This equates to 0.42% of total incidents across the Service per annum. The data also shows that the third fire engine at Redditch attended on average only one incident per year when there was no other fire engine available to attend from the station.

Leominster – General Concern raised by Local Council

35. Between April 2022 and March 2023, over 73% of all incidents Leominster’s fire station responded to, required only one fire engine.
36. On average, the second fire engine is only available 11.87% of the time in the day and 35.86% at night meaning that most of the time the second fire engine is not available to attend these incidents.
37. The total number of calls Leominster fire station attends remains relatively similar over a 14-year period, the number of incidents involving fire is decreasing. Leominster only attended 194 calls last year, that is only around one call every 48 hours and 47% (almost half) of those are false alarms. It should also be noted that there is another fire station (Kingsland) nearby, with consistently very high availability.

UK wide comparative incidents and resources

38. Additional evaluation has been undertaken with other Fire Services comparable to HWFRS, and whilst a range of factors that can affect incidents, type and volume, and the number of fire engines needed, it is worth noting the following:

Fire Authority	Fire Engines	Annual Incidents (Apr 22 – Mar 23)
Bedfordshire	22	7,779
Buckinghamshire	30	8,216
Cambridgeshire	36	8,455
County Durham and Darlington	26	8,849
HWFRS	41	8,156

Resource Review Final Proposals

39. Following staff and public consultation and receipt of the Report of Findings from ORS, the proposals within the Resource Review remain mostly unchanged. However, it is relevant to highlight some amendments to the proposals as outlined in this section and reflected in the updated Resource Review document (Appendix B). Those key changes are detailed below:

Malvern Fire Station

40. As shown in Recommendation ii above, in response to feedback received and further consideration, an amendment is proposed; which is to maintain Malvern's second fire engine for a period of two years after which a review of availability, cover moves and numbers of incidents attended will be conducted.
41. Whilst, as Chief Fire Officer, I believe there is still a case for the removal of the second fire engine in Malvern that based upon the need within the Malvern area, I accept it would be prudent to review this in two years' time due to the following factors outside of the Malvern town area:
- The availability of some nearby stand alone On-Call stations needs further improvement which is currently underway but may take some time to fully implement. Retaining the second fire engine in Malvern to provide an additional fire engine some of the time during this period.
 - Utilising the second fire engine from Malvern as a cover move into Worcester (as proposed by the Malvern On-Call staff). If the fire engines in Worcester are deployed for a protracted period, this prevents the need for a fire engine from another location being used.
 - Financially this proposal has only a very minor impact on the Resource Review as the review proposed to keep most of the staff at Malvern to crew the numerous special appliances located there. The Malvern On-Call watch also have enough staff to improve their availability without the need to recruit more firefighters, if they are upskilled and they have now indicated a willingness to do this. Also, as the staff suggested, the second fire engine could be a Compact fire engine with lower running costs.
42. Upon completion of this review after a period of two years, a recommendation may be presented to the Fire Authority for further consideration.

Provision of Vehicles for additional available On Call staff

43. As stated in the Resource Review document on page 46, there will be a reinvestment to provide an alternative 4x4 (or similar) type vehicle at specified locations. Following consultation with staff members, at some locations they may prefer an alternative vehicle such as a van for example to provide additional resilience for such specialist functions as Water First Responders or Animal Rescue. This request has been accepted, and will be taken forward and discussions with local stations will determine what type of alternative vehicle is best suited depending on the needs of the local community.

Special Appliances

44. Following consultation with staff, the Service will explore ways to continue to utilise On-Call staff to support certain special appliances in order to support availability and resilience, such as the Ariel Ladder Platforms at Hereford and Worcester. It is also proposed to review the current locations of some special appliances, so as to optimise the available staff and ensure first fire engine resilience is not adversely affected.

Financial Impact of Amendments

45. The budgetary impact of the amendments will occur over a number of years, but will involve a significant shift in resources within the budget. Some savings can be made quickly upon the implementation of the proposals if approved, however in a steady-state it is anticipated that resource changes falling from this review are as below:

	£m
Wholetime Pay	0.687
On-Call Pay	(0.359)
Support Pay	(0.044)
<hr/>	
Employee Related	0.284
Operational Logistics	(0.022)
Human Resources	(0.012)
ICT	(0.008)
<hr/>	
Running Costs	(0.042)
Capital Financing	(0.242)
<hr/>	
	0.000

46. These adjustments will be realised over time and brought before the Policy & Resources Committee for information as and when this happens. The Treasurer will then be able to demonstrate that the re-investment has only taken place when the relevant savings are achieved. However, some funding has already been identified to prime these changes and enable some of the investments to be made ahead of the savings being realised.
47. As noted in the Resource Review the pay costing above only takes into account a relatively modest saving from the current circa £700k overtime (resilience register) costs, and it is hoped that further efficiencies can be realised in this area over the longer term through improvements in wholetime crewing and resilience.

Conclusion/Summary

48. To conclude, a comprehensive consultation process has now been completed and amendments made to the Resource Review proposals. The proposals remain largely unchanged and Members are urged to support the recommendation in this paper.
49. Officers and many staff, firmly believe this is only viable and efficient solution to address the very significant issues currently being faced in regards of Wholetime and On-Call staffing. The issues highlighted in the Resource Review report are not going to improve naturally in the longer term and an increase in funding is also unlikely to emerge at any time in the future, to provide greater numbers of employed staff.
50. It is also incumbent on the Service to provide an efficient provision of resources with the tax payer funded budget it receives and to retain fire engines with low availability and very low usage, would neither be an effective or efficient use of public money.
51. Officers fully appreciate the removal of fire engines will always be an emotive and controversial matter. However, as has been demonstrated the issues faced with wholetime and On-call staffing are acute and reflect a much wider national issue. It is important that the Fire Authority consider carefully how the Service can keep ahead of these issues and retain an efficient and effective response to our communities.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>Savings made will be reinvested into other busier fire engines to improve resilience and crewing levels and support more prevention work within communities. Should proposals be agreed by the Fire Authority, impacted staff members will be individually consulted with. It is anticipated that most of the staff change can be achieved via natural turnover. If this is not the case redeployment options will be considered prior to any voluntary or compulsory redundancy.</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>The Resource Review links to both the Response and Prevention strategies. It has been undertaken with the Core Code of Ethics in mind, particularly Putting Our Communities First.</p>

<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures, and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>The Resource Review is different to a Community Risk Management Plan. The proposals outlined in the review do not pose an increased risk to the public – no fire stations are being closed.</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Public and staff consultation has been undertaken on the proposals outlined in the review.</p>
<p>Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>A People Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the proposals.</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>Our research partners complied with data protection rules and regulations.</p>

Background papers

Appendix A – Resource Review Consultation 2024 (separate enclosure)

Appendix B – Resource Review – Post Consultation Amendments June 2024

Appendix C – Resource Review (separate enclosure)



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Resource Review

Post Consultation Amendments

June 2024



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Post Consultation Amendments

Thank you very much to all those people that engaged in the consultation process and provided their feedback to the Resource Review proposals.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned to undertake a programme of key consultation activities and to report respondents' views, gathered through an open consultation questionnaire and three focus groups with members of the public. In total, 1,122 questionnaire responses were received; and 28 residents attended the three focus groups, with each focus group lasting two hours.

In total there were 49,352 views of social media posts across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. 3,000 people visited the consultation web page.

In addition to this, HWFRS held 27 formal internal consultation sessions with 202 staff at the affected fire stations (as well as Strategic Leadership Board discussions with other stations and support staff departments, at which the Resource Review proposals were discussed); and eight written submissions were received from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Fire and Rescue Services Association (FRSA), Leominster Town Council, Malvern Town Council, Redditch Borough Council, two individual town/county councillors, and an individual fire fighter.

After careful consideration of all the feedback received, some amendments to the proposals are proposed for consideration by the Fire Authority.

Malvern

The original document proposed that the second fire engine at Malvern Fire Station is removed. In response to feedback received an amendment is proposed, which is to maintain Malvern's second fire engine, for a period of two years, after which a review of availability and numbers of incidents attended will be conducted. The second fire engine will be a Compact fire engine. Upon completion of this review after a period of two years, a recommendation will be presented to the Fire Authority for further consideration.

Vehicles

As stated in the Resource Review document on page 46, savings will be reinvested to provide a 4x4 type vehicle at some of the impacted stations, this is to enable the use of alternative, more flexible modes of transport (instead of fire engines) to transport additional fire fighters to incidents.

Following consultation with staff members it became apparent that some locations may prefer an alternative vehicle such as a van for example. This recommendation will be taken forward and discussions with local stations will determine what type of alternative vehicle is best suited depending on the specific needs of the local community.

Special Appliances

Following consultation, the Service will explore ways to continue to utilise On-Call staff to support certain special appliances in order to support availability and resilience – such as the Aerial Lifting Platforms at Worcester and Hereford fire stations.

Financial Impact of Amendments

The financial impact of the amendments can be accommodated and, whilst they will utilise all the savings made and require a small additional investment, this can be supported from existing budgets.



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Report of the Monitoring Officer

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Purpose of report

1. To consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, the membership of those committees and appointments to outside bodies.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i) there be no change to the allocation of Committee seats to political groups as set out at Appendix 1;*
- ii) the current chairmanship and membership of Committees, as set out in Appendix 2, remain unchanged for 2024/2025;*
- iii) Cllrs E Marshall and N McVey be reappointed as Member Champions of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, together with an additional Member if so required.*
- iv) Cllr B Clayton be reappointed as the Member Champion on the Health & Safety Committee;*
- v) a Member be appointed as Fire Cadets' Member Champion;*
- vi) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 be continued; and*
- vii) the place and vote on the Local Government Association Fire Commission continues to be exercised by the Chairman of the Authority.*

Political Groups and Committee Appointments

2. The Authority is required to review the arrangements for political balance and the allocation of seats to political groups either at its annual meeting or as soon as practical thereafter. Where seats are allocated to a particular group, individual members are required to be appointed to those seats in accordance with the wishes of the respective group leaders. In the event that any members of the Authority are not members of any group, so called non-aligned members, then it is for the Authority as a whole to decide which committees, if any, they should serve on. There have been no changes to the political balance since last year.

Member Champions

3. Cllrs N McVey and E Marshall have served as Member Champions for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion since January 2022. Cllr D Boulter was appointed last

June. The Member Champions meet with officers on a regular basis to monitor delivery of the Authority's ED&I objectives. Cllrs McVey and Marshall have indicated their willingness to continue in this role. Cllr Boulter is no longer able to continue and the Authority may therefore wish to appoint an additional Member in his place.

4. Cllr B Clayton has served as the Member Champion on the Health & Safety Committee for the past three years and has indicated his willingness to continue in that role.
5. Cllr R Brookes has indicated he is no longer able to continue in the role of Member Champion for the Fire Cadets programme and Members are therefore asked to appoint a replacement.
6. There are no special responsibility allowances attached to any of the Member Champion roles.

Outside Bodies

7. The Local Government Association (LGA), works with local authorities to ensure local government has a voice with national government. This Authority is a corporate member of the LGA and as such is entitled to:
 - (a) appoint up to 4 representatives to serve on the General Assembly. Our current representatives are the leaders of the four political groups; and
 - (b) exercise 13 Service votes on the Assembly. These votes are allocated between the representatives on a politically proportionate basis in the same proportions as the seats on Policy & Resources Committee (above).
8. All Fire and Rescue Authorities are also entitled to a place and a vote on LGA Fire Commission. The Authority has previously appointed the Chairman or his nominee to the Commission and to exercise the vote on behalf of this Authority.

Conclusion/Summary

9. The current arrangements with regard to membership of committees and appointments to outside bodies have proven to be effective and it is recommended that these continue as set out above.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The Authority has approved a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 which sets out special responsibility allowances for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority, Committee Chairmen and Political Group Leaders. This will be met within existing budgets. There may be some costs</p>
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	associated with travel by appointees to meetings of outside bodies. This will also be met within existing budgets.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	None directly.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None directly.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out as the report does not contain a recommendation to approve a policy.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	None.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Political balance and allocation of committee seats
- Appendix 2 – Existing committee memberships

Appendix 1

Political Groups	<u>Conservative Group</u>	<u>Green & Independent Alliance</u>	<u>Unity Group</u>	<u>Non-aligned</u>	<u>Total</u>
	Cllr C Taylor Cllr R Phillips Cllr A Amos Cllr R Brookes Cllr D Chambers Cllr B Clayton Cllr D Davies Cllr A Ditta Cllr E Eyre Cllr A Hardman Cllr I Hardiman Cllr M Hart Cllr E Marshall Cllr J Monk Cllr D Morehead Cllr R Morris Cllr L Robinson 17 68%	Cllr T Wells Cllr N McVey Cllr D Boulter Cllr D Toynbee 4 16%	Cllr R Udall Cllr D Boatright Cllr J Carwardine 3 12%	Cllr J Kenyon 1	25

Political Balance & Allocation of Committee Seats

Group		<u>Conservative Group</u>	<u>Green & Independent Alliance</u>	<u>Unity Group</u>	<u>Non-aligned Members</u>	<u>Total</u>
		17 68%	4 16%	3 12%	1	25
Committee	Seats					
Appointments	7	5	1	1	-	7
Audit and Standards	12	8	2	1	1	12
Policy and Resources	13	9	2	2	0	13
TOTAL SEATS	32 %	22 69%	5 16%	4 13%	1	32

Policy and Resources Committee (13)

Conservative Group (9)	Ind. & Green Alliance (2)	Unity Group (2)	Non-aligned Members (0)
Cllr R Phillips (Chairman) Cllr C Taylor (Vice Chairman) Cllr D Chambers Cllr A Ditta Cllr J Monk Cllr D Morehead Cllr L Robinson Cllr D Davies	Cllr T Wells Cllr D Boulter	Cllr R Udall Cllr J Carwardine	

Audit and Standards Committee (12)

Conservative Group (8)	Ind. & Green Alliance (2)	Unity Group (1)	Non-aligned Members (1)
Cllr M Hart (Chairman) Cllr A Amos (Vice Chairman) Cllr R Brookes Cllr B Clayton Cllr A Hardman Cllr I Hardiman Cllr E Marshall Cllr R Morris	Cllr D Toynbee Cllr N McVey	Cllr D Boatright	Cllr J Kenyon

Appointments Committee (7)

Conservative Group (8)	Ind. & Green Alliance (2)	Unity Group (1)
Cllr C Taylor Cllr R Phillips Cllr M Hart Cllr E Eyre Cllr E Marshall	Cllr T Wells	Cllr R Udall

Report of the Treasurer

Provisional Financial Out-turn 2023-24

Purpose of report

1. To receive provisional financial results 2023-24, to review Treasury Management activities and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code Indicators.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Authority:

- i) Notes the provisional financial results for 2023-24;***
- ii) Approves the transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves in accordance with the Reserves Strategy:***
 - a) £367,355 from the Organisational Excellence Reserve;***
 - b) £324,108 from the On-Call Recruitment Reserve;***
 - c) £84,318 from Fire Control Project Reserve;***
 - d) £428,026 from the ICT Replacement Reserve;***
 - e) £95,916 from the Fire Prevention Reserve;***
 - f) £46,000 from the Taxation Income Guarantee Reserve;***
 - g) £854,551 from the Capital (Building) Projects Reserve;***
 - h) £7,197 to the Protection Grants Reserve;***
 - i) £94,000 from the Development Reserve;***
 - j) £24,592 from the Safety Initiatives Reserve;***
 - k) £616,808 from the RPE/BA Replacement Reserve;***
 - l) £47,435 from the Property Maintenance Reserve;***
 - m) £24,726 from the Pensions Reserve; and***
 - n) £139,439 from the Budget Reduction Reserve.***
- iii) Confirms that the Prudential Indicators for 2023-24 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters require further action.***

Background

2. The two areas covered by this report normally come under the Terms of Reference of the Policy and Resources Committee, but the timetable of meetings does not provide a suitable date for this to be done and so this report is always considered by the Full Authority.
3. The two areas are:
 - a. Provisional Financial Results
 - b. Treasury Management and the Prudential Indicators

Provisional Financial Results

4. The Audit and Standards Committee will consider the full Statement of Accounts; which will be completed on the basis of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and published following completion of the external audit.
5. Until the external audit process is completed these financial results technically remain provisional, but it is unlikely that they will change materially as a result of the audit.
6. The basis of the Statement of Accounts differs from the statutory framework within which the Authority is required to manage its budget. The detail of the differences between the two is dealt with in more detail by the Audit and Standards Committee.
7. This report is concerned with the statutory position under which the Authority is charged with governance.

Revenue Budget 2023-24

8. The Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report presented to Policy and Resources Committee in March identified a revised budget deficit of £117,000 and a projected over-spend of £27,000 – giving a total call on the Budget Reduction Reserve of £144,000.
9. The out-turn position, detailed in Appendix 1, (split between the core budget and reserve funded projects), and the core budget is summarised below. This shows a marginally reduced overspend at £23,000 and call on the Budget Reduction Reserve of £139,000.

		Revised Budget £	Provisional Out-turn £	Provisional Variation £
Employee Related	<i>Line 7</i>	27,448,200	27,683,554	235,354
Running Costs	<i>Line 29</i>	9,604,600	10,327,752	723,152
Capital Financing	<i>Line 31</i>	2,399,000	1,854,254	(544,746)
		39,451,800	39,865,560	413,760
Funding Grants	<i>Line 33</i>	(8,785,800)	(8,776,705)	9,095
Council Tax & Coll. Fund	<i>Line 34</i>	(27,246,000)	(27,244,229)	1,771
Business Rate	<i>Line 35</i>	(2,463,700)	(2,463,652)	48
Business Rate S31 Reliefs	<i>Line 36</i>	(643,200)	(768,653)	(125,453)
Business Rate Pool Gain	<i>Line 37</i>	0	(96,858)	(96,858)
Special Grants	<i>Line 38</i>	(960,700)	(1,141,551)	(180,851)
		(40,099,400)	(40,491,648)	(392,248)
		(647,600)	(626,088)	21,512
Reserve Transfers		763,900	765,527	1,627
		116,300	139,439	23,139
Budget Reduction Reserve		(116,300)	(139,439)	(23,139)
		0	0	0

10. Variation in Expenditure totals £414,000 and a summary of each of the three budget areas is given here:

- a. Employee related: £235,000. The underlying reasons for these variations are unchanged from what was reported to Policy and Resources Committee in March 2024, but Members are reminded that there was overspending on the Resilience Register to support WT availability which was offset by savings in allowances (as a result of delayed implementation of the new Day Crewing arrangements). It is anticipated that the full year impact of the new Day Crewing arrangements and, if approved, the Resource Review recommendations elsewhere on this agenda, will have a positive impact on this budget in 2024/25
- b. Running Costs: £723,000 of which £168,000 is matched by use of earmarked reserves leaving a net figure of £555,000. This compares to Quarter 3 projections of £299,000, £94,000 and net £205,000. An overall change of £350,000. There are 2 major reasons for this change:
 - i. Finance SLA costs – represents re-alignment of External Audit fee costs. Previously these were charged to the year when the Audit was carried out, but the Treasurer agrees with the new External Auditors that the correct treatment is to charge to the year to which they relate. This has a one off impact of around £64,000.
 - ii. Property Services: Due to a lack of accurate financial information at Quarter 3, this budget was assumed to be neutral but the out-turn is showing significant variations in Utilities, Cleaning and Business Rates costs. Officers are liaising with the PCC property team to understand the reasons.
- c. Capital Financing: £545,000. Of which £400,000 was identified at Quarter 3. The change since then is almost entirely due to the Treasurer's initial caution about releasing capital financing savings too early.

