



# **HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority**

**Full Authority**

## **AGENDA**

**Wednesday, 21 June 2023**

**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](mailto: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, 21 June 2023,10:30

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### Agenda

#### Councillors

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

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



<b>6</b>	<b>Public Participation</b>	
	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 16 June 2023). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b>	<b>1 - 7</b>
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2023.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies</b>	<b>8 - 13</b>
	To consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, the membership of those committees and appointments to outside bodies.	
<b>9</b>	<b>Provisional Financial Out-turn 2022-23</b>	<b>14 - 29</b>
	To receive provisional financial results 2022-23, to review Treasury Management activities and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code indicators.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Staff Survey Feedback Presentation</b>	
	Costa Antoniou from People Insight will present a summary of feedback from the staff survey that was recently undertaken.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Cultural Issues in the Fire Service</b>	<b>30 - 57</b>
	To inform Members of the current assessment of the Service's culture and behaviours and assure Members of the measures being taken to drive progress in this area.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Annual Service Review 2022-23</b>	<b>58 - 93</b>
	This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2022-23.	

<b>13</b>	<b>Annual Service Plan 2023-24</b>	<b>94 - 107</b>
	This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Plan 2023-24.	
<b>14</b>	<b>His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update Q4 2022 / 2023</b>	<b>108 - 134</b>
	This report is to update Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 15 Dec 2021.	
<b>15</b>	<b>Change Function Support</b>	<b>135 - 138</b>
	This report summarises steps that have been taken to review options to support the Authority’s significant change portfolio and propose a collaboration arrangement with West Mercia Police.	
<b>16</b>	<b>Invest To Improve Programme</b>	<b>139 - 142</b>
	To inform Members on the progress of the Invest to Improve Programme and assure Members of the measures being taken and positive impact of this programme.	
<b>17</b>	<b>Feasibility of Droitwich Training Centre/Wyre Forest</b>	<b>143 - 145</b>
	To update Members on the feasibility to relocate Training Centre (currently based in Droitwich) to Wyre Forest Fire Station.	
<b>18</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025 Update</b>	<b>146 - 165</b>
	To update Members on the progress in delivering the actions set out in the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025.	
<b>19</b>	<b>Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee</b>	<b>166 - 170</b>
	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2023.	
<b>20</b>	<b>Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>171 - 175</b>
	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2023.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Monday, 13 February 2023, 14:00

**Chairman: Mr C B Taylor**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright, Mr B Brookes, Mr D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mr A Ditta, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr J Hardwick, Mr M Hart, Mrs E Marshall, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs D Toynbee

**Also in attendance:** Mr Marc Bayliss, West Mercia Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

### **0406 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr S Bowen, Cllr K Hey, Cllr D Morehead, Cllr R Morris, Cllr N McVey, Cllr R Phillips and Cllr R Udall.

### **0407 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

There were no declarations of interests.

### **0408 Chairman's Announcements**

On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman expressed condolences to the family and friends of Scottish Firefighter Barry Martin who had died following serious injuries sustained at a fire in the Jenners Building in Edinburgh on Monday 23 January.

The Chairman congratulated Mr. A. Elliott on his promotion to Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Mrs. A Davidson on her promotion to Assistant Chief Officer (Prevention).

Members were informed of the revised pay offer made by the NJC for Fire & Rescue Services ('Grey Book'). The FBU were consulting their membership on the offer with a recommendation that the offer be accepted. The outcome of the consultation was expected on 6 March 2023.

**0409 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**0410 Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 12 December 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

**0411 Budget And Precept 2022/23 And Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24**

The Treasurer presented the Budget and Precept 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Plan

Further details showing the impact on the MTFP of the latest pay offer were presented to Members at the meeting. Members were advised that if the precept for 2023/24 was increased by the maximum permitted £5.00, as recommended, then there would be a projected underlying deficit in 2026/27 of £640,000. The Chief Fire Officer indicated that he would bring forward proposals to a future meeting for an efficiency plan to address that deficit.

Members thanked the Treasurer for the clarity of the report. In response to a question from Members, the Treasurer explained that if the Government provided additional funding to cover the cost of the increased pay offer then, if the Authority increased its precept for 2023/24 by the recommended £5, that would result in a balanced budget in the MTFP. However, there was no realistic expectation of any such further funding from Government beyond the Council tax flexibility that had already been announced.

***RESOLVED that the:***

***a. Capital Strategy (paragraphs 10-23) be approved.***

***b. Capital Budget and Programme (Appendix 1) be approved.***

***c. Core Net Revenue Budget of £39,396,800.00 (Appendix 3) be approved.***

***d. Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix 4) be approved.***

***e. Authority calculates that under the provisions of the relevant sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended),***

**and, in relation to the year 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 5 that the:**

**i. Aggregate expenditure it will incur [S42A(2)(a)] will be £39,472,600.00.**

**ii. Aggregate income it will receive [S42A(3)(a)] will be £12,944,593.00.**

**iii. Amount transferred to financial reserves [S42A(2)(c)] will be £763,900.00.**

**iv. Amount transferred from financial reserves [S42A(3)(b)] will be £46,000.00.**

**v. Net collection fund surplus [S42A(10)] is £29,679.00.**

**vi. Net amount of its Council Tax Requirement [S42A(4)] will be £27,216,228.00.**

**vii. Basic amount of Council Tax [S42B] will be £94.40 (Band D).**

**viii. Proportional tax-bands [S47] will be:**

- Band A £62.93**
- Band B £73.42**
- Band C £83.91**
- Band D £94.40**
- Band E £115.38**
- Band F £136.36**
- Band G £157.33**
- Band H £188.80**

**ix. Precept demands on the individual Billing Authorities [S48] are:**

- Bromsgrove £3,579,733.94**
- Herefordshire £6,708,561.77**
- Malvern Hills £3,103,164.45**
- Redditch £2,483,282.63**
- Worcester £3,110,987.68**
- Wychavon £4,950,103.16**
- Wyre Forest £3,279,394.37**

**f. Reserves Strategy (paragraphs 71-79 and Appendix 6) to be approved.**

**g. Investment Strategy (paragraphs 80-85) to be approved.**

*h. Fees and charges for 2023-24 (Appendix 7) to be approved.*

*i. Statement of Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (Appendix 9) to be approved.*

*j. Authorises the Treasurer to make appropriate adjustments to the use of the budget reduction reserve to balance any changes to the final grant settlement when this is confirmed.*

**0412 Pay Policy Statement**

The Assistant Director of Prevention presented the Pay Policy Statement for 2023-2024 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 2023-2024 be approved and published on the Authority's website.***

**0413 Core Strategies**

The Chief Fire Officer summarised steps that had been taken to review the Core Strategies to ensure these strategies remained focused, effective and complied with relevant standards and developments.

***RESOLVED that the Fire Authority note that steps have been taken to review the three Core Strategies.***

**0414 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update Q3 2022 / 2023**

The Assistant Director of Prevention updated Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 15 Dec 2021.

Members welcomed the confirmation that HMICFRS had now discharged the previous 'cause for concern' in respect of prevention activity.

It was noted that a number of actions relating to 'people' were scheduled for completion during the final quarter of 2022/23. Officers provided assurance that significant progress was being made and it was still anticipated these would be completed by the year end. Training on the Core Code of Ethics was being included as part of the equalities, diversity & inclusion training that was being rolled out to all staff in March

***RESOLVED that the Authority notes the actions agreed to address the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.***

**0415 Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24**

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 4.04% for 2023/24, in line with the increase to additional allowances agreed as part of the NJC pay award for 'Green Book' Staff for 2022;***

***ii) the Dependent Carers' allowance be increased each year in line with the national living wage; and***

***iii) the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 be approved.***

**0416 Fire Authority And Committee Dates 2023/24**

The Head of Legal Services presented the proposed meeting dates for 2023/24 for approval. Ordinarily the Authority would hold at least one meeting each year in Hereford but this had not been possible due to the on-going repairs at the Shire Hall.

The Head of Legal Services undertook to look for an alternative venue and re-schedule on the meetings in Herefordshire if at all possible.

**RESOLVED that the meeting dates for 2023/24 be agreed.**

**0417 Minutes From A&S 18/01/23**

The Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee presented the minutes from the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 18 January 2023. Members' attention was drawn to the recommendation therein with regard to the adoption of amended contract standing orders.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 18 January 2023 were received and the recommendations therein were approved.**

**0418 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

***It was RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during any discussion of:***

***a) the appendix to Item 13; and***

***b) item 14***

***on the grounds that these are likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority).***

**0419 Urgent Decision - Redditch Fire Station**

The Head of Legal Services advised Members of an urgent decision that had been taken since the last meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to the redevelopment of Redditch Fire Station.