11. In respect of the Funding there is more variation of £392,000 of which of £169,000 of the Special Grant variation (£180,000) relates to Protection Grant which is being taken to Earmarked Reserves leaving a net difference of £223,000. This is largely made up of:
- Business Rate Pool surplus £96,000. This figure is not budgeted because it is not guaranteed.
 - S31 Business Rate Relief – improved by £125,000. This is subject to the business rate collections of the individual Billing Authorities and may change in future as 2023/24 Billing Authorities are audited (Note: some of their audits are several years in arrears)
12. In addition to the Core Budget, Appendix 1, Column 5 shows expenditure of £3,766,000 on reserve funded projects – mostly the Invest to Improve Programme. This expenditure is summarised below:

	Invest to Improve £	Other £	TOTAL £
Broadway FS Replacement	1,338,073		1,338,073
BA Replacement	916,808		916,808
NOG Project	367,355		367,355
On Call Project	324,108		324,108
Alerting Station End Equipment		187,289	187,289
Protection Grants		182,835	182,835
Equipment Tracking	138,075		138,075
Intel Systems	102,662		102,662
Prevention Reserve		95,916	95,916
Fire Control Replacement	84,318		84,318
Firefighter Pension Remedy		24,726	24,726
Safety Initiatives		4,000	4,000
	3,271,399	494,766	3,766,165

Impact on Reserves

13. For explanatory purposes the core budget and reserve funded projects have been treated separately, but the consequential net movement in reserves is brought together in the table below:

	Core £	Out-turn £	Projects £	Total £
EMR Developments	(94,000)		0	(94,000)
EMR Pensions	0		(24,726)	(24,726)
EMR Property Maint.	(47,435)		0	(47,435)
EMR Fire Control	0		(84,318)	(84,318)
EMR Safety Initiatives	0		(24,592)	(24,592)
EMR Protection Grants	169,439		(162,243)	7,197
EMR TIG Reserve	(46,000)		0	(46,000)
EMR Organisational Excellence	0		(367,355)	(367,355)
EMR On Call Project	0		(324,108)	(324,108)
EMR ICT Replacements	0		(428,026)	(428,026)
EMR Capital (Building) Projects	483,522		(1,338,073)	(854,551)
EMR Fire Prevention	0		(95,916)	(95,916)
EMR BA Replacement	300,000		(916,808)	(616,808)
EMR Budget Reduction		(139,439)		(139,439)
	765,527	(139,439)	(3,766,165)	(3,140,077)

14. The impact on individual reserves is shown in Appendix 2, and shows that whilst balances fell significantly it was not quite as fast as was anticipated in February 2024. This is because expenditure on some Invest to Improve projects has not incurred as early as was anticipated, although these projects are well underway.

Capital Budget 2022-23

15. Details of the approved capital budgets are set out in detail in Appendix 3, and are summarised in the table below:

	Vehicles £m	Major Builds £m	Major Equip £m	Alloc. Minor £m	Unalloc Minor £m	Future Builds £m	TOTAL £
Approved Feb 2024	5.062	2.423	1.300	2.912	0.315	8.632	20.644
Major Scheme Allocation	(0.003)			(0.060)	0.063		0.000
Minor Schemes Allocation		0.130				(0.130)	0.000
Reserve Funded				0.210			0.210
	5.059	2.553	1.300	3.062	0.378	8.502	20.854
Expenditure to 2022/23	2.982	0.737		0.949			4.668
Available Budget	2.077	1.816	1.300	2.113	0.378	8.502	16.186

16. Major Schemes provision is that for Hereford Fire Station, the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility, and some costs for the relocation of training. These are not disclosed separately in case they prejudice any future tender/contract processes.
17. Allowing for the schemes awaiting approval or paused, actual expenditure has been at 70% which is the best performance for a number of years.

	£m
Capital Budget	20.854
Less: Future Building Schemes	(8.502)
Less: Unallocated Minor Schemes	(0.377)
Less: Paused Pump Replacement	(1.747)
Less: Prior Year Expenditure	(4.668)
Available to Spend 2023/24	5.560
Actual Spend 2023/24	3.882
	70%

18. Of the total revised Capital Budget of £20.854m, schemes totalling £4.563m (Lines 76 and 77 in Appendix 3) are completed and closed and will be removed from future monitoring reports.

Role of the Audit and Standards Committee

19. The Statement of Accounts will be prepared on an International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) basis and will show the true economic cost (but not the overall economic benefits) of providing a Fire and Rescue Service.
20. The IFRS basis differs substantially from the statutory basis on which Members are charged with managing the finances of the Fire Authority which is the basis of the Provisional Financial Results element of this report.
21. This is because there are significant items which are: either required to be charged by statute but which are not permitted under IFRS, or required to be charged under IFRS but which are prohibited by statute.
22. The Statement of Accounts will reconcile these differences and the Audit and Standards Committee will scrutinise this reconciliation as well as the Accounts themselves.
23. The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Statement of Accounts is signed by the Chief Financial Officer (the Treasurer) no later than 31 May.
24. These Regulations also oblige the Authority to approve and publish the audited Statement of Accounts normally by 30 September.
25. Members of the Audit and Standards Committee will be aware that the prolonged audit of the 2021-22 Accounts has already had a knock-on effect on the production of the 2022-23 statements. This will have a consequence on completion of the 2023-24 Statements. The Treasurer is working with both Grant Thornton as auditors of the 2022-23 statements and Bishop Fleming as auditors of 2023-24 to try to recover this slippage as soon as practical, however this may take several years.

Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators

26. The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Authority to 'have regard to' the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Authority's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
27. This guidance continues to make it clear that investment priorities should be security and liquidity, rather than yield and that authorities should not rely solely on credit ratings, but consider other information on risk.
28. In accordance with both the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, and current Fire Authority Financial Regulations the Treasury Management Activities are required to be reviewed by Members twice a year, but are now incorporated into the quarterly budget monitoring reports.
29. The final review of 2023-24 would normally have been brought to Policy and Resources Committee in September but this has again been brought forward to the Fire Authority.

Treasury Management Activities

30. Treasury Management is about managing the Authority's cash flow and investments to support its finances for the benefit of the public and the services that it provides. These activities are structured to manage risk foremost and then optimise performance.
31. The Treasury Management function strives to ensure the stability of the Authority's financial position by sound debt, cash and risk management techniques. The need to minimise risk and volatility is constantly addressed whilst aiming to achieve the treasury management objectives.
32. Banking arrangements and the Treasury Management functions for the Authority, in respect of lending and borrowing, are carried out by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) under a Service Level Agreement (SLA). All Authority funds are invested or borrowed by WCC in accordance with their Treasury Management Strategy; this means that the Authority is subjected to the same levels of risk and return as WCC.
33. At 31 March 2023 the Authority had long-term debt totalling £9.046m, and during 2023-24 £0.211m was repaid as planned, bringing the total debt at 31 March 2024 to £8.835m.
34. As revenue reserves (currently used in lieu of external borrowing) are used up as the Invest to Improve projects are progressed, it may be necessary to take further borrowing in future.

35. As a rule of thumb borrowing should not (other than temporarily) exceed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which at 31 March 2024 provisionally stands at £21.172m.
36. In accordance with the SLA, investment risk is shared with WCC proportionate to the relative funds invested.
37. As part of the defined investment risk strategy Authority funds are currently deposited with the Bank of England and other organisations deemed to be low risk, such as other Local Authority Bodies, WCC Treasury Management keeps this policy under constant review. With the downgrading of several large financial institutions, to comply with the AA credit rating required by the Treasury Management Strategy, which ensures the continued reduction of risk exposure, there are now fewer financial institutions available where investments can be made which increases reliance upon the Bank of England / HM Treasury.

Prudential Indicators

38. In considering the budget and precept for the year the Authority approves indicators and limits in respect of capital expenditure, borrowing and revenue consequences.
39. These are set by the Authority, as part of the overall budget setting process, in February prior to the start of the financial year.
40. Appendix 4 sets out the relevant indicators as approved and as they out-turn, and demonstrates that they are within the limits of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Whole report
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	Budget prepared in support of current policy priorities, in line with the CRMP and MTFP. The report has been prepared also to support the ethical principles in line with the Core Code of Ethics.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	n/a
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	n/a

Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	n/a
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	n/a - No personal data is involved

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1: Provisional Out-turn 2023-24: Revenue Budget
- Appendix 2: Provisional Out-turn 2023-24: Reserves Strategy
- Appendix 3: Provisional Out-turn 2023-24: Capital Budget
- Appendix 4: Provisional Out-turn 2023-24: Prudential Indicators

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
26th June 2024
Provisional Out-turn 2023/24: Revenue Budget

Col. Line	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Revised Budget £	Provisional Out-turn £	Provisional Variation £	Reserve Funded Projects £
1	15,128,200	15,432,189	303,989	444,222
2	4,581,600	4,673,193	91,593	0
3	1,015,800	1,037,468	21,668	84,318
4	5,597,600	5,549,170	(48,430)	362,381
5	90,000	105,873	15,873	0
6	1,035,000	885,661	(149,339)	0
7	27,448,200	27,683,554	235,354	890,920
8	108,700	208,639	99,939	0
9	52,200	42,569	(9,631)	0
10	40,500	89,809	49,309	0
11	39,500	65,400	25,900	0
12	290,400	233,091	(57,309)	69,034
13	592,500	672,797	80,297	0
14	1,382,800	1,273,864	(108,936)	0
15	683,500	692,395	8,895	0
16	2,261,600	2,658,712	397,112	0
17	454,500	454,500	(0)	0
18	(98,200)	0	98,200	0
19	2,280,400	2,313,102	32,702	0
20	74,900	49,191	(25,709)	0
21	88,400	133,215	44,815	0
22	575,000	612,239	37,239	0
23	58,300	57,561	(739)	0
24	39,700	51,373	11,673	0
25	456,600	443,875	(12,725)	0
26	131,700	91,996	(39,704)	0
27	91,600	183,424	91,824	0
28	0	0	0	431,261
29	9,604,600	10,327,752	723,152	500,295
30	2,399,000	1,854,254	(544,746)	2,374,950
31	2,399,000	1,854,254	(544,746)	2,374,950
32	39,451,800	39,865,560	413,760	3,766,165
33	(8,785,800)	(8,776,705)	9,095	
34	(27,246,000)	(27,244,229)	1,771	
35	(2,463,700)	(2,463,652)	48	
36	(643,200)	(768,653)	(125,453)	
37	0	(96,858)	(96,858)	
38	(960,700)	(1,141,551)	(180,851)	
39	(40,099,400)	(40,491,648)	(392,248)	
40	(647,600)	(626,088)	21,512	
	Use of Earmarked Reserves (EMR)			
41	0	(94,000)	(94,000)	0
42	0	0	0	(24,726)
43	0	(47,435)	(47,435)	0
44	0	0	0	(84,318)
45	0	0	0	(24,592)
46	0	169,439	169,439	(162,243)
47	(46,000)	(46,000)	0	0
48	0	0	0	(367,355)
49	0	0	0	(324,108)
50	0	0	0	(428,026)
51	509,900	483,522	(26,378)	(1,338,073)
52	0	0	0	(95,916)
53	300,000	300,000	0	(916,808)
54	763,900	765,527	1,627	(3,766,165)
55	116,300	139,439	23,139	
56	(116,300)	(139,439)	(23,139)	
57	0	0	(0)	0

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
26th June 2024
Provisional Out-turn 2023/24: Reserves Strategy

Col Row	(2)	(3) Actual at 31-Mar-23 £m	(4) Usage in 2023/24 £m	(5) Probable 31-Mar-24 £m	(6) Forecast in Feb 2024 £m
	<u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u>				
1	Capital Projects Reserve	3.388	(0.855)	2.533	2.516
2	C&C Reserve	1.448	(0.084)	1.364	0.975
3	ICT Replacements Reserve	1.239	(0.428)	0.811	0.775
4	ESMCP Reserve	1.032		1.032	1.032
5	RPE Reserve	1.000	(0.617)	0.383	0.739
6	On Call Recruitment Reserve	0.671	(0.324)	0.347	0.208
7	Organisational Excellence Reserve	0.558	(0.367)	0.191	0.266
8	Property Maintenance Reserve	0.534	(0.047)	0.487	0.444
9	Pension Tribunal Reserve	0.400		0.400	0.400
10	Development Reserve	0.310	(0.094)	0.216	0.254
11	Sustainability Reserve	0.286		0.286	0.000
12	Pensions Reserve	0.244	(0.025)	0.219	0.195
13	Protection Grants Reserve	0.228	0.007	0.235	0.216
14	Fire Prevention Reserve	0.157	(0.096)	0.061	0.034
15	Equipment Reserve	0.189		0.189	0.189
16	Safety Initiatives Reserve	0.138	(0.025)	0.113	0.138
17		11.822	(2.955)	8.867	8.381
	<u>Other Specific Reserves</u>				
18	Operational Activity Reserve	0.600		0.600	0.600
19	Insurance Excess Reserve	0.130		0.130	0.130
20		0.730	0.000	0.730	0.730
	<u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u>				
21	Budget Reduction Reserve	1.732	(0.139)	1.593	1.616
22	TIG Reserve	0.046	(0.046)	0.000	0.000
23		1.778	(0.185)	1.593	1.616
24	Total Earmarked Reserves	14.330	(3.140)	11.190	10.727
25	General (Un-earmarked) Reserves	1.538		1.538	1.538
26	Total Reserves	15.868	(3.140)	12.728	12.265

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
26th June 2024
Provisional Out-turn 2023/23: Capital Budget

Col. Line	(2) BUDGET Fire Authority Feb 2024 £	(3) Budget Adjust -ments £	(4) REVISED BUDGET 2023/24 Quarter 4 £	(5) Expenditure to 22/23 £	(6) Expenditure in 23/24 £	(7) Remaining Unspent £
Vehicle Programme						
1	1,747,000		1,747,000			1,747,000
2	95,000		95,000			95,000
3	1,842,000	0	1,842,000	0	0	1,842,000
Completed or Closed Schemes						
4	1,109,079		1,109,079	1,109,079	0	0
5	203,307		203,307	203,307	0	0
6	203,307		203,307	203,307	0	0
7	43,595	0	43,595	0	43,595	0
8	53,540		53,540	53,540	0	0
9	65,392	(386)	65,006	0	65,006	0
10	49,369	0	49,369	0	49,369	0
11	1,264,191		1,264,191	1,264,191	0	0
12	80,119		80,119	80,119	0	0
13	68,492		68,492	68,492	0	0
14	25,852	0	25,852	0	25,852	0
15	53,480	(2,374)	51,106	0	51,106	0
16	3,219,723	(2,760)	3,216,963	2,982,035	234,928	0
17	5,061,723	(2,760)	5,058,963	2,982,035	234,928	1,842,000
Major Buildings						
18	585,510	130,000	715,510	337,912	376,907	691
19	1,696,000		1,696,000	295,221	1,338,073	62,706
20	141,916		141,916	103,586	38,214	116
21	2,423,426	130,000	2,553,426	736,719	1,753,193	63,514
22	8,631,938	(130,000)	8,501,938	0	0	8,501,938
Major Equipment						
23	1,300,000		1,300,000		853,431	446,569
24	1,300,000	0	1,300,000	0	853,431	446,569
Minor Schemes						
25	179,000		179,000	42,063	6,206	130,731
26	30,000		30,000			30,000
27	210,000		210,000		138,645	71,356
28	106,354	108,000	214,354		106,354	108,000
29	6,000		6,000			6,000
30	158,000		158,000			158,000
31	115,000		115,000			115,000
32	135,000		135,000	36,473	29,580	68,947
33	70,000		70,000	8,890		61,110
34	66,000		66,000	39,600		26,400
35	48,230		48,230		23,050	25,180
36	38,000		38,000			38,000
37	42,000		42,000			42,000
38	10,000		10,000			10,000
39	25,000		25,000			25,000
40	40,000		40,000			40,000
41	50,000		50,000			50,000
42	0	29,000	29,000		25,428	3,573
43	0	210,000	210,000		187,289	22,711
44	0	40,000	40,000			40,000
45	1,328,584	387,000	1,715,584	127,026	516,551	1,072,006
Completed or Closed Schemes						
46	20,000	(20,000)	0			0
47	96,082	(30,584)	65,498	55,082	10,416	0
48	200,000	(62,450)	137,550	137,550		0
49	150,000	(15,284)	134,716	134,716		0
50	213,933	(1,362)	212,571	208,728	3,843	0
51	40,000	(35,170)	4,830	4,830		0
52	15,000	(15,000)	0			0
53	34,027		34,027	34,027		0
54	20,254		20,254	20,254		(0)
55	38,396		38,396	38,396		0
56	31,514		31,514			0
57	80,677	845	80,912	1,020	79,892	0
58	27,141		27,141		27,141	0
59	8,000	(2,050)	5,950	5,950		0
60	170,000	(6,468)	163,532	72,387	91,145	0
61	2,743	(2,743)	0			0
62	20,000	(20,000)	0			0
63	15,000	(14,480)	520	520		0
64	18,076		18,076	18,076		0
65	70,000	(11,008)	58,992	58,992		0
66	36,637	(2,294)	34,342		34,342	0
67	12,221		12,221		12,221	0
68	71,633		71,633		71,633	(0)
69	28,562	640	29,202		29,202	0
70	164,352		164,352		164,352	0
71	1,583,638	(237,409)	1,346,229	822,042	524,187	0
72	2,912,222	149,591	3,061,813	949,068	1,040,739	1,072,006
73	314,257	63,168	377,425			377,425
74	3,226,479	212,760	3,439,238	949,068	1,040,739	1,449,432
75	20,643,566	210,000	20,853,566	4,667,822	3,882,291	12,303,453
76	(3,219,723)	2,760	(3,216,963)	(2,982,035)	(234,928)	0
77	(1,583,638)	237,409	(1,346,229)	(822,042)	(524,187)	(0)
78	15,840,205	450,168	16,290,373	863,745	3,123,176	12,303,453

Prudential Indicators 2023-24 Out-turn

Introduction

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to provide a code of practice to underpin the system of capital finance embodied in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Prudential Code supports a system of self-regulation that is achieved by the setting and monitoring of a suite of Prudential Indicators that directly relate to each other. The indicators establish parameters within which the Authority should operate to ensure the objectives of the Prudential Code are met.

Recent revisions to the code have reduced the number of mandatory indicators, but the Treasurer believes that they provide useful information to the Authority so they continue to be included.

Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Indicators for which the Authority set limits are as follows:

1. Capital Expenditure

The actual amount of capital expenditure that was incurred during 2023-24 was as follows:

	Original (Feb 2023) £m	Revised (Feb 2024) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Capital Expenditure	9.399	3.270	3.882

2. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Financing Costs include the amount of interest payable in respect of borrowing or other long-term liabilities and the amount the Authority is required to set aside to repay debt, less interest and investments income.

The actual Net Revenue Stream is the 'amount to be met from government grants and local taxation' taken from the annual Statement of Accounts, and the estimated figure is the Authority's budget net of any transfers to or from the balances.

The indicator only requires that the costs associated with capital expenditure are measured in this way. However, the Authority has used, and may continue to use Operational Leasing as a cost-effective method of acquiring vehicles. In the spirit of the Prudential Code these costs are included for comparative purposes.

	Original (Feb 2023) £m	Revised (Feb 2024) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Financing Costs	2.833	2.583	1.852
Net Revenue Stream	39.397	40.115	39.866
Ratio	7.19%	6.44%	4.65%

3. Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The capital financing is a measure of the extent to which the Authority needs to borrow to support capital expenditure. It does not necessarily relate to the actual amount of borrowing at any one point in time. The Authority arranges its treasury management activity via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) which has an integrated treasury management strategy where there is no distinction between revenue and capital cash flow, and the day to day position of external borrowing and investments can change constantly.

The capital financing requirement concerns only those transactions arising from capital spending, whereas the amount of external borrowing is a consequence of all revenue and capital cash transactions combined together following recommended treasury management practice.

	Original (Feb 2023) £m	Revised (Feb 2024) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
CFR at 31st March 2024	23.277	19.952	21.172

4. Authorised Limit

The Authorised Limit represents an upper limit of borrowing that could be afforded in the short term but may not be sustainable.

5. Operational Boundary

The Operational Boundary represents an estimate of the most likely, prudent, but not worst-case scenario and provides a parameter against which day to day treasury management activity can be monitored.

The limits for these indicators set for 2023/24 and the final out-turn are given below, and it can be confirmed that the out-turn figure represents the maximum borrowing at any point in the year, i.e. the Authorized limit was not exceeded.

	£m
Authorized Limit at 31st March 2024	27.000
Operational Boundary at 31st March 2024	23.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2024	8.835

6. Fixed Interest Rate Exposures

The Authority set an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures as follows:

	£m
Upper Limit at 31st March 2024	27.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2024	8.835

7. Variable Interest Rate Exposures

The Authority set an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures, however all current borrowing is at fixed rates.

8. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

The upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings are as follows:

	Lower Limit £m	Actual £m	Upper Limit £m
Under 12 months	0.000	0.347	2.209
Over 12 months but within 24 months	0.000	0.000	2.209
Over 24 months but within 5 years	0.000	0.000	4.418
Over 5 years but within 10 years	0.000	4.000	6.626
Over 10 years	2.209	4.488	8.393
		8.835	

Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

Annual Service Review 2023-24

Purpose of report

1. To seek approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2023-24.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Review 2023-24 and approves it for publication on the Service website.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service produces a Fire Authority Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan as part of its corporate planning process. The Annual Service Review provides a review of the previous year's activity and performance, and an overview of the Service organisation and budget. The Annual Service Plan is a look ahead to activities planned for the coming year: The Plan is reported elsewhere on the agenda.
3. The two-report format was introduced in 2021-22 as a replacement to the Fire Authority Annual Report, reflecting a change to a more accessible, visual and engaging style suited to an increasingly online audience.

The Annual Service Review 2023-24

4. The Annual Service Review provides information on the Service's main activities throughout the year. In addition to a wealth of information about the Service's frontline activities and incident statistics, the report has a focus on some of the highlights of work behind the scenes. The Service attended 8,006 incidents during 2023-24, a slight decrease of 2 per cent on the previous year. Whilst we did not see the dramatic effects of wild-fires from the summer before, protracted periods of wet weather and storms saw a 7 per cent rise in special service call-outs, including a 27 per cent rise in flood incidents and a more than doubling of water rescue operations.
5. The Review aligns with our current Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 (CRMP) and Core Strategies with articles Focusing on Excellence across Response, Protection and Prevention as well as Valuing our Workforce and providing Value for Money. It also provides information on the demographics and geography of our communities and the performance data across our three districts; North, South and West of our two counties. The Review has also been

expanded to highlight progress made in delivering the service objectives set out in the 2023-24 Annual Service Plan.

6. The draft Review is included as Appendix 1.

Conclusion/Summary

7. This report presents the Annual Service Review 2023-24, which is a look back at the range of work undertaken over the last year, including headline activities and incident statistics.
8. Subject to Fire Authority approval, the finalised review 2023-24 will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Annual Service Review provides information on resources necessary to support the implementation of Fire Authority objectives and priorities.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link with current priorities and policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics).	The Review highlights key achievements and performance in delivering the Service's core purpose during 2023-24. The Review also highlights the Service's alignment to the Core Code of Ethics.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	The Review reports on activity from the previous year.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Strategic Leadership Board consultation.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	When preparing projects or other activities, departments are required to consider proposed actions against the Service's equality objectives as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-25.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	No personal data is processed in the Review.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Service Review 2023-24 – separate enclosure



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



HWFRS Annual Service Review 2023-24



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Contents

Foreword	1
The Service in 2023-24	2
Our People	3
Our Purpose	4
Our Ethical Principles	5
Operational and Organisational Excellence	6
Our Priorities	7
Focusing on Excellence	
Leadership	8
Response	9
Protection	10
Prevention	11
Valuing our Workforce	12
Value for Money	13
The Year in Numbers	
Response	14
Protection	17
Prevention	18
Incident Breakdown by District	
North	19
South	20
West	21
Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives	22
Finance 2023-24	31
Contact Us	32

Unless stated, figures used in this Review are as at 31 March 2024, rounded to the nearest 100 where appropriate. Population and household data are based on Census 2021 estimates.

Foreword

Annual Service Plan 2024-25
link to be added once live

This Annual Service Review looks back over the last financial year (April 2023 – March 2024) focusing on the main headlines and highlights. It is a reflection on the wide range of work the Fire and Rescue Service does to keep our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire safe from fire and other emergencies.

Throughout the year we have provided a 24/7 response to a variety of crises including fires, road traffic collisions, and floods. Notably, there was a 2% drop in the total incidents attended, with figures falling slightly from 8,137 in the previous year to 8,006.

Weather patterns played a significant role, with a surge in rainfall contributing to a 7% rise in special service call-outs, including a 27% rise in flood incidents and a more than doubling of water rescue operations. Additionally, there was a 6% increase in the number of False Alarm incidents. This year's Annual Review clearly sets out the substantial body of work we have delivered to continue to drive excellence throughout the Service – in ourselves, and in everything we do.

You'll find out a lot more about the wide range of our work on the [News](#) page of our [Website](#). This Review sits alongside our [Annual Service Plan for 2024-2025](#) which you will find on our [Publications](#) page. For further clarity, there is now a section in this Review demonstrating the direct correlation between the Service objectives set out in the Annual Service Plan and the work we have done towards achieving them.

Finally, we would like to thank our Members and staff for their continued professionalism and dedication to keeping our communities safe during the year.



Councillor Kit Taylor
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Jonathon Pryce
*Chief Fire Officer/
Chief Executive*

The Service in 2023-24

Core Purpose

Keeping people safe from fire and other risks – responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies



696 (764 roles)
Staff Members



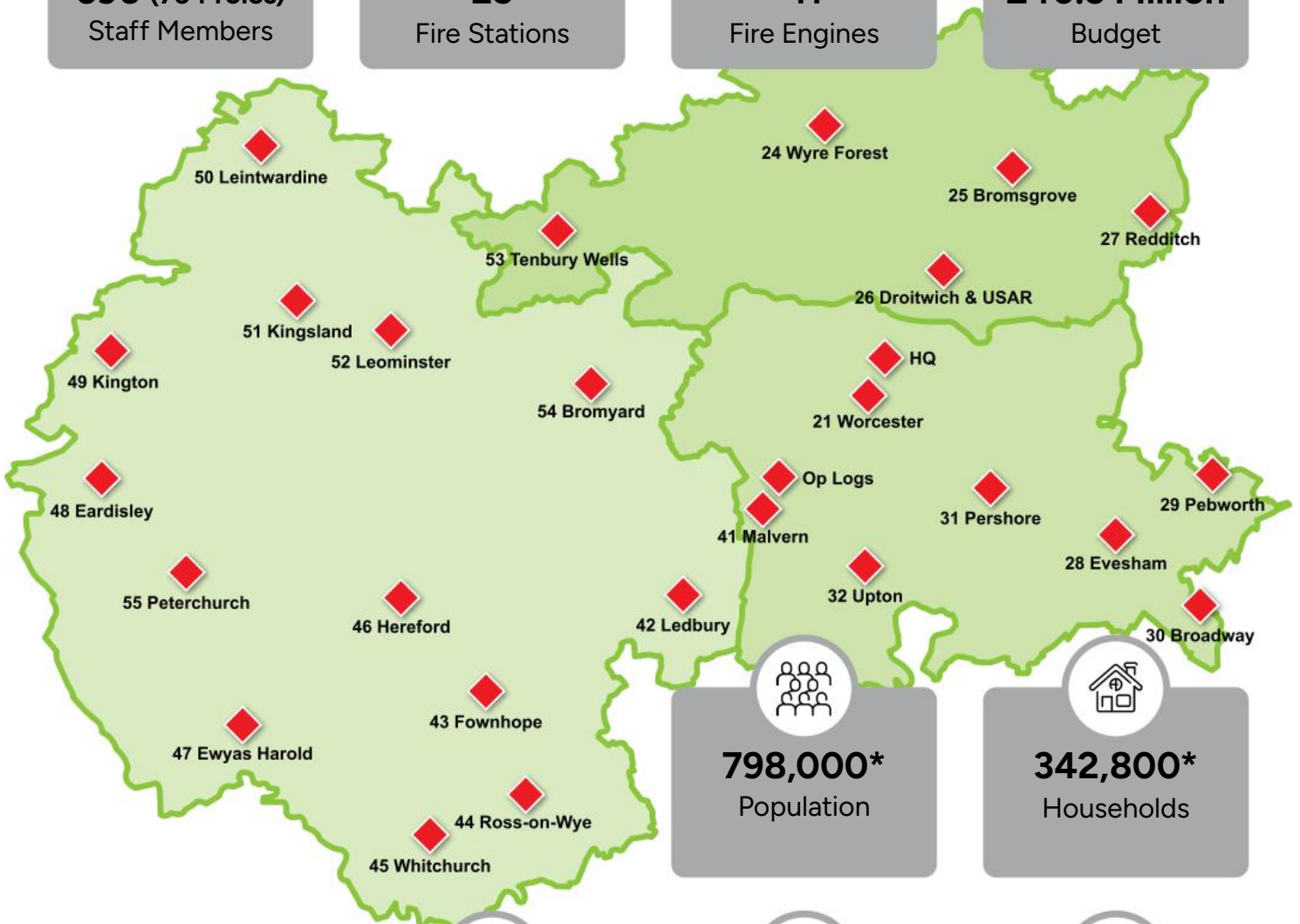
25
Fire Stations



41
Fire Engines



£40.3 Million
Budget



798,000*
Population



342,800*
Households



392,000
Area in Hectares



42,260**
Businesses



4,737
Road length
in Miles

*Census 2021

**Office for National Statistics 2023-24

Our People

Staff Structure



The Service is led by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive with the support of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), made up of Directors and Assistant Directors. The Service employs 696 full-time and part-time members of staff, who work in 764 roles. Firefighters make up approximately 80% of the workforce, assisted by professional teams providing support and enabling services such as finance, human resources and legal services. The 26 Fire Control firefighters are the frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. There are also 19 active volunteers supporting community safety activities.

Gender Balance

This is an improvement from the 19% female – 81% male ratio recorded in March 2023.



20%



80%

Ethnic Minority Representation

Ethnic minority representation in the Service shows a 1% decrease from March 2023.



10%

Within the community*



5%

Within the Service

Staff Sickness

9.21 days/shifts were lost per person in 2023-24, a decrease of 28.9% compared with 2022-23.



*Census 2021

Our Purpose

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission represents our commitment to putting our communities first, keeping people safe from fire and other risks and protecting the most vulnerable. They underpin everything we do, which benefits us as individuals, the whole Service and everyone in the communities we serve. You can find out more on our Service [website](#).

Purpose

Why we are here

Keeping people safe from fire and other risks. Responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.

Vision

What we want to do

Saving More Lives: Building on our successes to continue to make a difference, improve lives and help secure resilient communities.

Mission

What we do every day

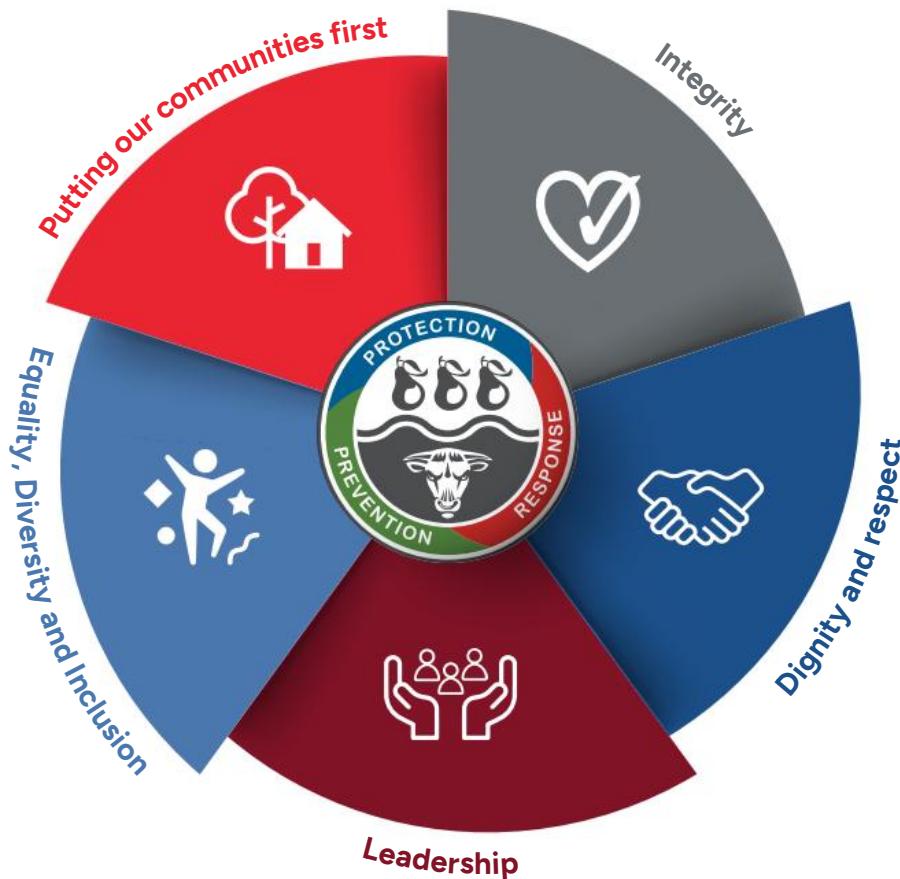
As one professional team we will work hard every day to deliver high quality, sustainable services to our communities.





Our Ethical Principles


We are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(FRS\)](#) in England.


The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. These principles are our guiding set of values and help us to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.



Putting our communities first 
We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity 
We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect 
We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership 
As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 
We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

Operational and Organisational Excellence

Our aim is to drive excellence in ourselves and in everything we do, so that we can deliver a highly professional service and maintain high standards.

Over the year, we have been working hard to make sure our strategic aims for keeping our communities safe are well-embedded throughout all aspects of our work.

At the heart of our strategic approach is the [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 \(CRMP\)](#). The CRMP is our overall strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe from fire and other emergencies with the resources available to us.

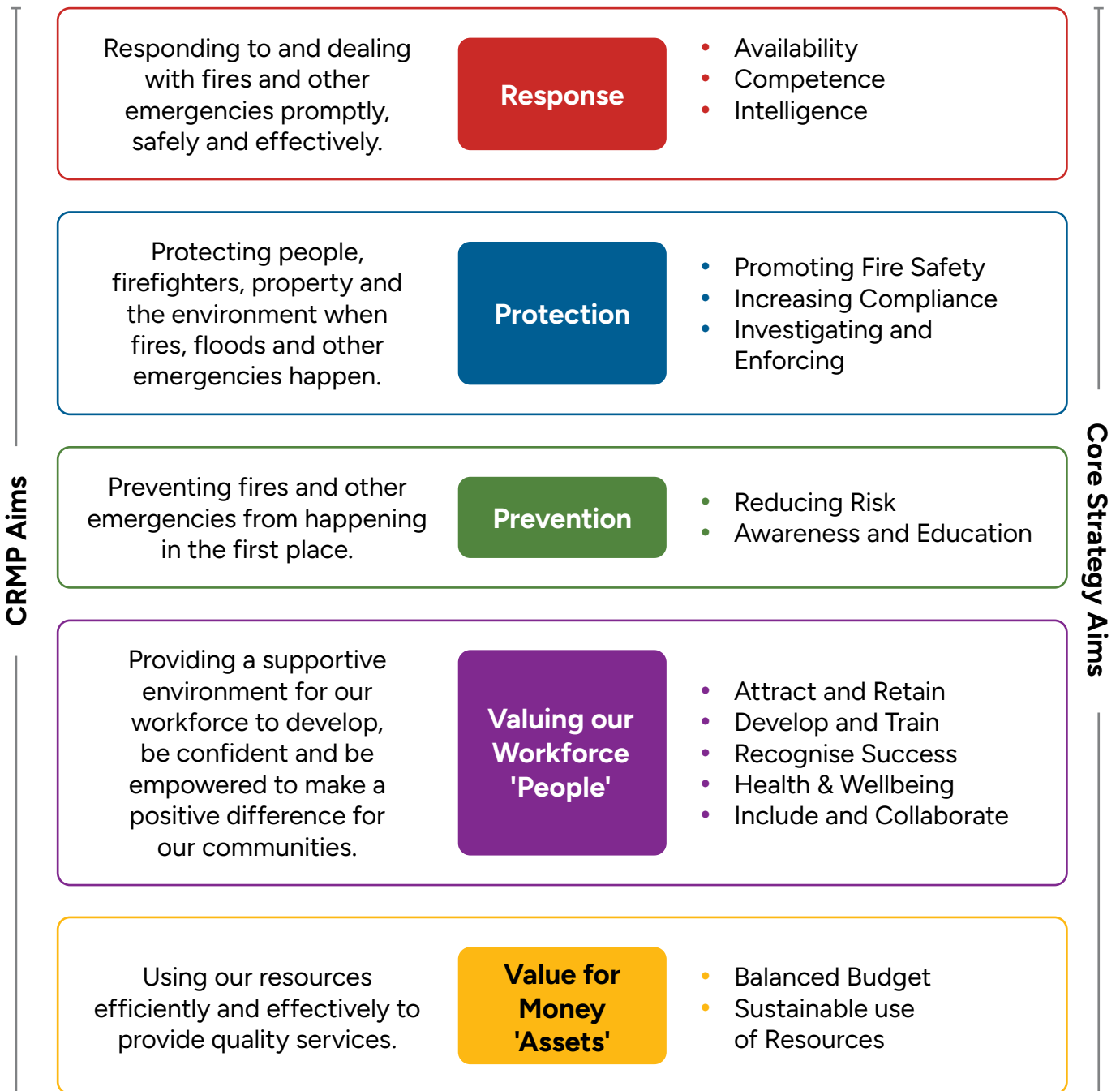


To ensure that we link everything we do to the aims of the CRMP, we have revised our Core Strategies and reshaped the overall structure of the organisation to provide a clear focus on our primary functions: [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#).



Our Priorities

Our headline priorities are set out in the [CRMP 2021-25](#) and our Core Strategies: [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#). Together they represent our four-year strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe. Supporting them are a host of enabling strategies and plans, including the [People Strategy](#) and the annual Medium-Term Financial Plan. The strategies and plans are available on the Service website, but the following diagram highlights the main areas of focus for our work.



Focusing on Excellence

Our aim is to drive excellence in ourselves and in everything we do. Here is how we have been driving organisational and operational excellence over the year.

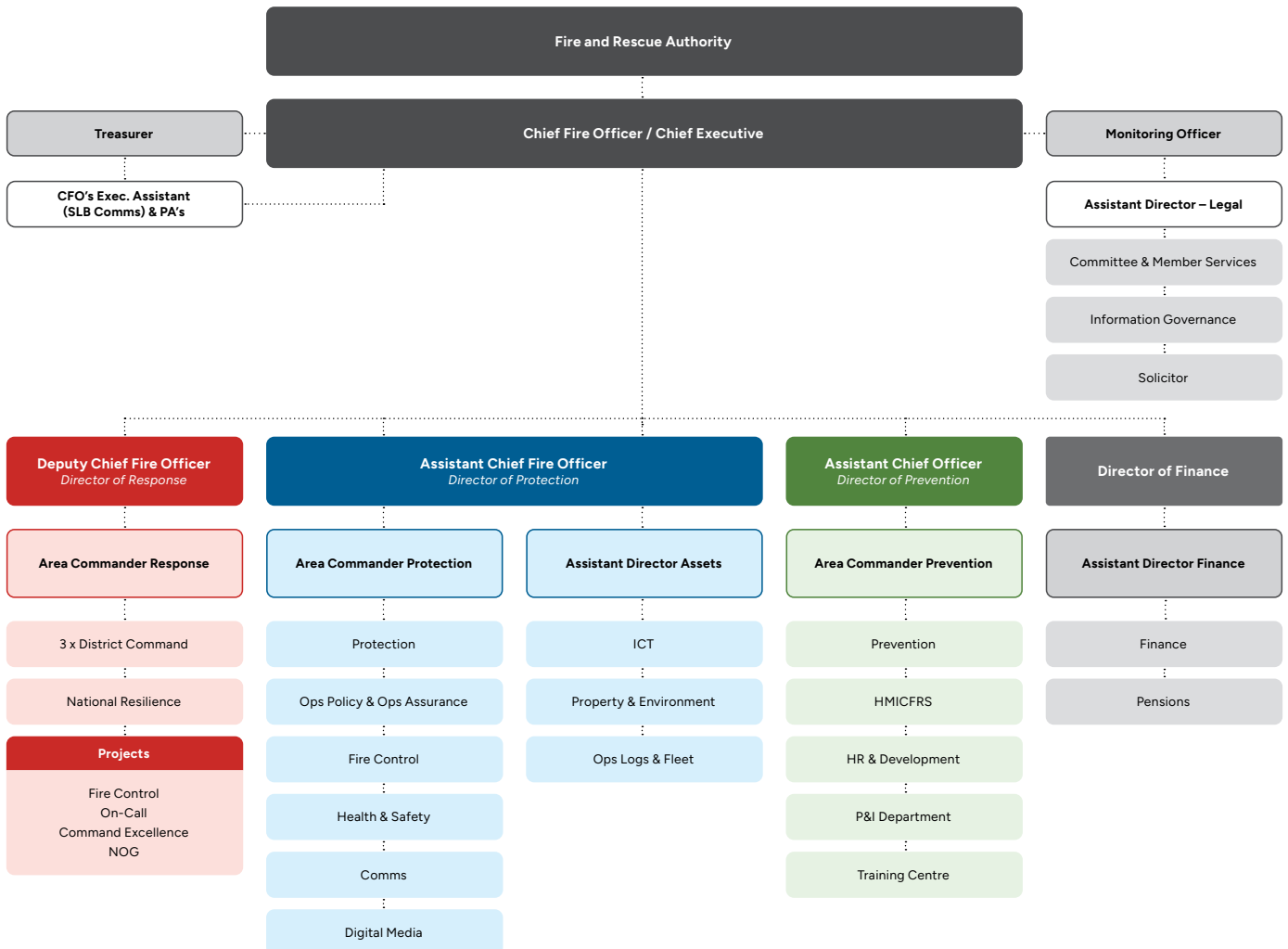
Leadership

The Strategic Leadership Board's (SLB) primary focus is on leading, managing and driving the Service's core and enabling strategies to implement the strategic direction of the Fire Authority.