*[Cllr Boatright joined the meeting at 2:45pm]*

***RESOLVED that the decision taken under the Urgent Decisions Procedure to further increase the budget allocation for the redevelopment of Redditch Fire Station, be noted.***

**0420 Business Continuity Briefing Session**

The Chief Fire Officer briefed Members on the business continuity arrangements that would apply during any periods when the normal availability of resources might be reduced, such as due to industrial action or extreme weather conditions. In such circumstances the Authority would still be able to provide an effective fire & rescue service although response times may be longer.

*[Cllr M Hart and Mr M Bayliss left the meeting at 3:04pm]*

In response to member questions, the Chief Fire Officer expressed confidence that the high proportion of on-call firefighters within the Service would help to maintain an effective response throughout the two Counties.

Members were reassured by the information provided.

The Meeting ended at: 15:22

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman





## Report of the Head of Legal Services

### 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.
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#### Recommendations

##### *It is recommended that:*

- i) the appointments of Cllrs. D. Boulter, J. Carwardine, D. Davies and J. Kenyon as members of the Fire Authority by Herefordshire Council be noted;*
- ii) the allocation of Committee seats to political groups as set out at Appendix 1 be agreed;*
- iii) the chairmanship and membership of Committees, be:*
  - as set out in Appendix 2 (insofar as indicated)*
  - where nominations are still awaited from Group Leaders, those appointments be delegated to the Head of Legal Services to be made in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders; and*
  - the Authority decide on the appointment of any non-aligned members to seats on committees*
- iv) the following existing member champions be reappointed:*
  - Cllrs E Marshall and N McVey - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;*
  - Cllr B Clayton - Health & Safety Committee;*
  - Cllr R Brookes - Fire Cadets' Member Champion;*
- v) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 be continued; and*
- vi) 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.

3. Following recent elections to Herefordshire Council, we have been notified that Cllrs D. Boulter, J. Carwardine, D. Davies and J. Kenyon have now been appointed as members of the Fire Authority.
4. Cllr Toynbee is the only remaining member of the previous 'Herefordshire Alliance' Group. Since a group must contain at least two councillors, that group will now cease. At the time of writing this report, four councillors, including Cllr Toynbee, remain non-aligned. Appendices 1 and 2 have been prepared on that basis. If there is any change to this information then amended appendices will be presented at the meeting.

### **Member Champions**

5. Cllrs N McVey and E Marshall have served as member champions for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion since January 2022 (previously alongside Cllr S Bowen). The Member Champions meet with officers on a regular basis to monitor delivery of the Authority's ED&I objectives. It is suggested that both members be reappointed.
6. Cllr B Clayton has served as the Member Champion on the Health & Safety Committee for the past two years and has indicated his willingness to continue in that role.
7. Cllr R Brookes was appointed to the role of member champion for the newly reconstituted Fire Cadets programme in June 2023 and has also indicated his willingness to continue in the role.
8. There are no special responsibility allowances attached to any of the Member Champion roles.

### **Outside Bodies**

9. 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).
10. 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

11. 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><b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The Authority has approved a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 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 associated with travel by appointees to meetings of outside bodies. This will also be met within existing budgets</p>
<p><b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (identify how proposals link with current priorities &amp; policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>None directly.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>None directly.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out as the report does not contain a recommendation to approve a policy.</p>
<p><b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>None.</p>

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Political balance and allocation of committee seats

Appendix 2 – Existing committee memberships

## APPENDIX 1

<u>Political Groups</u>		<b>Conservative Group</b>	<b>Green &amp; Ind. Alliance</b>	<b>Unity Group</b>	<b>Non-aligned</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>Cllr. C. Taylor</b>	<b>Cllr.T. Wells</b>	<b>Cllr. R. Udall</b>	Cllr. D. Boulter	
		Cllr. R. Phillips	Cllr.N. McVey	Cllr.J. Robinson	Cllr J. Carwardine	
		Cllr. A. Amos			Cllr J Kenyon	
		Cllr. B.Clayton			Cllr D. Toynbee	
		Cllr. E. Eyre				
		Cllr. A. Hardman				
		Cllr. I. Hardiman				
		Cllr. M.Hart				
		Cllr. R. Morris				
		Cllr.L. Robinson				
		Cllr.D. Chambers				
		Cllr.A. Ditta				
		Cllr.R. Brookes				
		Cllr.D. Morehead				
		Cllr. J. Monk				
		Cllr.E. Marshall				
		Cllr. D. Davies				
		<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>
		68%	8%	8%		

### Political balance & Allocation of Committee Seats

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

<b><u>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</u></b>			
<b>Conservative Group (9)</b>	<b>Ind. &amp; Green Alliance (1)</b>	<b>Unity Group (1)</b>	<b>Non-aligned Members (2)</b>
Cllr. R. Phillips (Chairman)	Cllr.T. Wells	Cllr. R. Udall	Vacancy
Cllr. C. Taylor (Vice)			Vacancy
Cllr. D. Chambers			
Cllr. A. Ditta			
Cllr. J. Monk			
Cllr. D. Morehead			
Cllr. L. Robinson			
Cllr. D. Davies			
<b><u>Audit &amp; Standards Committee</u></b> (cannot include Chair/Vice-Chair of Authority, Chair of Policy & Resources or Group Leaders)			
<b>Conservative Group (8)</b>	<b>Ind. &amp; Green Alliance (1)</b>	<b>Unity Group (1)</b>	<b>Non-aligned Members (2)</b>
Cllr. M. Hart (Chairman)	Cllr. N. McVey	Cllr. D. Boatright	Cllr. D. Toynebee
Cllr. A. Amos (Vice)			Vacancy
Cllr. R. Brookes			
Cllr. B. Clayton			
Cllr. A. Hardman			
Cllr. I. Hardiman			
Cllr. E. Marshall			
Cllr. R. Morris			
<b><u>Appointments Committee</u></b>			
<b>Conservative Group (5)</b>	<b>Ind. &amp; Green Alliance (1)</b>	<b>Unity Group (1)</b>	
Cllr. C. Taylor	Cllr. T. Wells	Cllr. R. Udall	
Cllr. R. Phillips			
Cllr. M. Hart			
Cllr. E. Eyre			
Vacancy			

## Report of the Treasurer

### Provisional Financial Out-turn 2022-23

#### Purpose of report

1. To receive provisional financial results 2022-23, to review Treasury Management activities and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code indicators.
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#### Recommendation

*It is recommended that the Authority:*

- i) Notes the provisional financial results for 2022-23;*
- ii) Approves the transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves in accordance with the Reserves Strategy;*
  - a) £349,251 from the Organisational Excellence Reserve;*
  - b) £324,348 from the On-Call Recruitment Reserve;*
  - c) £78,459 from Fire Control Project Reserve;*
  - d) £76,020 from the ICT Replacement Reserve;*
  - e) £74,046 from the Fire Prevention Reserve;*
  - f) £49,000 from the Taxation Income Guarantee Reserve;*
  - g) £29,374 to the Capital Building Projects Reserve;*
  - h) £23,501 from the Sustainability Reserve;*
  - i) £21,327 from the Protection Grants Reserve;*
  - j) £15,478 from the Pensions Reserve; and*
  - k) £139,843 from the Budget Reduction Reserve.*
- iii) Notes that the production of the 2022-23 Statement of Accounts has been delayed by the late completion of the 2021-22 Audit, that Treasurer will certify them outside the regulatory time-scale, and that the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP; and*
- iv) Confirms that the Prudential Indicators for 2022-23 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) 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.
8. Members of the Audit & Standards Committee will be aware of the delays to the completion of the Audit of the 2021-22 Accounts (*the Committee approved the audited Accounts on 19 April 2023, with no material changes to the Statements as signed by the Treasurer in July 2022*).
9. The Committee has considered the reasons behind this (which are part of a concerning national picture) and they do not need to be repeated here, however they have had a substantial knock on effect on the closure of 2022-23 and completion of the Statements.
10. Consequently, this provisional out-turn is more provisional than is usual, and the Accounts were not completed within the current statutory timescales.

## Revenue Budget 2022-23

11. The financial year 2022-23 saw the continued economic impacts of global conditions, including very significant inflation and pay awards.
12. The Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report presented to Policy and Resources Committee in March identified a potential net overspending of £0.5m, and recommended that this be funded from the Budget Reduction Reserve.