Over 2023-24 this focus has been broadened and evolved into a Senior Management cohort to include over 50 middle managers. By investing in Senior Management away days, hosted at Worcester Racecourse, the leaders of the organisation have had the opportunity

to listen and engage with guest speakers and reflect on their personal impact and contribution to the organisation.

Two sessions in March and November focused on Leadership, Culture and Digital Transformation in the Service. Interactive workshops on Leading Yourself and Leading Others provided an opportunity for the Senior Managers to develop their natural leadership qualities and reflect on how they can continually improve.



Focusing on Excellence

Response

In responding to emergencies and other incidents, we aim to ensure that we are making the best use of our available resources and funding, to assure our communities that we are providing the most effective service possible across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Our Response Strategy's core foundations are availability, competence and intelligence, which means that we are focused on having the right assets available, at the right time with effective firefighters that have access to accurate, relevant and timely operational risk information.

We adopted the Attendance Performance Measure (APM) during 2023, which provides an evidence base to measure how quickly and effectively we are arriving on scene. Consolidating the data collected over the first year and continually monitoring this information will inform areas of best practice and allow opportunities to improve where attendance falls outside the expected response times. Early arrival at incidents minimises the impact on our communities, businesses and the environment, and also allows us to deal with incidents with a safer and more effective use of firefighting and rescue tactics.

We have experienced a long duration of wetter weather increasing the amount of water-related incidents and rescues that we attended during 2023 and into 2024. During the last year we have attended 224 flooding incidents which is a 27% increase on the same period the year before. We have increased our water response capability across the service and continue to invest in Water First Responder (WFR) units; every fire station will be WFR enabled by the end 2025.

As a Service we continue to ensure fire and emergency cover arrangements are appropriate to meet current and emerging risks. Our planning phase for the next Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) has started with defining risk in Dwelling Fires and Road Traffic Collisions to ensure that we provide an effective and professional response, putting our communities first.



Focusing on Excellence

Protection

Departmental Fire Safety Inspectors who are Level 4 qualified, inspected over 1151 complex premises in 2023-24 (exceeding the target of 1000) to ensure fire safety compliance. In addition, operational managers are trained to Level 3 Fire Safety Certificate standard to enable them to inspect less complex premises. In 2023-24 an additional 355 Fire Safety inspections were carried out by operational crews. Ambitious incremental inspection targets have been set to increase this further over the next 3 years.

In 2023-24 an additional 164 Fire Safety inspections were carried out by operational crews. Ambitious incremental inspection targets have been set increasing from 350 in 2023-24 to 1,000 in 2026-27.

The Service has implemented new Fire Safety legislation that was introduced in 2023, supporting safety in commercial premises, including high-rise buildings. Proactive steps have been taken to communicate new Fire Safety legislation to business owners and support the new Building Safety Regulator. This includes sharing expertise and developing quality assurance and resilience practices with neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services.



Focusing on Excellence

Prevention

We have continued to develop all areas of our Prevention services, including the launch of the new delivery model for the Service's road safety educational package Your Impact. This road safety scheme is aimed at reducing death and serious injury amongst young road users in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) has continued to increase and 7,660 visits were completed with 93% of these completed in the homes of those individuals who had a vulnerability or risk factors identified. This is an increase of 1,141 visits from the previous year.

In line with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Person-Centred Framework, during the year, the Service also introduced a HFSV Evaluation process, the aim of this being to identify if individuals have changed their behaviour as a result of the advice given during a HFSV.



Focusing on Excellence

Valuing our Workforce

Everything we do is underpinned by the national Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. This ensures the services we deliver are inclusive, professional, and maintain the trust and confidence placed in us by our communities.

Our Culture & Ethics Steering Group, made up of a cross-section of staff, continues to support the Service on its cultural journey. The group has developed an Ethical Dilemma Workshop toolkit to promote the Code and to help create a space where teams can discuss how they put the principles of the Code into practice.

As a Service, we support our workforce to be empowered to do what's right, make responsible decisions, and create a safe environment to speak up. We have refreshed our Code of Conduct to clearly set out our professional standards to support a positive working culture and continuously improve the quality of service to the public.

Feedback from staff on the externally provided Service-wide inclusion training programme has been extremely positive. The face-to-face input provides an opportunity to actively seek out and consider different views and perspectives; fully embracing difference so we can strive to continue to be an inclusive, safe place to work where all staff feel valued, supported and able to thrive.



Focusing on Excellence

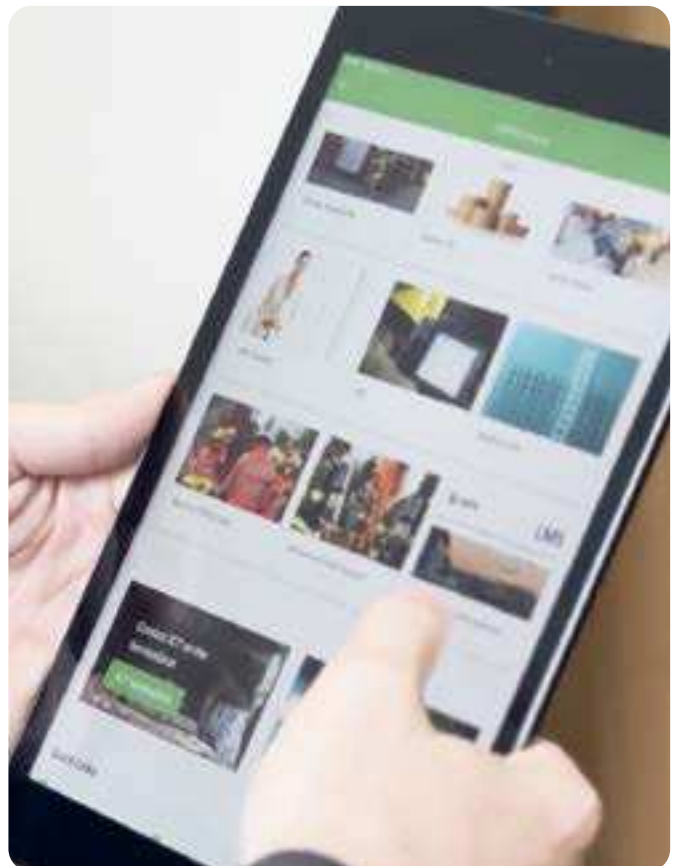
Value for Money

Assets

Planning applications for a new Hereford Fire Station have been granted as well as the new Strategic Training Facility at Leominster. Redditch is into the final stages of the build phase and Broadway Station is now operational with an official opening scheduled for Summer 2024.



In line with the Environmental Sustainability Plan a waste recycling provision has been rolled out to every Service location. Electrical charging points have been introduced at multiple locations to support the first 9 electric vehicles which are now being used by support staff in our Protection and Prevention teams. We will continue to develop this infrastructure to enable the procurement of additional electric vehicles in line with the fleet replacement programme.

To support the integration of multiple digital solutions that have been embedded within the Service, tablet technology has been provided to all operational staff to improve productivity, efficiency and the delivery of the 3 core strategies (Prevention, Protection, Response).



The Year in Numbers

Response

 Increase since 2022-23
 Decrease since 2022-23



8,006
Total Incidents
Attended



2%
Decrease
(131 incidents)



16,212
Calls to
Fire Control



6%
Decrease
(951 calls)

The total number of incidents attended was 8,006 including 55 incidents outside the Service's operational boundaries. A decrease of 2% was largely attributed to a reduction in the number of fires attended (-26%, 510 incidents).

Note that calls now include duplicate calls for some incidents reported.



The Year in Numbers

Response continued



Increase since 2022-23



Decrease since 2022-23

Detailed statistics below are provided excluding incidents that occurred outside Service's area.



1,467
Fires



26%
Decrease
(510 incidents)



1,078
Accidental Fires



20%
Decrease
(274 incidents)



389
Deliberate Fires



38%
Decrease
(236 incidents)



563
Primary Building
Fires



3%
Increase
(14 incidents)



540
Outdoor Fires



48%
Decrease
(493 incidents)



47
Non-Fatal
Casualties from
Fire Incidents



15%
Decrease

While there were 7 fire fatalities in 2023-24, the fire fatality rate in Herefordshire & Worcestershire remained low at **0.88 per 100,000** population.



The Year in Numbers

Response continued



Increase since 2022-23



Decrease since 2022-23



2,569

Special Service
Incidents



7%

Increase
(161 incidents)



659

Road Traffic
Collisions



1%

Decrease
(4 incidents)



224

Flooding
Incidents



27%

Increase
(48 incidents)



293

Assisting Other
Agencies



8%

Decrease
(27 incidents)



127

Animal Rescues



9%

Increase
(11 incidents)



153

Rescues From
Water



101%

Increase
(77 incidents)



3,915

False Alarms



6%

Increase
(225 incidents)



3,064

False Alarms
due to Apparatus



10%

Increase
(282 incidents)



801

Good Intent
False Alarms



5%

Decrease
(45 incidents)



50

Malicious
False Alarms



23%

Decrease
(12 incidents)

The Year in Numbers

Protection



1,687
RBIP */ Visits
Post Fires



439
Building Reg.
Consultations



66
Enforcements



270
Licensing Applications
Completed



82
Fire Investigations



49,870
Number of followers on our
main X** corporate pages



46
Media Campaigns

**RBIP = Risk-Based Inspection Programme*

*** Formerly known as Twitter*



The Year in Numbers

Prevention



7,660

Home Fire Safety Visits



3,243

Referrals from
External Agencies



115

Safeguarding Referrals



32

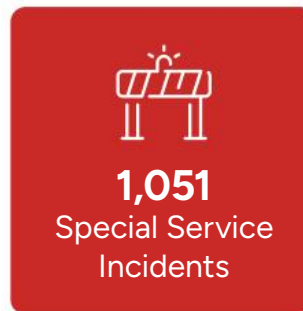
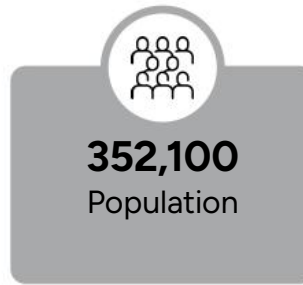
Firesetter Referrals



Incident Breakdown by District

North District

North District covers 180 square miles across northern Worcestershire with the majority of people living in the towns of Redditch, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Droitwich. It has five fire stations, the busiest of which during the year was Wyre Forest attending 1,299 incidents or 39% of incidents in the District.



Note: population and household estimates are based on HWFRS District area so do not precisely match Local Authority District Council boundaries.

Incident Breakdown by District

South District


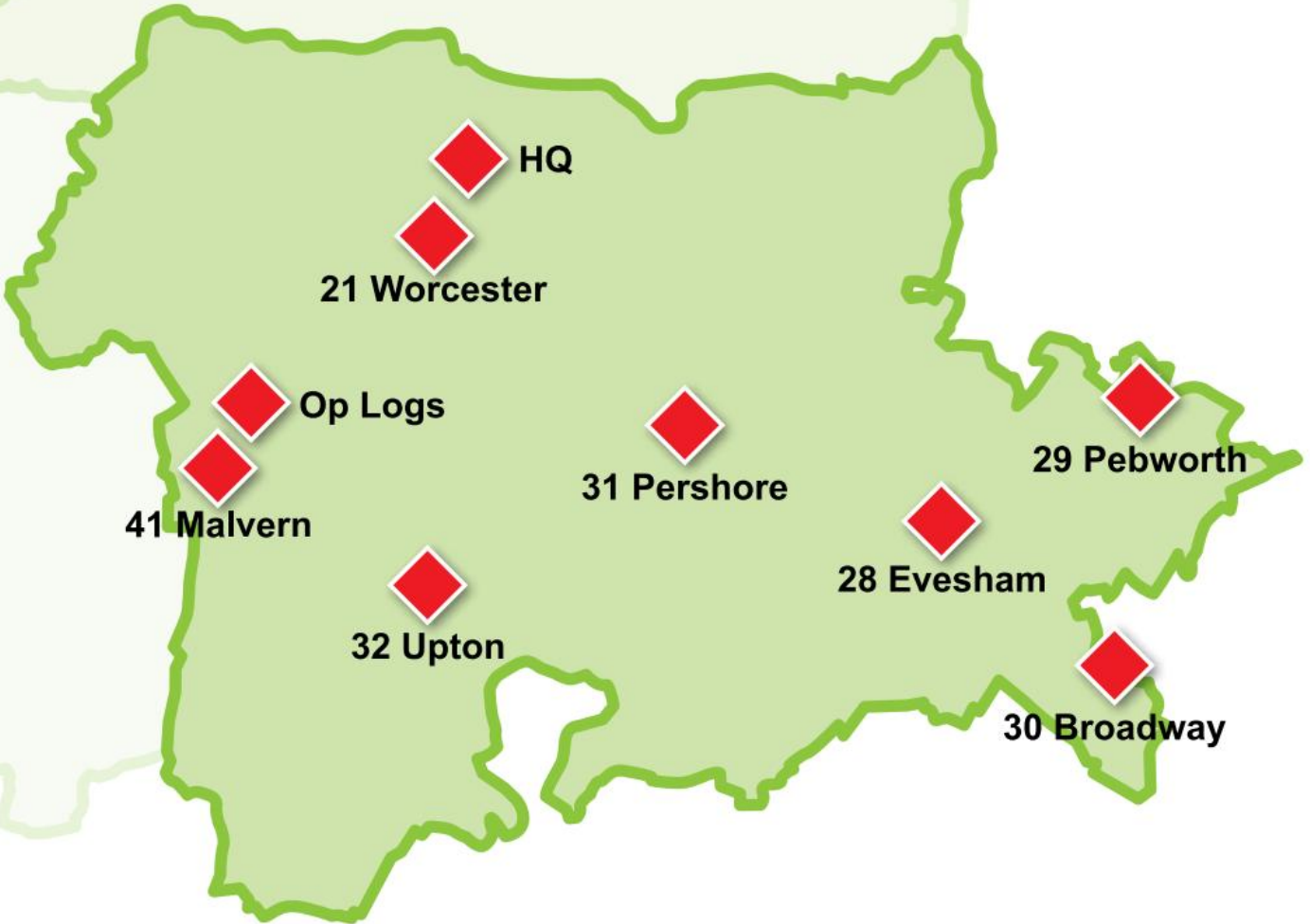
South District covers 490 square miles with most people living in the city of Worcester and the two towns of Malvern and Evesham. It is served by six fire stations including Worcester, the busiest station in the two counties, attending 1,496 incidents or 54% of incidents in the District during the year.



261,600
Population




112,600
Households




2,774
Incidents Attended



472
Fires



878
Special Service Incidents



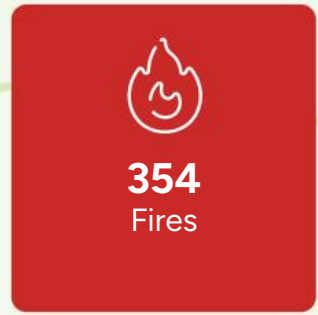
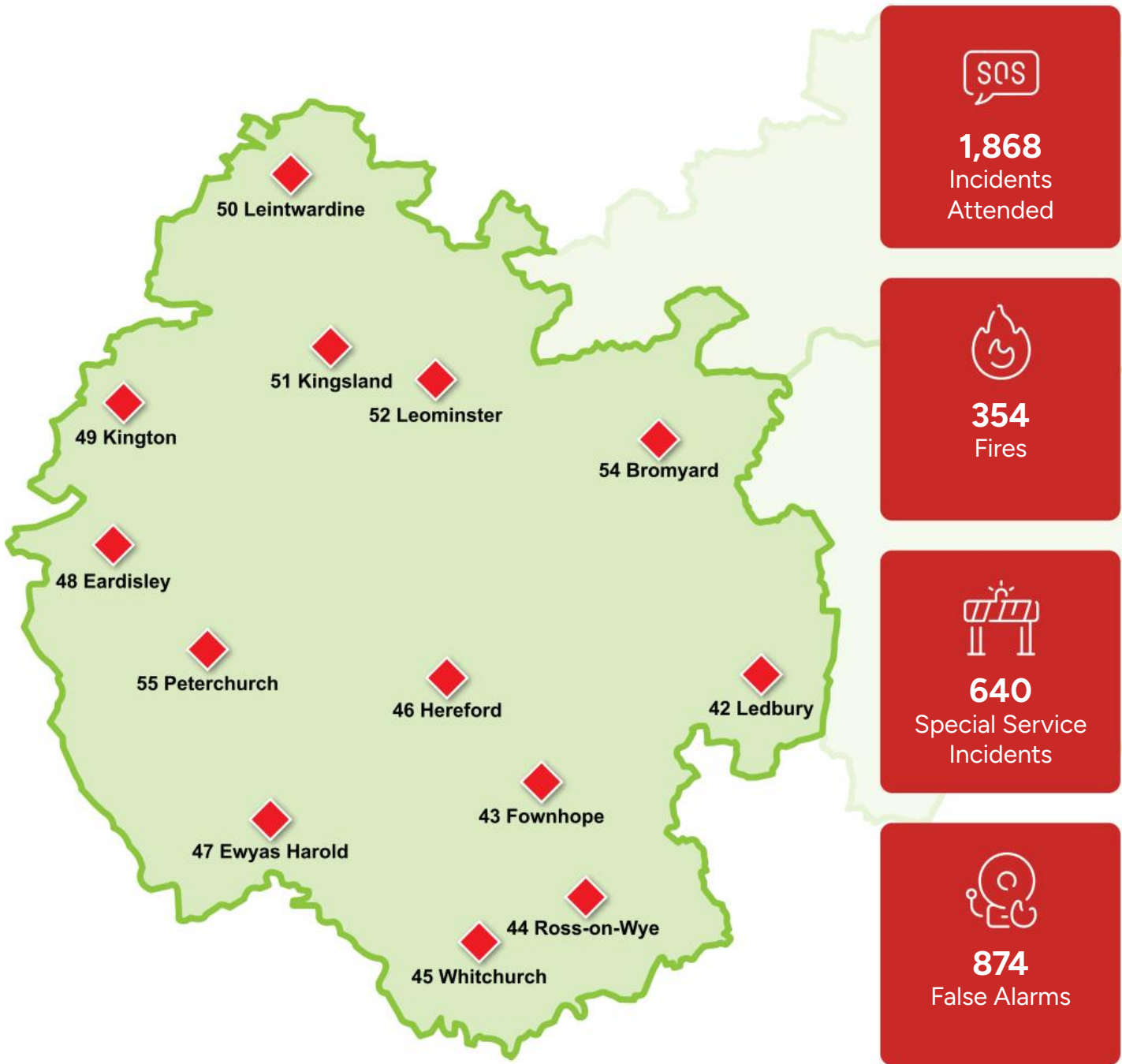
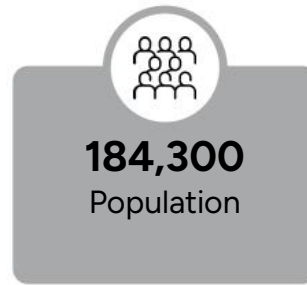
1,424
False Alarms

Note: population and household estimates are based on HWFRS District area so do not precisely match Local Authority District Council boundaries.

Incident Breakdown by District

West District

West District covers the whole of Herefordshire. About a third of the population live in the city of Hereford, with most people living in smaller communities across the rural county. It has 13 fire stations, the busiest of which was Hereford attending 932 incidents or 50% of incidents in the District.



Note: population and household estimates are based on HWFRS District area so do not precisely match Local Authority District Council boundaries.

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives

In our [2023-24 Annual Service Plan](#), we set out a number of objectives we wanted to achieve over the year. The objectives were designed to provide a priority focus on what we were going to do in 2023-24 towards delivering our Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 and our Response, Protection and Prevention Core Strategies.

The following sections report on what we said we would do, and what we did.

Response

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
-------------------------------------	-------------

On-Call Recruitment

- We will drive up the availability of our On-Call resources by a targeted, intelligence/evidence based recruitment plan specific to both the station needs and community profile. This will be delivered by the On-Call Marketing Project the service is investing in.

We delivered a digital campaign over social media to reach out and update our communities on the role of the On-Call firefighter. Moreover, the team filtered around 900 enquiries into the role across the 25 fire stations. The successful outcome of this initiative/project has demonstrated the need to commit fulltime resources to support the long-term sustainability of the On-Call model used by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). A team is now being established throughout 2024-25 to build on the successful outcomes from the project.



Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Response

What we said we would do in 2023-24

Firefighter Safety and Command Excellence

- We will drive our focus on firefighter safety and leadership by maximising the use of our new Incident Command training facilities to ensure every Commander has the right skills and knowledge to deploy, monitor and manage our resources.

What we did

We delivered an introduction to incident command for aspiring firefighters who wanted to experience the first steps in supervisory manager Incident Command training, through practical and theoretical training days that could lead them to become a supervisory Incident Commander of the future.

Incident Command training sessions are provided for everyone and are designed to create an open learning environment, using mentoring that will help build on the knowledge and skills at every level of Incident Command.

Effective Command was introduced to replace Active Incident Monitoring. Effective Command was created as a behavioural marker framework, to address the disconnect between academic research and its application within the Fire Service.

The aim was to develop a robust strategy to implement non-technical skills during Fire-officer training. It focuses on five key behaviours: Situational Awareness, Decision-making, Objective Setting, Action Behaviours and Review. All staff have completed Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) and Major Incident training.

In addition to training, planning and preparedness we assess current operational risks and utilise those themes to complete three large scale district exercises per year. Simulations that support our operational capabilities in pursuit of operational excellence. Run Hide Tell was a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) and culminating in a challenging building fire situation. Commanders from all partner agencies were presented with diverse scenarios, testing their decision-making skills through JESIP.

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Response

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
<p>National Operational Guidance – Digital Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will introduce digital training across the Service to embed and support National Operational Guidance to support firefighter safety.	<p>Throughout 2023-24 the National Operational Guidance team/project delivered a number of new interactive digital packages via the Learning Management System. This new learning style and training delivery model has allowed all our operational staff to gain the valuable knowledge needed to identify risks and hazards and apply appropriate safe working practices laid out in the national guidance. In addition, the team, supported by ICT, also delivered and successfully rolled out iPads to all operational staff to enable them to have instant access to the products both in and out of the workplace.</p>
<p>Working Practices and Time Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will review our working practices and introduce tools to support managers with time management to enable them to drive more efficient and effective ways of delivering our frontline services to the public.	<p>Building on the time and motion study, the Response directorate has developed and embedded a new 'Work Routines' policy to standardise working practices and maximise working time. This policy has been complemented with a new IT recording system that builds on the commitment given to drive firefighter efficiency by 3% linked to the three-year Spending Review. It captures the work activity of operational staff to ensure not only best use of time, but also allows for more analysis moving forward regarding the time split between Prevention, Protection and Response.</p>
<p>Attendance Performance Measure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will monitor our response to the communities, ensure we meet our attendance performance measure on as many occasions as possible, and investigate and analyse when we are unable to meet them.	<p>A new Attendance Performance Measure (APM) has been approved by the FRA and adopted within Response. This new standard is measured via an APM portal and managers are held to account when the measure is not met, with exception reporting being captured via the new software. In addition, a new Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT) has been introduced to allow operational managers to proactively look at the available fire cover across the two counties to ensure the disposition of our assets affords the best cover possible.</p>

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Protection

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
Risk Based Inspection Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will deliver departmental and operational Risk Based Inspection Programme targets, including providing training and support to operational staff working towards Fire Safety qualifications.	Fire safety inspections increased by 24% (1219 – 1510) in 2023/24. This increase is predominantly down to training frontline operational staff to the Level 3 Fire Safety standard. This enabled this group of staff to complete 355 inspections, in addition to the 1,155 conducted by departmental staff, which also exceeded its annual target of 1,000. Our inspection programme was recognised by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has focused on the highest risk buildings, consistently good quality audits and effective quality assurance processes.
Fire Safety Compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will work proactively with businesses to ensure compliance, including the effective management of Enforcement and Prohibition Notices and the prompt and proportionate use of prosecution powers where necessary.	HMICFRS recognised that the Service is good at taking enforcement action, where appropriate, to reduce risk. They also found that we consistently use our range of enforcement powers and prosecute where appropriate. This can be seen in our successful fire safety prosecution of a commercial premises in July 2023, which resulted in total fines exceeding £30,000.
Intelligence Based Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will conduct a programme of fire safety inspections which target smaller and more vulnerable commercial premises where life may be at risk. These visits will be part of a joint inspection with partner enforcement agencies.	This multi-agency inspection programme considers local or national fire trends and local or national non-compliance trends linked to the Fire Safety Order. As with all of our fire safety inspections, the programme aims to prevent death or serious injury in the event of fire and limit the economic cost of fire, by ensuring compliance with the Fire Safety Order.
Unwanted Fire Signals <ul style="list-style-type: none">We made a commitment to start a review of how we respond to unwanted fire signals and act on report outcomes. This will ensure that we effectively manage the burden of false alarms.	In 2023 we conducted and published a comprehensive review of unwanted false alarm fire signals. This review and proposal were approved by the Fire Authority in 2023. A plan is being implemented in 2024 to reduce the number of unwanted fire alarm signals.

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued



Prevention

What we said we would do in 2023-24

Dying2Drive Delivery

- We will adopt a new delivery model for our road safety educational package for Years 10 and 11 students. Workshops will take place predominantly in schools, with the aim of an educational package being offered to all schools across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. All schools will be given the option of face-to-face delivery or online training. This will ensure that the Service and partners can carry out road safety educational input to as many young people as possible.

What we did

Following a review of the Dying2Drive campaign we realigned our commitment to this initiative and with our partners we started the new delivery model of the road safety educational package Your Impact. The Prevention team along with our partners carry out workshops in schools providing Year 10 students with the education, tools and confidence to make the right choices using the road to first become better passengers. Your Impact involves a realistic road traffic collision (RTC) reconstruction that is delivered through Virtual Reality technology, followed by powerful interactive workshops.

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Prevention

What we said we would do in 2023-24

What we did

Partnership Working

- We will continue to work with local partners to increase the number and quality of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) we will complete on an annual basis to ensure we are targeting those individuals who are most at risk of fire. We also will promote our Winter Warmth Campaign and work collaboratively with partners to address the impact of the cost of living crisis. Prevention staff can also offer input and expertise on developments and opportunities to support the well-being of our communities.

The Service increased the number of HFSVs completing 7,660 visits. This was an increase of 18% on the previous year.

The Prevention team supported various local events to promote fire safety and have worked with partners to promote the services that we can offer and how we can best support them. They worked with partners as part of the cost of living campaign, providing Winter Warmth packs to those most vulnerable within our communities.

The team are now key representatives on all District Collaboratives where partners work together to meet the needs of the communities we serve. This means we have been able to work collaboratively to identify those individuals who are most at risk of fire.

Evaluation of Prevention Activities

- We will evaluate all areas of our Prevention activity so we can consider whether the intervention delivered has changed individual behaviour and has been effective. We will also start the evaluation of behaviour change related to the HFSV intervention and will evaluate youth engagement activities using interactive tools.

Post HFSV evaluation started this year with the aim of reviewing if an individual's behaviour has changed as a result of the advice given during a HFSV. From the evaluation contacts made, 80% of individuals said they had made changes as a result of the visit with having an escape plan, testing smoke alarms regularly and carbon monoxide awareness being the top three areas of the HFSV individuals recalled or adopted changes.

Use of Data

- We will continue to develop our use of data from a range of sources to inform our risk-based targeting of Prevention activities. This will allow us to prioritise our services to those most vulnerable to fire and other emergencies within our communities.

Following adoption of the NFCC's Definition of Risk for Dwelling Fires last year, the Service also adopted the methodology for RTCs. This gives the Service guidance on targeting those most at risk of being killed or seriously injured in an RTC. We have also undertaken an annual review of our Statement of Intent for dwelling fires, which assists in risk-based targeting for delivery of our Prevention activities.

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Valuing our Workforce

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
<p>People Strategy 2022-25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to deliver the People Strategy 2022-25 to support the delivery of the Response, Protection and Prevention Strategies and the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25. 	<p>We continued to progress our People Strategy Action Plan to support the core organisational strategies and the CRMP.</p>
<p>Culture and Inclusion (EDI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to develop our culture by putting the recommendations of our own culture audit and those from HMICFRS into action. We will also roll out a bespoke and specialist inclusion training programme for all staff at all levels. 	<p>We continued to develop our organisational culture via an externally provided Service-wide inclusion training programme.</p> <p>We matured our approach to culture and inclusion by creating a Culture & Ethics Steering Group made up of a cross-section of staff, to support the Service in its cultural journey.</p> <p>We refreshed our Code of Conduct to align with the national Core Code of Ethics and to clearly set out our professional standards.</p>
<p>Health and Resilience (EDI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will deliver our Mental Health at Work Commitment action plan to improve the support available for staff. 	<p>We delivered Year 1 of the Mental Health at Work Commitment action plan including the creation of more than over 20 Wellbeing Champions across the organisation, to assist in promoting an open culture around mental health.</p>
<p>Staff Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to invest in the development of our staff in three ways; firstly, in their core roles, secondly in any aspirations to advance and develop their skills, and thirdly as employees we will invest in them to help them achieve their personal goals. 	<p>We developed an e-appraisal and introduced a "Career Conversation" as an opportunity for staff to discuss their future career aspirations, goals and plans as a way of nurturing talent within the Service.</p>

Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Value for Money

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
<p>Maintain a balanced and sustainable budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will invest in new ways of working through up-front investment to develop a clear path to more efficient working in the future. We will invest in new systems and review how we use our current assets to ensure they offer best value in the future. 	<p>We continue to make upfront investment in the Project work detailed in this Review such as ICT, embedding National Operational Guidance, investing in new Breathing Apparatus, new equipment tracking to drive efficiency and the ambitious Capital Build project.</p>
<p>Continue our project/asset plans to modernise and improve efficiency at fire stations through our Invest to Improve programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will pursue planning applications for a new Hereford Fire Station, a strategic training facility at Leominster Fire Station and a new training facility at Wyre Forest Fire Station. We will also continue rebuilding works at Redditch Fire Station and Broadway Fire Station. 	<p>Planning applications for a new Hereford Fire Station have been granted as well as the new Strategic Training Facility at Leominster. Redditch is into the final stages of the build phase and Broadway Station is now operational with an official opening scheduled Summer 2024.</p>
<p>Continue to implement the ICT Strategy 2021-2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will rationalise our Microsoft 365 Licensing model by adopting a targeted approach to user licences. This will enable savings on subscriptions, while users will still have access to the same ICT facilities as before. 	<p>The Microsoft Licensing Model has been rationalised so that we have a better working model. Licences are applied accordingly to Rank and Role within the organisation and users who require greater flexibility and capability are now catered for, with access to add on features as and when required.</p>

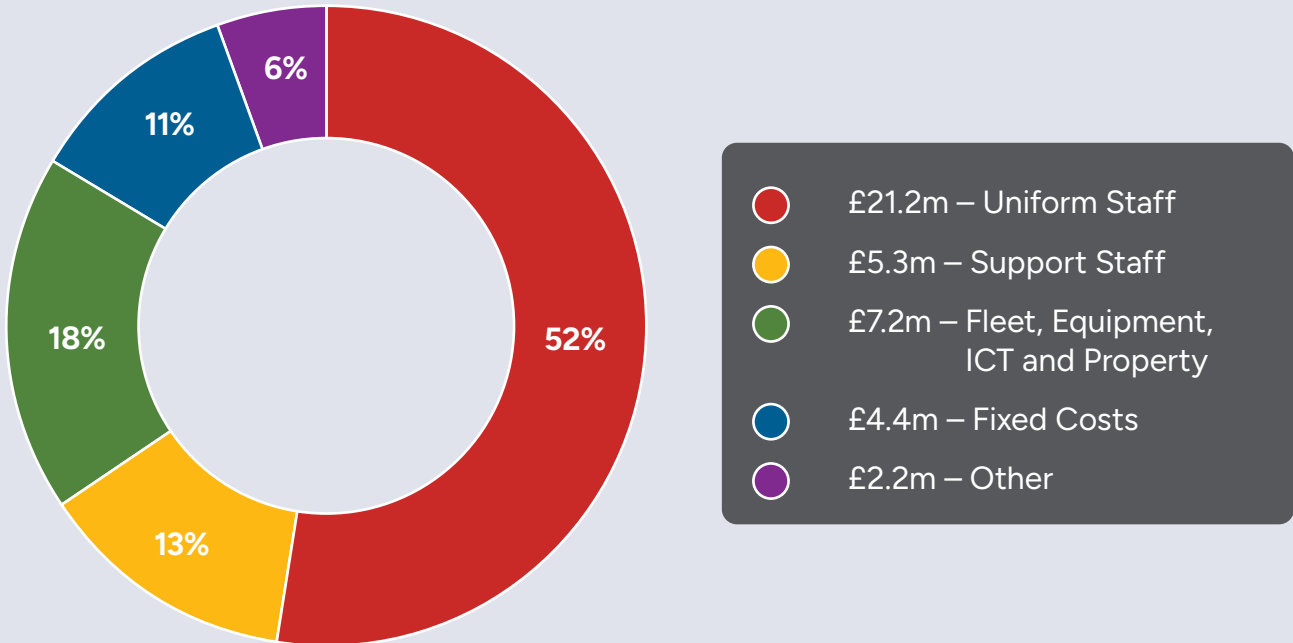
Delivering our 2023-24 Service Objectives continued

Value for Money

What we said we would do in 2023-24	What we did
<ul style="list-style-type: none">We will move towards a new telephony model using the Session Initiation Protocol or SIP, helping to reduce overall costs but also improving the facilities offered to staff, including MS Teams integration and extended functionality.	<p>The ISDN PSTN communication standards are due to be retired as of 2025 as mandated by British Telecom and ICT have been working to ensure that we are ready for the switch over to more modern SIP Services (Voice Over Internet Protocol – VOIP). Once the mandatory switch over is implemented, this will provide enhanced services to all our users including the full capability MS Teams, Voice and video conferencing facilities as well as delivering efficiencies. These unified platforms enable real-time messaging, video conferencing, file sharing, project management and promotes collaboration regardless of physical location.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">We will continue to develop a more agile, modern ICT workspace, enabling people to work from anywhere at any time, supporting our flexible working policies.	<p>In order to support this, the Service has invested in a one-to-one issue of mobile tablet devices supporting our users to be able to access ICT services and facilities from any location, enhancing the capability for people to work from anywhere at any time to further support our commitment to flexible and agile working. The tablets also provide the mechanism for further online training and developmental opportunities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">We will continue to develop a more personalised and directed platform for our users, with targeted data, content and learning across our Microsoft 365 estate.	<p>More features of Office 365 have been introduced across the organisation, that adopts the Me, We, Us, philosophy which is being rolled out across the Service. By trialling various applications within specific departments, we will develop a good understanding of how they will enable more effective and collaborative working, whilst moving us further into a modern workspace.</p>

Finance 2023-24

Fire Authority Budget 2023-24



How the Service was funded

H&W Council Tax	£27.2m
Funding Grants	£8.8m
Business Rates, etc.	£3.1m
Special Grants	£1.0m
Reserves	£0.2m
	£40.3m

The annual Band D Council Tax was £94.40 or less than 26 pence per day.

Contact Us

We always welcome any views or comments on our reports and plans, so if you want to contact us about any issues, please visit our website at www.hwfire.org.uk where you will find full contact details along with links to further information about our services and activities.

If you have any general enquiries, please call 0345 122 4454 or email us at info@hwfire.org.uk

You can also follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook @hwfire

Alternatively, you can write to us at:

Hereford & Worcester FRS Headquarters
Hindlip Park
Worcester
WR3 8SP

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Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

Annual Service Plan 2024-25

Purpose of report

1. To seek approval for the draft Annual Service Plan 2024-25.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Plan 2024-25 and approves it for publication on the Service website.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service produces a Fire Authority Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan as part of its corporate planning process. The Annual Service Plan is a look ahead to activities planned for the coming year, with priorities arranged against the overall aims of the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 (CRMP) and the Service's Core Strategies. The Annual Service Review is a review of the previous year's activity and performance, and an overview of the Service organisation and budget: the Review is reported elsewhere on the agenda.
3. The two-report format was introduced in 2021-22 as a replacement to the Fire Authority Annual Report, reflecting a change to a more accessible, visual and engaging style suited to an increasingly online audience.

The Annual Service Plan 2024-25

4. The Annual Service Plan highlights the key priorities for the Service in 2024-25 set out under the main CRMP headings of Response, Protection, Prevention, Valuing Our Workforce and Value For Money.
5. The overall focus for the year remains firmly fixed on driving organisational and operational excellence throughout the Service. Activities are focused on continuous improvement across our Response, Protection and Prevention functions, as well as supporting our workforce to make a positive difference for our communities and ensuring we continue to use our resources in the best ways to deliver value for money for the public.
6. The Plan is included as Appendix 1.

Conclusion/Summary

7. This report presents the Annual Service Plan 2024-25, which sets out our key priorities and activities for the coming year.
8. Subject to Fire Authority approval, the finalised Service Plan will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The Annual Service Plan provides information on resources necessary to support the implementation of Fire Authority objectives and priorities.</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>The Plan highlights proposed priority activities in 2024-25 to support the delivery of the CRMP 2021-25 and Core Strategy objectives. The Plan also reports on the Service's adoption of the Core Code of Ethics.</p>
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>The Plan provides an overview of proposed priority actions. Risk implications are considered as part of the details of each activity as drawn up in departmental business plans.</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Strategic Leadership Board consultation.</p>
<p>Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>When preparing projects or other activities, departments are required to consider proposed actions against the Service's equality objectives as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-25.</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>No personal data is processed in the Plan.</p>

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Service Plan 2024-25 – separate enclosure



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HWFRS Annual Service Plan 2024-25



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Contents

Foreword	1
Service Structure	2
Our Ethical Principles	3
Our Priorities	4
Service Objectives for 2024-25	
Response	5
Protection	7
Prevention	8
Valuing our Workforce	9
Value for Money	10
Contact Us	13

Foreword

Annual Service Review 2023-24
link to be added once live

The Annual Service Plan looks forward over the financial year (April 2024 – March 2025) and focuses on some of the key priorities and objectives we have set for the coming months.

The Plan sits alongside the [Annual Service Review 2023-24](#), which looks back over the last twelve months showing the key highlights and events of the year, including an overview on how we delivered last year's Service Plan priorities. You can find the Review on the [Publications](#) page of our [Service website](#).

The Service priorities and objectives for 2024-25 are built around delivering our overall plans as set out in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2021-25 and the three Core Strategies for Response, Protection and Prevention, alongside the People Strategy, our financial plans and a host of enabling plans – all of which can be found on our Publications page.

Priority Focus for 2024-25

During 2024-25 the Service will be focusing on embedding any change generated by the Resource Review, reinvesting savings into the front line and focusing on driving forward with our build and regeneration plans.

Community safety remains a high priority and work will continue to identify those most at risk of fire and other emergencies in our communities to ensure that they are engaged and supported. Key to this is working with partner agencies and time will be invested in working collaboratively to share information and work on joint initiatives to combine resources and reduce risk.