13. The out-turn position, detailed in Appendix 1, which is split between the core budget and reserve funded projects, is summarised below:

		<b>Core £m</b>	<b>Projects £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
Employee Related	<i>Line 7</i>	25,927,099	693,202	26,620,301
Running Costs	<i>Line 29</i>	9,842,334	270,386	10,112,720
Capital Financing	<i>Line 31</i>	2,297,189	91,993	2,389,182
		<u>38,066,622</u>	<u>1,055,581</u>	<u>39,122,203</u>
Funding Grants	<i>Line 33</i>	(8,153,731)		(8,153,731)
Council Tax	<i>Line 34</i>	(25,821,586)		(25,821,586)
Business Rates & Grants	<i>Line 35</i>	(2,780,280)		(2,780,280)
Other Grants	<i>Line 36</i>	(1,185,957)		(1,185,957)
		<u>(37,941,554)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(37,941,554)</u>
		<u>125,068</u>	<u>1,055,581</u>	<u><b>1,180,648</b></u>
from TIG Grant Reserve		(49,000)		(49,000)
to Buildings Project Reserve		(29,374)		(29,374)
to Protection Grants Reserve		154,170		154,170
from ICT Replacements Reserve		(61,020)		(61,020)
		<u>139,843</u>	<u>1,055,581</u>	<u>1,195,424</u>
from Pensions Reserve			(15,478)	(15,478)
from On Call Recruitment Reserve			(324,348)	(324,348)
from Organisational Excellence Reserve			(349,251)	(349,251)
from Fire Control Reserve			(78,459)	(78,459)
from ICT Replacements Reserve			(15,000)	(15,000)
from Fire Prevention Reserve			(74,046)	(74,046)
from Protection Grants Reserve			(175,497)	(175,497)
from Sustainability Reserve			(23,501)	(23,501)
		<u>139,843</u>	<u>(0)</u>	<u>139,843</u>
from Budget Reduction Reserve		<u>(139,843)</u>		<u>(139,843)</u>
		<u>0</u>	<u>(0)</u>	<u>0</u>

14. The net position is significantly better than forecast in March, largely due to the late receipt of additional Business Rate Support Grant, the share of the 2022-23 Rates Pool surplus and a positive adjustment to the 2021-22 Pool surplus (following completion of some Billing Authority audits).
15. The picture is slightly more complicated than this, however, and more details are given below, but the resultant demand on the Budget Reduction Reserve is now only £139,843 compared to the £0.5m forecast in March.
16. A summary comparison of Budget, Out-turn and the March forecast is given below:

		<b>Core Budget £m</b>	<b>Core Out-turn £m</b>	<b>Core Variation £m</b>	<b>March Forecast £m</b>
Employee Related	<i>Line 7</i>	25,270,400	25,927,099	656,699	955,700
Running Costs	<i>Line 29</i>	8,755,600	9,842,334	1,086,734	30,000
Capital Financing	<i>Line 31</i>	2,827,000	2,297,189	(529,811)	(450,000)
		36,853,000	38,066,622	1,213,622	535,700
Funding Grants	<i>Line 33</i>	(8,153,300)	(8,153,731)	(431)	
Council Tax	<i>Line 34</i>	(25,821,600)	(25,821,586)	14	
Business Rates & Grants	<i>Line 35</i>	(2,035,500)	(2,780,280)	(744,780)	(18,500)
Other Grants	<i>Line 36</i>	(1,002,000)	(1,185,957)	(183,957)	(4,176)
		(37,012,400)	(37,941,554)	(929,154)	(22,676)
		(159,400)	125,068	284,468	513,024
from TIG Grant Reserve		(49,000)	(49,000)	0	
to Buildings Project Reserve		208,400	(29,374)	(237,774)	
to Protection Grants Reserve			154,170	154,170	
from ICT Replacements Reserve			(61,020)	(61,020)	
		0	139,843	139,843	513,024

17. The key variations on the expenditure side are shown in Appendix 1 and explained below:

- a. **Employee Related £0.657m over:** The impact of both the Grey and Green book pay awards has been considered by the Authority on several occasions throughout the year. The position is somewhat better than the forecast as more staff were involved in Reserve funded projects than were included in the March estimate.
- b. **Running Costs £1.087m over:** There are a number of different impacts here and the key ones are outlined below:
  - i. **Property: £0.401m overspend.** A recent review has identified that some costs that are currently charged to revenue actually relate to minor capital schemes and work is underway with the PCC property team to identify these and recode them appropriately. If this is the case it is proposed to fund this capital from revenue, increasing the Capital Financing figure, and leaving the overall out-turn position unchanged
  - ii. In addition, the budget assumes that **£0.100m** of relevant PCC property team costs would be capitalized against major building projects. However, these projects were not significantly advanced in 2022/23 to allow this. However, this is partially offset by savings in the Capital Financing budget.