You can keep in touch with our plans and progress through our Service website, in our reports to the [Fire Authority and its Committees](#) and through our social media platforms. You will find the links at the end of this Plan.

We hope this Plan helps you to appreciate the wide range of work we do to keep our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire safe from fire and other emergencies.



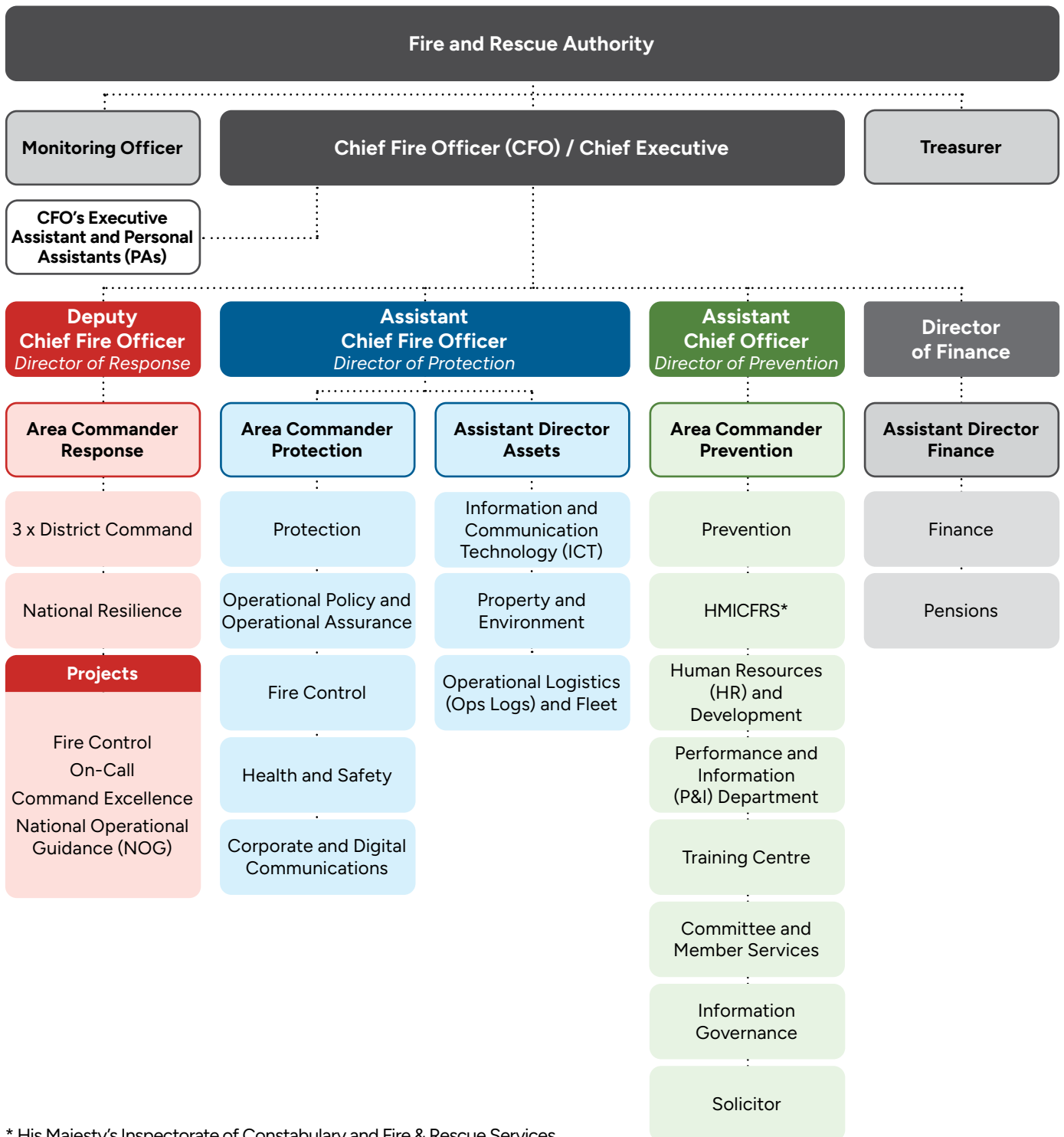
Councillor Kit Taylor
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Jonathon Pryce
*Chief Fire Officer/
Chief Executive*

Service Structure

We aim to continue to embed a number of small but significant adjustments to our Service structure. The revised structure reflects the important focus on our three primary functions: Response, Protection and Prevention. Each of these functions has a dedicated Director with a clear line of responsibility and accountability to lead and deliver their respective Core Strategies. The structure also aligns with the way His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspect and assess the Service. You can find more about each Department on the Service website.

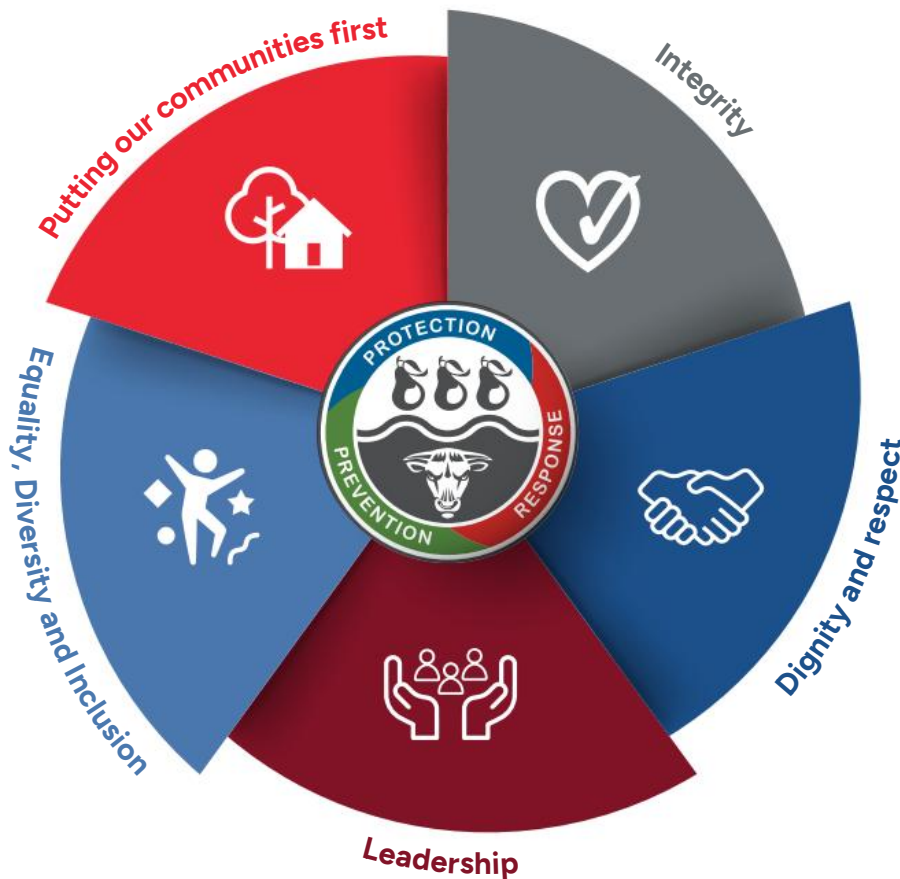



* His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services


Our Ethical Principles


We are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(FRS\)](#) in England.


The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. These principles are our guiding set of values and help us to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.




Putting our communities first 
We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity 
We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

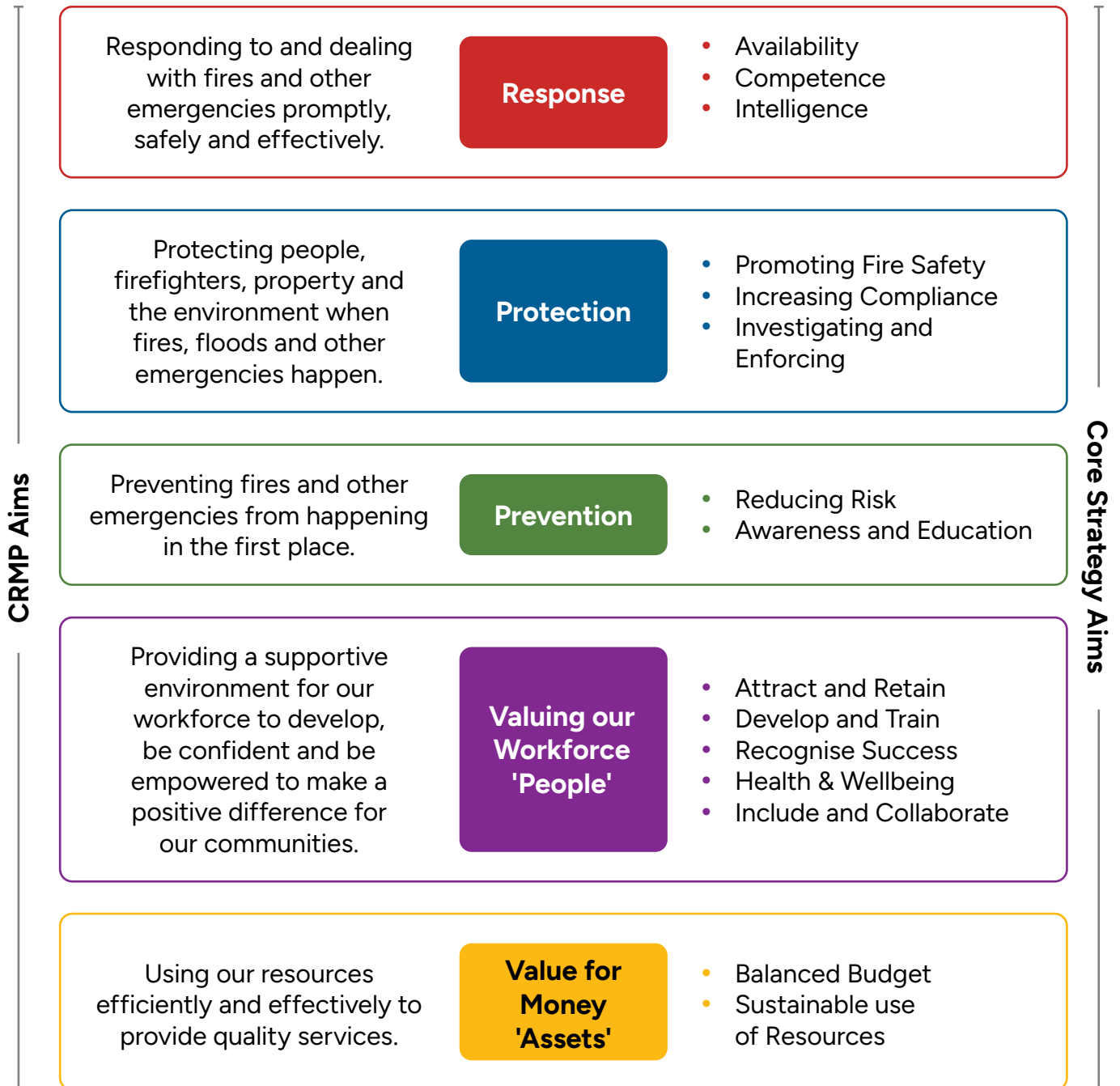
Dignity and respect 
We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership 
As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 
We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

Our Priorities

Our priorities turn our overall Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values into action. They are set out in our [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 \(CRMP\)](#) and our Core Strategies: [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#). Together they represent our four-year strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe. Supporting them are a host of enabling strategies and plans, including the [People Strategy](#) and the annual Medium-Term Financial Plan.



Service Objectives for 2024-25

Response

Priority Focus

Delivering Operational Excellence



Resource Review

Recommendations were made to change the way in which we resource our response model to provide an effective and sustainable service to our communities. The reinvestment is focused on making the best use of our available resources and funding to assure the Fire Authority, stakeholders and our communities that the Service is providing the most effective service possible across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The review aligns with the core principles of the current CRMP and the Response strategy.

Special Appliance Review

There has been a review of the special appliances and resources across the Service, focusing on the locations of incidents, types of incidents attended and the staffing model that enables the effective use of those resources. In 2024-25, recommendations will be made to relocate or utilise special appliances that are appropriate to meet current and emerging risks. This will include working with National Resilience (NR) to trial new emerging technology, appliances and equipment to tackle the most likely fire and rescue risks.

Response Strategy

We are continually reviewing our response plan analysing our internal and external operating environments, as emerging themes evolve. The priorities are based on our Response Strategy and CRMP. We will be evaluating and consulting on the next CRMP process, shaped by the definition of risks identified across our two counties. That will determine the future direction of our Response Strategy.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Response continued

Day Crewing

The Day Crewing Duty System has been implemented at Evesham, Droitwich and Malvern Fire Stations, providing a robust and resilient emergency service to the communities in those locations, during the day and at night. These stations provide fire appliances and specialist teams including boat crews, rope teams and other specialist rescue teams.

Over Border Exercising Strategy

We aim to develop a strategy to ensure effective Service Delivery in planning, preparedness and essential practical training for foreseeable risks, providing the ability to deliver timely, reliable and resilient cross-border operational capabilities.

Whilst providing high quality operational support is critical, it is also important to ensure the maintenance of well-practised communications, plans, processes and logistical support, ensuring sharing of systems and equipment where appropriate and possible.

Maintain the roll out of Water First Responder Training and Equipment

There is a continuous programme of operations to ensure the successful completion of Water First Responder training, equipment and infrastructure at all our fire stations to ensure that we are ready and equipped to meet the requirements of our communities in times of flooding.

Capital Build Programme

Hereford, Redditch, Broadway, North Hereford Strategic Training Facility

The official opening of our new fire stations at Broadway and Redditch will be held during 2024. Plans are approved for our new buildings at the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility in Leominster and also the new fire station in Hereford. These new facilities will be better placed to meet the needs of our firefighters in training and responding to incidents in our communities.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Protection

Priority Focus

Ensuring Compliance



Risk Based Inspection Programme

We will continue to deliver departmental and operational Risk Based Inspection Programme targets, including providing training and support to operational staff working towards Fire Safety qualifications.

Fire Safety Compliance

We will continue to work proactively with businesses to ensure compliance, including the effective management of Enforcement and Prohibition Notices and the prompt and proportionate use of prosecution powers where necessary.

Intelligence Based Inspections

We will continue to conduct a programme of fire safety inspections which target smaller and more vulnerable commercial premises where life may be at risk. These visits will be part of a joint inspection with partner enforcement agencies.



Service Objectives for 2024-25

Prevention

Priority Focus

Promoting Awareness and Evaluation



Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) and Partnership Working

In 2023-24, the Service completed 7,660 HFSV, and of these 3,243 visits were generated by referrals from our partners. We will continue to work with local partners to promote our services and work collaboratively to identify the most vulnerable people in our communities by targeting those individuals who are most at risk of fire, as identified in the Definition of Risk for Dwelling Fires. We will also promote our services and campaigns by exploring the use of new digital technology to improve the way we deliver our safety messages.

Water Rescues and Flooding

We will work alongside partners to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries in or around water by providing water safety advice and flooding awareness to reduce the number of drownings. We will use data from the Service's Definition of Risk to identify the individuals and groups mostly likely to be affected by water incidents along with supporting partnership campaigns and targeted events.

Road Safety

We will work collaboratively with partners to promote and expand the Your Impact road safety programme delivered to Year 10 students in schools. We will gather feedback and evaluation from schools and partners to assess the effectiveness of the delivery model and make improvements where appropriate. We will also deliver targeted road safety interventions to other road users such as mature drivers with the aim of reducing deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

Evaluation

We aim to ensure continuous improvement through quality assurance and the evaluation of the effectiveness of our prevention activities. We will further embed the HFSV behaviour change evaluation process by monitoring and reviewing, to demonstrate continual improvement.

We will also develop an approach to evaluate changes in behaviour following the delivery of road safety education and intervention, working with partners to establish an evaluation method to measure behavioural change.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Valuing our Workforce

Priority Focus

Influencing the Right Behaviours



People Strategy 2022-25

We will continue to deliver the People Strategy 2022-25 to support the delivery of the Response, Protection and Prevention Strategies and the CRMP 2021-25.

Culture and Inclusion

We aim to continue to develop our culture by making our strategic intent more explicit through a Cultural Statement of Intent, to support the Service in continuing to improve and foster an inclusive, safe culture and making equality, diversity and inclusion the fabric of the organisation.

We aim to complete a bespoke and specialist inclusion training programme for all staff at all levels.

Health and Resilience

We will deliver Year 2 of the Mental Health at Work Commitment action plan to improve the health and wellbeing support available for staff.

Unlocking Potential

We aim to develop a clear roadmap for developing our people and unlocking their potential in support of our cultural journey and continue to invest in the development of our staff in their roles and their future career aspirations.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Value for Money

Priority Focus

Targeted Use of Resources



Maintain a balanced and sustainable budget

We will invest in new ways of working through up-front investment to develop a clear path to more efficient working in the future.

We will invest in new systems and review how we use our current assets to ensure they offer best value in the future.

Assets

Capital Build Programme

We will start the demolition and build of the new Fire Station in Hereford. The new Redditch Police and Fire Station is scheduled to open by the end of 2024.

Breathing Apparatus (BA)

Following a regional procurement process the Service has invested in new BA sets for operational crews. These utilise the most up-to-date technology and will be fully integrated into the Service by the end of 2024/25.

Workwear

Due to the contract ending with our current workwear suppliers, the Service has identified a new provider. Following engagement with staff across the organisation, the garments chosen reflect the preferences identified. This is also an opportunity to enhance the performance and the appearance of the uniform to reflect the modern-day firefighter.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Value for Money continued

Equipment Management System

An upgrade to the equipment management system will improve the accuracy of information related to equipment, whilst allowing for greater efficiencies through the use of handheld QR Code scanners.



ICT

Further Develop our Digital Transformation Initiatives

We aim to incorporate the use of new technologies like Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and process automation. We have already started to look into how our ICT department can help with this, by identifying which tasks can be automated. By digitising manual processes, we can work more efficiently, make better decisions using data and plan ahead more effectively.

The further development of our Cybersecurity position

We will strengthen our cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data and mitigate cyber threats. Implementing multi-factor authentication, encryption protocols and regular security audits helps us safeguard against potential breaches and vulnerabilities. We will continue to provide training to all our staff that will not only protect the organisation but also help them to stay safe online.

Service Objectives for 2024-25

Value for Money continued

To support and develop opportunities through technology to support Learning and Development for all staff

We will encourage continuous learning and upskilling among all our staff that is essential for staying abreast of advancements. Providing access to training resources, certifications and professional development opportunities, to help foster a culture of innovation and expertise within the workspace.

Incorporate better use of Collaboration and Communication Tools

By using collaborative tools such as Microsoft Teams, we will facilitate seamless communication and teamwork among distributed teams. These platforms enable real-time messaging, video conferencing, file-sharing, project management and promote collaboration regardless of physical location.

Continue to collect Data and Data models within the data warehouse from various systems and processes to provide analytics and information insights

We will harness the power of data analytics with tools such as Power BI which can provide valuable insights for decision-making, enhance strategic planning, resource allocation and operational efficiency within the ICT workspace.



Contact Us

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Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Spotlight Report – Values & Culture Recommendations

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the progress made against the recommendations from the 2023 HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Values & Culture in Fire and Rescue Services.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the actions and progress made against the recommendations in the HMICFRS Values & Culture Spotlight Report be noted.

Introduction and Background

2. On 30 March 2023, HMICFRS published their spotlight report on [Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services](#) (see Appendix 1).
3. The report focused on the values and culture of all 44 Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England and drew on the evidence collected through their inspections since 2018. HMICFRS researched and analysed evidence and set out findings based on the following themes:
 - Values and culture, including bullying, harassment and discrimination.
 - Training and skills.
 - Fairness and diversity.
 - Leadership.

HMICFRS Values & Culture Spotlight Report Recommendations

4. In the report, HMICFRS made a series of 35 recommendations, 20 of which were aimed at Chief Fire Officers to consider and implement along with deadlines for each recommendation.
5. The Performance & Information department monitors progress made against the recommendations and provides a quarterly update to HMICFRS.

HWFRS Response to Recommendations

6. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) has provided a response to each of the recommendations where required. The recommendations and responses can be found in Appendix 2
7. The deadlines for each recommendation vary. HWFRS has completed and fully implemented 18 out of the 20 recommendations. Where recommendations have not been fully implemented as written by HMICFRS, these actions are planned into workstreams for 2024/2025, rationale has been provided as to why this is and we remain in contact with our HMICFRS Service Liaison Lead regarding these.
8. Following the most recent update, HWFRS has identified a requirement to report on progress and provide updates to the Fire Authority on a regular basis.
9. Following the most recent update from HMI Roy Wilsher in March 2024, it is now likely that a progress update against the HMICFRS Values and Culture Spotlight Report recommendations will be included in the Misconduct Thematic Report being produced by the inspectorate, due for release later this year.
10. HMICFRS are also considering how they might be able to use future inspection activities to explore how services have implemented the recommendations and the outcomes achieved as a result.

Conclusion/Summary

11. The spotlight report on Values and Culture within Fire and Rescue Services was published on 30 March 2023.
12. HWFRS provides a quarterly update to HMICFRS on progress made against the recommendations in the report. A requirement has been identified to report progress to the Fire Authority.
13. Further updates will be provided at future Fire Authority meetings.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The HMICFRS Spotlight Report highlights 20 recommendations for CFOs relating to values and culture. Actions to address these areas are likely to have resource implications, which are highlighted in the action plan.</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>National efforts, including the Core Code of Ethics, have helped bring the issue of culture in fire and rescue services (FRSs) into focus. The recommendations contained in the report are designed to guide services in improving values and culture. All responses will continue to be assessed to ensure they meet the Service's overall Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Strategies and are in line with the Core Code of Ethics.</p>
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through continued monitoring of the recommendations in the action plan.</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Proposals to deliver the recommendations have the full participation of Senior Managers in relevant Service departments. Quarterly updates are sent to HMICFRS for consideration.</p>
<p>Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>An EIA is not required for this report. EIAs will be considered as appropriate when addressing the recommendations through the action plan.</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personnel data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>Impact assessments, if required, will be completed by the relevant Departments as needed for the specific actions related to the recommendations and action plan.</p>

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – HMICFRS Values & Culture Spotlight Report - Recommendations

Appendix 2 – Values & Culture Recommendations and HWFRS Progress

HMICFRS Spotlight Report

Values & Culture

Recommendations

Raising Concerns

Recommendation 1

By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.

Recommendation 2

By 1 October 2023, National Employers, the [Local Government Association](#) and the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should review any current independent arrangements whereby staff can raise concerns outside their FRS. They should then ensure that all FRS staff have access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a confidential way to raise concerns outside their own FRS.

Recommendation 3

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.

Recommendation 4

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.

Recommendation 5

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.

Background checks

Recommendation 6

By 1 January 2024, the Home Office, working with the Ministry of Justice, should make sure that the Government incorporates fire and rescue authority employees within the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 \(Exceptions\) Order 1975](#) so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks.

Recommendation 7

By 1 May 2024, the Home Office, working with the fire and rescue sector, should make sure that the [Police Act 1997 \(Criminal Records\) Regulations 2002](#), or a similar appropriate legislatively enabled solution, makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.

Recommendation 8

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should:

- clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services;
- clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public;
- define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and
- be subject to review following any legislative change.

Recommendation 9

By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should:

- immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to [safeguard](#) their staff and communities they serve; and
- make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the [Fire Standards Board](#).

Recommendation 10

By 1 September 2023, chief constables should make sure they are appropriately using their Common Law Police Disclosure powers in circumstances involving employees of fire and rescue services.

Misconduct handling

Recommendation 11

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances.

Recommendation 12

By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling.

Recommendation 13

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes. These should include requirements to:

- conduct and complete investigations, whether or not the staff member under investigation leaves;
- consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal;
- provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and
- ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person.

Recommendation 14

By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.

Recommendation 15

By 1 October 2023, the Home Office should work with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) and fire and rescue service employers to make sure there is a process to handle misconduct allegations against chief fire officers. The Home Office should immediately notify HMICFRS of any allegations and outcomes that it is aware of.

Recommendation 16

By 1 October 2023, the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should develop and manage a national barred list that holds details of staff who have been dismissed for gross misconduct (including staff who have already left services). It should ensure that this list is referred to in all appointment processes to prevent those who are barred from re-joining another service. After the College of Fire and Rescue has been established (see recommendation 25), it should take responsibility for managing the list.

Recommendation 17

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:

- involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs;
- are of a serious nature; or
- relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.

Recommendation 18

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.

Recommendation 19

By 1 July 2023, the Home Office should examine whether any appeal processes for fire and rescue misconduct cases are appropriate.

Leadership

Recommendation 20

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the [Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard](#) and its [leading and developing people standard](#).

Recommendation 21

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.

Recommendation 22

By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.

Recommendation 23

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the [leading and developing people standard](#). They should show how they act on this feedback.

Recommendation 24

By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, [watch](#) and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.

Management and leadership training and development

Recommendation 25

By 1 January 2025, the Government should establish a College of Fire and Rescue, as proposed by the [White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service](#). There should be no further delay to its implementation.

Recommendation 26

By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.

Diversity data

Recommendation 27

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the [National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit](#).

Recommendation 28

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the [National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit](#).

Recommendation 29

By 1 December 2023, the Home Office should publish greater detail on the protected characteristic data it collects about FRS staff, including joiners and leavers, by rank and role.

Recommendation 30

By 30 December 2024, the Home Office should align the data it collects on protected characteristics with the [Office for National Statistics harmonised standard](#) and publish this data.

Recommendation 31

By 1 December 2024, the Home Office should collect and publish experimental statistics on public complaints and conduct matters in relation to FRS staff, similar to that which it currently publishes on police forces in England and Wales.

Improving diversity

Recommendation 32

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.

Recommendation 33

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.

The Core Code of Ethics

Recommendation 34

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the [Core Code of Ethics](#) and make sure it is being applied across their services.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

Recommendation 35

By the end of this Parliament, the Government should consider the findings and recommendations in this report when refreshing the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#).

HMICFRS Values & Culture Spotlight Report - Recommendations

Raising Concerns				
Recommendation Number	Recommendation description	Due date	Service Update Summary	Is this recommendation complete?
1	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.	01/10/2023	Already completed with the introduction of Say So in March 2023. Reminder communicated to staff about Whistleblowing Policy and process. Whistleblowing Policy amended to include details of Say So. Reminder to all staff - Bulletin 28/4/23.	Yes
2	By 1 October 2023, National Employers, the Local Government Association and the National Fire Chiefs Council should review any current independent arrangements whereby staff can raise concerns outside their FRS. They should then ensure that all FRS staff have access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a confidential way to raise concerns outside their own FRS.	01/10/2023	N/A	
3	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.	01/06/2023	Comprehensive support available for staff. Welfare team have a leaflet for employees, comprehensive information about support on staff SharePoint site. Say So building in links to signpost those that report a concern to internal support mechanisms. One page PDF created to summarise support available for staff.	Yes
4	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.	01/06/2023	The Leading and Developing People Fire Standard links to this recommendation which has been adopted, as well as the CCOE which underpins our intent. Concerns raised via Say So all receive an update as to progress via the online tool. SPOC ACO's co-ordinate and ensure concerns are prioritised. An Independent HR Consultant is contracted to provide independent HR and employment law advice. We also have an independent liaison officer in place to support those who are subject to investigation. An Independent HR Consultant and Solicitor provides oversight of cases and ensure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way. Checklist for investigation officer / commissioning officer - put onto HR workstream. A quarterly report on support and information provided to those who have raised concerns discussed at HR Ops Meeting along with case debriefs to capture learning from cases and embedding professional behaviours - feed into new Culture and Ethics Steering Group as part of organisational learning. Additional training being provided for investigating managers.	Yes
5	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.	01/06/2023	Independent and confidential helpline in place provided by Say So for internal staff members as of 28.03.23. SPOC is ACO. Say So Plus arranged for public reporting to be launched in July 2023. Information to be hosted on the Service Website, SPOC for Say So Plus is the Monitoring Officer.	Yes
Background Checks				
6	By 1 January 2024, the Home Office, working with the Ministry of Justice, should make sure that the Government incorporates fire and rescue authority employees within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks.	01/01/2024	N/A	
7	By 1 May 2024, the Home Office, working with the fire and rescue sector, should make sure that the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002, or a similar appropriate legislatively enabled solution, makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.	01/05/2024	N/A	
8	By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services; clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public; define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and be subject to review following any legislative change. 	01/12/2023	N/A	
9	By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard their staff and communities they serve; and make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board. 	01/01/2024	SLB paper approved regarding adoption of Standard Checks for preferred candidates as part of pre-employment checks. Role mapping exercise completed to determine level of DBS check required for each role. Recruitment policy updated and published to reflect changes. New levels of checks being conducted for new starters. Engaged with Rep Bodies to seek feedback on process. Criminal record checks policy out for formal consultation including NFCC guidance on managing a positive disclosure and a criminal record check risk assessment. Staff FAQs and letter drafted. Plan to commence checks in May 24. May 2024 Update: The Criminal Record Check policy has been through consultation, and has been signed off by SLB. Checks have commenced.	Yes
10	By 1 September 2023, chief constables should make sure they are appropriately using their Common Law Police Disclosure powers in circumstances involving employees of fire and rescue services.	01/09/2023	N/A	
Misconduct Handling				
11	By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances.	01/12/2023	N/A	
12	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling.	01/03/2024	HWFRS have adopted the NFCC Managing Allegations Guidance and updated local policies. Also adopted the Leading and Developing People and Leading the Service Fire Standards.	Yes
13	By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes. These should include requirements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct and complete investigations, whether or not the staff member under investigation leaves; consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal; provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person. 	01/12/2023	N/A	
14	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.	01/03/2024	In scope, no immediate action required. TBC following implementation of standard, however we do not feel we need the standard as an employer are satisfied we operate already to a high standard and have independent assurance of this. March 2024 Update: We have updated local policies including the Managing Allegations Guidance to reflect these changes. We've also adopted the Leading and Developing People Fire Standard.	Yes
15	By 1 October 2023, the Home Office should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue service employers to make sure there is a process to handle misconduct allegations against chief fire officers. The Home Office should immediately notify HMICFRS of any allegations and outcomes that it is aware of.	01/10/2023	N/A	

16	By 1 October 2023, the National Fire Chiefs Council should develop and manage a national barred list that holds details of staff who have been dismissed for gross misconduct (including staff who have already left services). It should ensure that this list is referred to in all appointment processes to prevent those who are barred from re-joining another service. After the College of Fire and Rescue has been established (see recommendation 25), it should take responsibility for managing the list.	01/10/2023	N/A	
17	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that: - involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs; - are of a serious nature; or - relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.	30/03/2023	Anonymised, high level information about Gross Misconduct cases sent to SLL on 01.06.23. HMICFRS are in the process of looking at how recommendations will be followed up and how updates will be collected.	Yes
18	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.	01/08/2023	Comprehensive support is available for those involved in an investigation, from the Welfare Support Team and reference to this is included in a letter received by staff involved in processes. OH referrals available, cases regularly reviewed and monitored in terms of time scales, counselling available. In addition, HR to prepare leaflet for those involved in investigations to explain what support is available.	Yes
19	By 1 July 2023, the Home Office should examine whether any appeal processes for fire and rescue misconduct cases are appropriate.	01/07/2023	N/A	
Leadership				
20	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the "Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard" and its "leading and developing people standard."	01/06/2023	SLB have completed a gap analysis against the Fire Standard and actively considered the content and are confident that the Fire Standard is being met. Regular updates on further work linked to the Fire Standard will be reported quarterly to SLB and the Culture and Ethics Steering Group.	Yes
21	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.	01/06/2023	Trans 2 Performance (T2) provide this for all aspiring strategic leaders at the moment. T2 have coordinated 360 Degree Feedback for all SLB Members who have not yet had it commenced W/C 15.05.23. 360's and debriefs all now complete.	Yes
22	By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.	01/09/2023	Options paper presented to SLB to consider approach and costs. People Plan objective for 24/25.	No
23	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard. They should show how they act on this feedback.	01/06/2023	Staff survey completed in 2023 and in place every two years. Belong Index positive, 65% completion rate and engagement score of 85%. Say So confidential reporting line in place since March 2023. CFO and SLB visits to all Watches and departments annually. Extended management team meetings every quarter. Cultural Audit undertaken in Spring 2023 by an external professional who spoke with 181 respondents (37 females and 144 males) through 19 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); 26 Face-to-Face One-to-One interviews (1-2-1s); and 24 telephone/video conferencing 1-2-1 interviews. This represents approximately 23% of the workforce, which in the consultants experience, is an exceptional response. Regular feedback will be sought via the Culture and Ethics Steering Group, Say So, updating communications and media channels, future staff surveys and a continuation of visits to staff annually.	Yes
24	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, watch and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.	01/10/2023	Dr Debra Willoughby leading independent cultural audit across the Service. Her feedback and recommendations has fed into new inclusion and culture training for all staff. Workplace environment review of on-call units attached to WT stations is in progress by external consultant. Culture and Ethics Steering Group to use feedback to develop overarching Culture Statement for review by SLB. Staff survey undertaken in early 2023 by People Insights, 65% completion rate, 85% engagement score. Staff survey to be run every two years.	Yes
Management and Leadership Training and Development				
25	By 1 January 2025, the Government should establish a College of Fire and Rescue, as proposed by the White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service. There should be no further delay to its implementation.	01/01/2025	N/A	
26	By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the National Fire Chiefs Council should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.	01/10/2023	Aspiring Supervisory Managers programme and Aspiring Strategic Leaders programme pilot implemented. People management training programme in place for line managers. Support for candidates for the ELP evolved to include Middle Manager candidates. ILM L3, ILM L5 and CMI L7 in place. Authority Members act as Champions for core areas of business and new Members have had an induction 13.6.23. Member EDI training completed in for Autumn 2023 by IODA as part of wider service rollout. Service-wide inclusion training commenced in April 24, well underway and due to conclude July 24. Overall review of 'Development Offer' focus of People Plan objective 2024/25.	No
Diversity Data				
27	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit	01/06/2023		Yes
28	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit.	01/06/2023	Quarterly Performance Report includes EDI data. Annual Gender Pay Gap and Equality Monitoring Report is in place. Review of EDI Training complete with IODA commissioned to provide bespoke training for all staff over the next 18 months. Use of toolkits from NFCC such as Gender Diversity, Neurodiversity and Staff Network being used as reference. EDI Data toolkit being used to ensure our data is harmonised. Mapping exercise completed of the ethnicity categories used against the 2021 Census categories. EDI Officer liaising with Resourcing/HR Admin to ensure alignment in relevant areas. Poster showing local data community snapshot created for each Station.	Yes
29	By 1 December 2023, the Home Office should publish greater detail on the protected characteristic data it collects about FRS staff, including joiners and leavers, by rank and role.	01/12/2023	N/A	
30	By 30 December 2024, the Home Office should align the data it collects on protected characteristics with the Office for National Statistics harmonised standard and publish this data.	30/12/2024	N/A	
31	By 1 December 2024, the Home Office should collect and publish experimental statistics on public complaints and conduct matters in relation to FRS staff, similar to that which it currently publishes on police forces in England and Wales.	01/12/2024	N/A	
Improving Diversity				
32	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.	01/06/2023	Workforce Planning Meeting and Policy in place. Appraisal template amended to include career discussion. EIA in place for recruitment and promotion processes. Strategic Workforce Plan approved (May 2022). EDI succession planning to be added onto workforce planning meetings. Specific targeted positive action activity is discussed/agreed/monitored/evaluated at workforce planning going forward. Overarching Positive Action Organisational Statement prepared for 23/24.	Yes
33	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.	01/08/2023	We have transparent processes, support and routes for the development of all support staff, which many have utilised up to ACO level. Complimented by Workforce Planning Meeting, overarching Strategic Workforce Plan and Policy in place. Appraisal template includes career discussion, EIA in place for recruitment and promotion processes. Sponsorship has been available for all staff who wish to pursue development for the past three years. Letter from CFO to Support Staff to encourage career conversations (May 2022). Succession planning / career pathways statement to be created. We have 61 senior managers, 38% women and a significant focus on creating support staff / green book leadership roles and career pathways has been undertaken in the past two years. There are plans to build a more formal development framework for support staff in the future.	Yes
The Core Code of Ethics				
34	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.	30/03/2023	CCOE Steering Group established 2022 to take forward implementation. Core Code of Ethics fully adopted, with a clear plan that is already well underway and was introduced in 2022, promoted widely and it replaced existing values. Also new policy and inclusion / ethical training being rolled out across the whole organisation facilitated by IODA.	Yes
The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England				
35	By the end of this Parliament, the Government should consider the findings and recommendations in this report when refreshing the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.		N/A	

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Culture Statement of Intent

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval for the Culture Statement of Intent setting out the key ambitions for the Service's (Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service - HWFRS) organisational culture.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Culture Statement of Intent is approved and published on the Service website.

Introduction and Background

2. Following the national focus on culture within the fire and rescue sector and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) spotlight report on values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) held a culture summit and released a Culture Action Plan in July 2023, to help deliver sustained improvements and establish an inclusive, safe culture across FRSs.
3. Prior to this, in February 2023, the Service commissioned an independent cultural audit, led by Dr Debra Willoughby in conjunction with ioda, the Service's new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training provider. The audit recognised an overall positive culture within the Service and also made a number of recommendations to enable the Service to make EDI and ethics the fabric of the organisation. One key recommendation is to make our 'EDI strategic intent more explicit across the organisation'.
4. In addition to this, the Service has adopted the Code of Ethics, Fire Standards, safeguarding and wider culture and inclusion developments. These areas of focus are channelled through and supported by the Culture and Ethics Steering Group.

The Culture Statement of Intent

5. The Culture Statement of Intent aims to:

- Enable the Service to make our cultural strategic intent more explicit, reinforcing expected behaviours and conduct, and the expectation to call out behaviour that falls below our professional standards.
 - Provide a clear foundation to shape, guide and sustain our strategic goals and priorities, enabling a more inclusive and positive workplace to be developed and nurtured.
 - Provide a baseline to ensure anything we do is aligned to support our desired culture, making EDI and ethics the fabric of HWFRS.
6. The Culture Statement of Intent has been developed in conjunction with the Culture and Ethics Steering Group as a way to define our desired Service culture – where everyone feels safe and included and, where unacceptable behaviour is always dealt with and appropriate action taken. The Culture Statement of Intent can be found at Appendix 1.
7. Feedback from our staff survey, the independent cultural audit and themes from the confidential reporting line have told us the things we are getting right and the things we could do better, to continue to make HWFRS a great place to work. Based upon this feedback, there are four key statements of intent to describe where we want to be:



8. A summary of what this looks like in practice is provided, supported by the key message that achieving our desired culture is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play. This culture statement will underpin the People Strategy objectives, and provide the guiding principles for the Culture and Ethics Steering Group workstreams.

Communication and Implementation

9. The Culture Statement of Intent will be launched Service-wide via a TriplePlay video, with promotion on the Organisational Culture SharePoint site. Engagement activities will take place to embed the culture statement, supported by regular messaging from the Strategic Leadership Board and senior managers, as well as

being championed by members of the Culture and Ethics Steering Group within their specific work areas and via staff networks. It will also be published externally via the Service website.

Sector Considerations

10. The NFCC have developed a Culture Action Plan and culture remains a national focus. A follow up national Culture Conference is scheduled for July 2024, which will be attended by a representative from the Service.
11. Alongside delivering against the Culture Action Plan, the NFCC have attended and given evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee and the Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee as part of their scrutiny of the culture of Fire and Rescue Services. The NFCC has worked closely with HMICFRS to support their ongoing inspections, including the thematic inspection of misconduct expected to be published soon. They have worked with the Government to support the reforms set out in the White Paper including work around the Code of Ethics, Fire Standards, safeguarding and wider culture and inclusion developments. In addition, they have worked with the national employers and trade unions through the Inclusive Fire Service Group and have engaged with other organisations who are responding to similar cultural challenges to share learning.
12. The Service will continue to remain appraised and engaged with the national picture.