- iii. Strategic Management: **£0.062m** continued investment in leadership development across the service and control of the Invest to Improve project portfolio.
  - iv. Operational Policy: **£0.075m**, mainly costs of over-border support for a number of major incidents in the year
  - v. Fleet: **£0.147m**, mainly fuel cost above the estimated additional inflation included in the budget.
  - vi. Operational Logistics: **£0.167m**, includes the costs of proper cleansing of foam tanks to safely remove residual Persistent Organic Pollutants.
  - vii. Net Other: **£135m**
- c. Capital Financing **£0.530m under** This is mainly due to the frequently reported slippage in the capital programme and £0.450m of this was already recognized and forecast in the Quarter 3 monitoring report. The net balance is largely due to significantly increased investment returns as a result of increased interest rates (Note this is a relative increase from a very low base)  
This figure may be amended subject to any adjustments regarding property schemes (see 17 (b)(i) above).
18. This overall additional expenditure, compared to the Quarter 3 forecast has been more than offset by additional funding which is outlined below:
- a. Business Rates and Grants **£0.745 additional**, of which there are four elements:
    - i. **£0.502m**: 2022/23 Business Rate Reconciliation Grant paid by DLUHC in late January. This was unexpected and not budgeted (but this was the same for all Fire Authorities in the region).
    - ii. **£0.047m**: Levy Surplus Grant 2021/22. A distribution of the national surplus left in this fund, and is not within the control of the Authority.
    - iii. **£0.128m**: The Authority's estimated share of the 2022/23 Business rate Pool gain. This is subject to confirmation of final audit of Billing Authorities and may change in the future (see below).
    - iv. **£0.048m**: adjustment to the Authority's estimated share of the 2021/22 following final audit of one Billing Authority. This may change again as other audits are completed.
    - v. **£0.020m**: late adjustment to Collection Fund surplus, already reported.
  - b. Other grants **£0.184m**: a number of un-budgeted grant the major one being the repeating but annually allocated Fire Prevention Grant of £0.169m. Of which the £0.154m not spent this year is to be taken to the Protection Grant Reserve.
19. In accordance with approved plans, significant expenditure £1.1m has been incurred on reserve funded projects – largely the Invest to Improve programme - and these are shown as funded from the appropriate reserve.
20. The total impact of all these factors is for a net transfer from reserves of £1.2m as indicated below:

from Organisational Excellence Reserve	(349,251)
from On Call Recruitment Reserve	(324,348)
from Fire Control Reserve	(78,459)
from ICT Replacements Reserve	(76,020)
from Fire Prevention Reserve	(74,046)
from TIG Grant Reserve	(49,000)
from Buildings Project Reserve	(29,374)
from Sustainability Reserve	(23,501)
from Protection Grants Reserve	(21,327)
from Pensions Reserve	(15,478)
from Budget Reduction Reserve	(139,843)
	<b>(1,180,648)</b>

21. The impact on individual reserves is shown in Appendix 2, and show that whilst balances fell it was not quite as fast as was anticipated in February 2023; however, this is after largely due to the late receipt of Business Rate grants and Rate Pooling gains, of £0.7m, as explained in 18(a) above.
22. The commencement of these invest to save projects, and further approved Schemes (e.g. Fire Control replacement, completion of Broadway Fire station, Breathing Apparatus replacement etc.) mean that there will be a further significant fall in reserves in 2023/24.

### Capital Budget 2022-23

23. Details of the approved capital budget are set out in Appendix 3, and are summarised in the table below:

	Vehicles	Major Builds	Major Equip	Alloc. Minor	Unalloc Minor	Future Builds	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Approved at Mar 2023</b>	<b>3.826</b>	<b>8.183</b>	<b>0.590</b>	<b>2.660</b>	<b>0.058</b>	<b>12.682</b>	<b>27.999</b>
Major Scheme Allocation		0.333				(0.333)	<b>0.000</b>
Minor Scheme Allocation				0.124	(0.124)		<b>0.000</b>
Sustainability Reserve				0.023			<b>0.023</b>
ICT Reserve Adjustment					0.108		<b>0.108</b>
	<b>3.826</b>	<b>8.516</b>	<b>0.590</b>	<b>2.807</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>12.349</b>	<b>28.130</b>
Expenditure to 2021/22	1.345	7.473	0.431	0.664			<b>9.913</b>
<b>Available Budget</b>	<b>2.481</b>	<b>1.043</b>	<b>0.159</b>	<b>2.143</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>12.349</b>	<b>18.217</b>

24. Major Schemes provision is that for Hereford, Redditch and Broadway Fire Stations and the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility, which are not disclosed separately in case they prejudice any future tender/contract processes.
25. Expenditure against these schemes has been slow for a number of reasons including significantly longer lead times on supplies from the European Union.
26. It should be noted that the Future Builds provision still includes the Redditch scheme even though it is intended that this will now be funded via the PCC. This is because we are waiting an opportunity to adjust the budget without disclosing

information which may identify individual scheme provisions before contracts have been awarded.

27. Excluding the Future Buildings provision, total budgets of £5.527m were approved with expenditure of £2.783m being incurred. This figure may increase following review of property costs as referred to at 17 (b)(i) above.
28. In relation to the schemes in Appendix 3 that are showing apparent overspends, the following information is provided:
  - a. Response Vehicles (*Line 13*) **£0.099m**: this scheme was split over two years, but it has been beneficial to order as a single batch, with some delivery slightly earlier than was planned. There is capital provision in 2023/24 and the timing will have a marginal impact on capital finance in costs.
  - b. Traffic Management – Droitwich (*Line 44*) **£0.004m**: it is believed that this a revenue cost and will be adjusted as part of the review referred to at 17 (b)(i) above.
  - c. Ladders (*Line 71*) **£0.010m**: is again an early order against a 2023/24 allocation.

### **Role of the Audit and Standards Committee**

29. 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.
30. 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 this Provisional Financial Results element of this report.
31. 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.
32. The Statement of Accounts will reconcile these differences and the Audit and Standards Committee will scrutinise this reconciliation as well as the Accounts themselves.
33. 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. This has not been achieved (see below).
34. Members of the Audit and Standards Committee will be aware of the prolonged audit of the 2021-22 Accounts (although no material changes were required as a result) and this has already had a knock-on effect on the production of the 2022-23 statements. It has also now emerged that due to the delay in signing off the 2021-22 statements, the External Auditors may now require a recalculation of pension liability data (to reflect data now available) and amendment of the 2021-22 accounts. If it is necessary to carry this out it will further divert resources from production of the 2022-23 statements.

35. The Treasurer is in discussion with the External Auditor about the implications of this requirement. Whilst it is technically correct, it arises solely because of the delays to the Audit and, given that the 2022-23 statements will be published soon, it is the Treasurer's view that this change will not have a material impact on users of the Accounts.
36. These Regulations also oblige the Authority to approve and publish the audited Statement of Accounts normally by 31 July.

### **Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators**

37. 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.
38. 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.
39. 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.
40. The final review of 2022-23 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**

41. 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.
42. 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.
43. 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.

44. At 31 March 2022 the Authority had long-term debt totalling £10.411m, and during 2022-23 £1.365m was repaid as planned, bringing the total debt at 31 March 2023 to £9.046m.
45. 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.
46. As a rule of thumb borrowing should not (other than temporarily) exceed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which at 31 March 2023 provisionally stands at £19.265m.
47. In accordance with the SLA investment risk is shared with WCC proportionate to the relative funds invested.
48. 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**

49. In considering the budget and precept for the year the Authority approves indicators and limits in respect of capital expenditure, borrowing and revenue consequences.
50. These are set by the Authority, as part of the overall budget setting process, in February prior to the start of the financial year.
51. 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

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Whole Report
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Budget prepared in support of current policy priorities
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	n/a
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	n/a
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	n/a
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (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: Revenue Budget 2022-23: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 2: Reserves Strategy 2022-23: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 3: Capital Budget 2022-23: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 4: Prudential