Conclusion/Summary

13. A Culture Statement of Intent will support the Service in continuing to improve and foster an inclusive, safe culture and will make our EDI strategic intent more explicit across the organisation (as recommended by the cultural audit). It is recommended that the Fire Authority approve the Culture Statement of Intent for HWFRS.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>All managers responsible for ensuring that the desired culture underpins all service policies, procedures and systems.</p> <p>No additional financial costs are identified.</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRMP and core organisational strategies • Core Code of Ethics • People Strategy
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify</p>	<p>A poor organisational culture can significantly impact on the service we deliver to the communities, as well as</p>

any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	reputational damage. Introducing a culture statement enables our EDI strategic intent to be more explicit.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation has been undertaken with the Culture and Ethics Steering group, which comprises of staff members from across the organisation.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Yes, no adverse impacts identified.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Culture Statement of Intent

Culture Statement of Intent

XXXX 2024

Release date



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Contents

Our Ethical Principles	1
Our Culture Statement	2
Where we are heading	3
Who is responsible?	5

Our Culture Statement of Intent

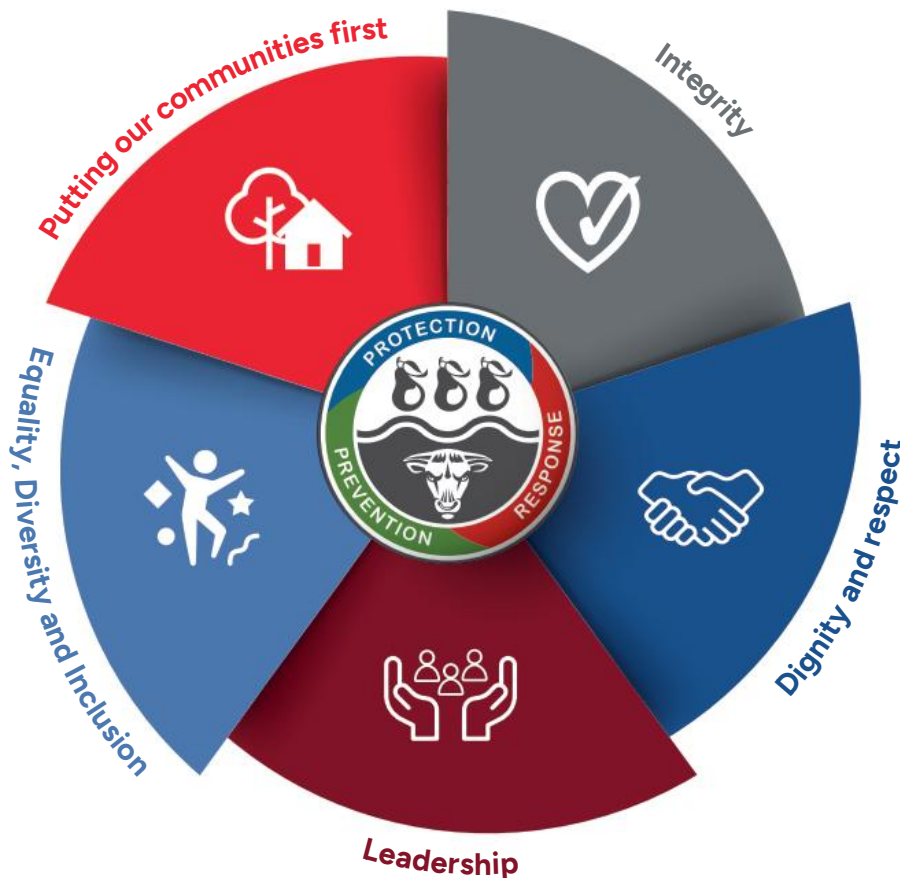
These pages provide Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's (HWFRS) culture statement, which defines our desired culture.

It outlines where we want to be through statements of intent and how this will be achieved. Building and nurturing an organisational culture is an ongoing process and this document plays a crucial role in shaping, guiding and sustaining our strategic goals and priorities.

Our Ethical Principles

We are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(FRS\)](#) in England.

The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. These principles are our guiding set of values and help us to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.



Putting our communities first

We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.



Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.



Dignity and respect

We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.



Leadership

As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.



Our Culture Statement

At Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service we take pride in **working as one professional team** every day to deliver **high quality, sustainable services** to our communities. Our culture is rooted in our **commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the communities** we serve.

We believe in being an **inclusive and safe place to work** where all staff are **valued, supported and able to thrive** in an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, abuse and harm. We deliver services that are inclusive, safe and professional, and **inspire public confidence and trust**.

Everything we do is underpinned by the Core Code of Ethics. In order to foster an inclusive environment, we **prioritise learning and development** to make **continual improvements** through training and education. We do not tolerate behaviours which show a lack of respect for others or cause people to feel uncomfortable, threatened, harassed or intimidated. Unacceptable behaviour will always be dealt with and appropriate action taken.

As an organisation and as individuals, we are truly committed to **calling out unacceptable behaviours** whenever we see them; **learning from and reflecting** on, our own behaviours and actions.

Where we are heading

Feedback from our staff survey, the independent culture audit and themes from the confidential reporting line have told us the things we are getting right and the things we could do better, to continue to make HWFRS a great place to work.

Based on your feedback, the following **statements of intent** have been developed to describe where we want to be:



Where we are heading continued

1 Our leadership is visible, inclusive and diverse

What does this look like:

- We have a team of visible, open and honest leaders that represent the communities we serve.
- Our leaders are able to communicate and engage with staff at all levels.
- We have set clear expectations on the importance of regular, meaningful conversations on inclusion.

2 Our people feel safe, respected and included

What does this look like:

- Our people feel able to speak up if something is not right – in most cases, raise and resolve issues early and at a local level.
- We try to understand other viewpoints, listening and learning with respectful curiosity.
- Our people are supported to learn and change behaviour where minor or clumsy errors are made.
- Our people are receptive to constructive feedback and behave in a way that creates a positive, respectful and inclusive workplace for all.

3 Our people feel that their wellbeing at work is supported

What does this look like:

- We have open and honest conversations about wellbeing.
- We feel empowered to manage our own wellbeing with support from our line managers.

4 Our people feel they have the right skills and knowledge to succeed

What does this look like:

- The right development, training and guidance is available at the earliest point (induction) so we can flourish at work.
- There are clear career pathways and fair, transparent progression opportunities.
- Our people embrace the opportunities and support provided to help them grow, develop and succeed.



Who is responsible

Achieving our desired culture is a shared responsibility. Whilst ultimate responsibility for shaping and upholding the culture lies with our leaders, every member of our organisation plays a role in living and promoting the desired culture:

The Fire Authority, Strategic Leadership Board and Senior Leaders will set the tone and model the Core Code of Ethics and behaviours outlined in the Culture Statement. They will ensure the culture aligns with our strategic goals and objectives.

Middle and Supervisory Leaders play a crucial role in translating the culture statement into actionable behaviours and expectations for their teams. They will engage with staff, listen and act on feedback and support their staff to embody the culture and provide opportunities for development.

The HR Team is responsible for ensuring new starters align with our culture and Core Code of Ethics during recruitment and onboarding processes, providing the right development to help us understand and embody our culture. They also ensure we have policies and processes in place to encourage the behaviours we are seeking and to help us manage those occasions when behaviours fall below our professional standards.

Staff Networks will play a significant and positive role by providing a platform for employees to share feedback on what's working, what needs improvement and provide input on their experiences.

The Culture & Ethics Steering Group will act as a sounding board where specific culture initiatives can be monitored.

And finally – you! We are all responsible for living the Service's Core Code of Ethics and behaviours daily in our work and interactions. We act appropriately at all times, regardless of the audience, and mindful that our behaviours outside of work can reflect on the Service, having a wider impact as an employee of a trusted public sector organisation.

You will provide feedback on how the organisational culture is being experienced and suggest improvements or changes. You will also support and encourage your colleagues and peers to embrace the culture.





HEREFORD & WORCESTER
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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Wednesday, 17 April 2024, 10:30

Chairman: Mr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright-Greene, Mr B Brookes, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Ms N McVey, Mr R J Morris, Ms D Toynbee

0301 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Clayton, Cllr I Hardiman and Cllr E Marshall.

0302 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

0303 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

0304 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0305 External Audit Plan (2023/24 Accounts)

The Treasurer introduced Alex Walling from Bishop Fleming as the new External Auditor. Members were reminded that the Authority had agreed to tender via the LGA Local Public Sector Audit Appointments arrangement as part of the nationally managed contract and it had been awarded to Bishop Fleming.

The External Auditor then presented the External Audit Plan (2023/24 Accounts) which set out the work to be undertaken in 2024/25 in respect

of the 2023/24 Audit.

[Cllr A Hardman entered the meeting at 10.33am].

Members noted that the Authority is required to prepare the accounting statements for 2023/24 by 31 July 2024 and is required to publish the accounts along with the Auditor's Opinion by 30 November 2024.

Members were also reminded of the delays to the audit of the 2021/22 accounts, which had led to delays to the production of the 2022/23 Statements, and consequentially the delayed audit of those Accounts. Members were assured that Officers were working with Grant Thornton (as auditors of the 2022/23 accounts) and Bishop Fleming (as auditors for the 2023/24 accounts) to minimise the impact on production and audit of the 2023/24 Statements.

RESOLVED that the External Audit Plan 2024/25 (2023/24 Accounts) including proposed Audit Fee be noted.

0306 Internal Audit Progress Report

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with an update in regards to the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan 2023/24.

Members noted that the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 continued to see progress. For the 2023/24 finalised reports issued to date there were no high priority recommendations to report, and robust management action plans had been agreed and were in place to address the findings from the reviews. All finalised reviews would be reported to Members on completion.

The Head of Internal Audit informed Members that he was confident that the Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion would be provided on time at the next Committee meeting. At this stage, there were no emerging risks or issues which would indicate that a less than Reasonable level of assurance would be provided for 2023/24.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

0307 Draft Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

The Head of Legal Services presented the draft Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 for approval. Members were informed that the Authority has to review its governance arrangements once a year via self assessment. Members were pleased to note that the Authority had provided evidence of compliance with all the core and supporting principles of the CIPFA/Solace framework 'Delivering Good Governance

in Local Government (2016 Edition).

Members noted that there were no areas where the direction of travel had decreased during 2023/24 or where the status was less than satisfactory.

The Treasurer had suggested an amendment to paragraph 5.1 of the Annual Governance Statement to include reference to the 2021/22 audit delays and this was approved by the Committee. The amendment was as follows:

Due to the delays to the 2021/22 Audit (which ultimately made no change to the Accounts) and consequential and sequential impacts, the 2022/23 Accounts were produced late and are not yet audited. This did not give rise to any underlying governance risks as the core Accounts were produced and out-turn duly reported. However, there will be a consequential impact on the production of the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts due to capacity, but this is expected to be minimal and back on track by 2024/25. Again, there are no underlying governance issues.

RESOLVED that the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 be approved subject to the amendment to paragraph 5.1 as detailed above.

0308 Annual Compliments, Complaints, Concerns and Requests for Information 2023/24

The Head of Legal Services presented a report on compliments, complaints, concerns and requests for information made by the public to the Service over the past 12 months.

Members were informed that there was an increase in the number of complaints received over the past 12 months compared to last year and were assured there were no recurring themes or trends in the concerns and complaints to give any cause for concern.

Members were assured that all complaints are investigated by duty officers, draft responses are sent to Legal Services to be reviewed and all complainants can ask for a further review by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer or make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Members noted that there had been an increase in the number of requests for information and SARs during this period. No requests were passed to the Information Commissioners Office for review.

The Assistant Chief Officer then updated Members on the new confidential reporting tool 'Say So'. Members noted that since the introduction of 'Say So' in March 2023 (as recommended by the

HMICFRS Spotlight Report in October 2023), there had been 28 concerns raised via members of staff. Since the introduction of 'Say So PLUS' in September 2023 there had been one concern raised by a member of the public.

Members raised concerns about the current confidential reporting scheme that allowed anonymous concerns to be raised. Members asked for an urgent review of the current scheme so as to allow confidential reporting but stop concerns being raised anonymously to avoid potentially vexatious claims.

RESOLVED that:

the Committee noted that during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024:

i) a total of 117 requests for information containing 433 queries about the Service were received. This number had reduced compared to last year's figure because requests for incident information were now categorised separately as Miscellaneous Information Requests (MIRs). There were 174 MIRs during this period. No requests were passed to the Information Commissioners Office for review.

ii) a total of 53 compliments were received from the public;

iii) 43 complaints or concerns about Service activities were made;

iv) 39 other complaints or concerns were received about activities carried out by other organisations or individuals;

v) 3 of the complainants appealed the response provided but none were passed to the Local Government Ombudsman for further investigation;

vi) 28 concerns were received via the internal 'Say So' confidential and an anonymous reporting tool, from staff; and

vii) 1 concern was received via 'Say So PLUS' the confidential and anonymous reporting tool for members of the public.

Members asked the Chief Fire Officer and relevant officers for an urgent review of the current Say So scheme so as to allow confidential reporting but stop concerns being raised anonymously to avoid potentially vexatious claims.

(Quarter 3)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the Committee with a Health and Safety update on activities and items of significance.

Members noted that the number of safety events recorded in Quarter 3 had increased by 3 compared to the previous quarter. The most significant increases were in the Vehicle Collisions and Near Hit categories. Members were reassured that all incidents were investigated at an appropriate level, with no significant findings identified.

The Internal Auditor suggested that health and safety audits get fed back to him to be referenced into the audit plan.

RESOLVED that the following, in particular, be noted:

- i) The involvement of the Service in Health and Safety initiatives;***
- ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during October to December 2023 (Quarter 3); and***
- iii) Workforce Health & Wellbeing performance (Quarter 3).***

The Meeting ended at: 11:55

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 06 March 2024, 10:30

Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Boulter, Mr D Davies, Mr A Ditta, Ms J Monk, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr C B Taylor, Mr T Wells

0251 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr J Carwardine, Cllr D Chambers and Cllr D Morehead.

0252 Named Substitutes

Cllr I Hardiman substituted for Cllr D Morehead.

0253 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 a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book).

0254 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 14 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0255 Budget Monitoring 2023/24 – Quarter 3

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2023/24 and gave an update on Treasury Management.

Members noted the small overspend of £0.027m and that given the small size and the imminence of year end, it was proposed not to make specific decisions about how to fund what will inevitably be a different figure at outturn. Members also noted the error in paragraph 8 ii) - the cost associated with prevention works at a major fire risk site should have stated £0.035m rather than £0.35m.

With regard to Treasury Management, Members noted that the Authority was significantly “under-borrowed” to the extent of around £10m. This shortfall was funded by disinvesting the large cash balances held in relation to the ear-marked revenue reserves. As the Invest to Improve programme progresses this cash would be used up and additional long-term borrowing would be required.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

i) Confirmed the revenue budget allocation adjustments;

ii) Noted the current projection of a small £0.027m revenue overspend;

iii) Noted the projected expenditure on “Invest to Improve” projects; and

iv) Noted the implementation of changes to the Capital Budget approved by the Fire Authority.

0256 Property Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an update on the current property programme.

Members noted that previous reports to the Committee had referenced the UK construction tender price index and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Taking this into account the Treasurer was building in contingency funds in anticipation of the current capital build programme. Members would be updated as the projects developed, with particular regard to the largest projects which were still to be tendered, notably Hereford Fire Station and the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility builds.

Members were pleased to note that the planning application for the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility had been approved last week and detailed design work was now progressing to enable final costs to be established for the proposed project.

The Chief Fire Officer thanked Members for their support in the capital

build programme ensuring that all wholtime stations were either new or refurbished which made an immense difference to staff moral and performance. It was further noted that on call stations would be looked at after 2025.

RESOLVED that the property update and progress of the capital build programme and property maintenance be noted at:

i) Broadway Fire Station;

ii) Redditch Fire Station;

iii) Hereford Fire Station;

iv) North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility;

v) Relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station; and

vi) Planned and reactive property maintenance.

0257 2023-24 Performance Report: Q3 (01 October – 31 December 2023)

The Assistant Chief Officer presented a summary of the Service's performance for Q3, 2023-24.

Members noted that a total of 2,076 incidents were attended in Q3 2023-24, an increase of 3% on Q3 2022-23. The Service also attended 16 'Over the Border' incidents during this quarter. 1,898 Home Fire Safety Visits were completed which exceeded the quarterly target of 1875 HFSVs per quarter and the number of inspections of business premises had decreased to 315 due to Protection staff realigning workloads in Q3 2022-23 to increase capacity in delivering other areas of Protection work in Q4 2022-23.

Following a discussion about false alarms, a Member requested further information on the total number of malicious false alarms attended. There was also discussion about flooding events, in particular rescues from fords, and a Member requested further information on the number of ford rescues attended. This information would be sent to all Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED that the details of the Q3 2023-24 performance headlines be noted, in particular that:

i) A total of 2,076 incidents overall were attended in Q3 2023-24 which was an increase of 3% on Q3 2022-23;

ii) Fires (312) were 7% lower than Q3 2022-23 and lower than the

five-year average of 344;

iii) Special services (699) were 4% higher than the corresponding quarter of the previous year and higher than the five-year average of 627; and

iv) False alarms (1,065) were higher by 6% compared with Q3 2022-23 and above the five-year average of 872.

The Meeting ended at: 12:00

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 08 May 2024, 10:30

Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Boulter, Mrs J Carwardine, Mr D Chambers, Mr D Davies, Mr D Morehead, Ms L Robinson, Mr C B Taylor, Mr T Wells

0258 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr J Monk, Cllr R Phillips and Cllr R Udall.

0259 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

0260 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

0261 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 6 March 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0262 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023/2024

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention presented the updated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023/24 for approval.

Members noted that the existing Safeguarding e-learning training packages had been updated to include reference to modern slavery which were now mandatory for all staff to complete.

Members also noted that the Authority had made a Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking statement publicly available in order to raise

awareness and ensure there is no modern slavery within the Service or supply chains.

RESOLVED that the updated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023/24 be approved and published on the Service website.

0263 Pensions Board Update (Fire Pension Schemes)

The Treasurer provided an update on the establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Members noted that since the last report there had been no conflicts of interest or significant breaches. However, there had been a technical breach in relation to the deadline date for contacting staff as part of the second options exercise that would be reported.

With reference to the Matthews Remedy, Members noted that letters had been sent out to approximately 500 eligible members with an Expression of Interest form. There were 22 that had been identified with no known addresses and therefore a tracing agency was being used to try and establish contact. Due to the additional workload, the Strategic Leadership Board agreed to bring in temporary support to complete the work to the set deadline date; this person had now commenced.

With reference to the Sargeant Remedy, Members noted that relevant legislation had now been amended by Parliament which delivered options for individuals to have their service during the remedy period (April 2015- April 2022) recalculated as though they were still members of the legacy scheme for that period.

RESOLVED it be noted that:

i) the Pensions Board continues to be compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013;

ii) in line with the recommendations of the Pensions Regulator, the Pensions Board now meets four times a year; and

iii) progress continues to be made on a range of issues as described in the report.

0264 2023-24 Performance Report: Q4 (01 January – 31 March 2024)

The Assistant Chief Officer - Director of Prevention presented a summary of the Service's performance for Q4, 2023-24.

Members noted that a total of 1,841 incidents were attended in Q4 2023-24, an increase of 6% on Q4 2022-23, which broke down to 289 Fires, 680 Special Services and 872 False alarms. The Service also attended 12 'Over the Border' incidents during this quarter, completed 1856 Home Fire Safety Visits (432 by Prevention Technicians and 1,424 by Wholetime crews) and 241 business premises inspections.

RESOLVED that the details of the Q4 2023-24 performance headlines be noted, in particular that:

i) A total of 1,841 incidents overall were attended in Q4 2023-24 which was an increase of 6% on Q4 2022-23;

ii) Fires (289) were 15% lower than Q4 2022-23 and lower than the five-year average of 364;

iii) Special Services (680) were 13% higher than the corresponding quarter of the previous year and higher than the five-year average of 603; and

iv) False alarms (872) were higher by 10% compared with Q4 2022-23 and above the five-year average of 796.

0265 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Director of Protection and Assets presented the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since the last update provided on 14 November 2023.

Members noted the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

RESOLVED that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:

i) Station Work Routines;

ii) Fitness and Attendance Management Policies;

iii) Resource Review;

iv) Culture and Ethics Steering Group;

v) National Operational Guidance (NOG) and Intel Projects;

vi) Property Updates;

vii) HMICFRS Action Plan;

viii) Updates: Proposed New Flexible Duty System for Fire Control, Fire Control Crewing, New Employment Rights; and

ix) USAR On-Call Process.

The Meeting ended at: 11:06

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman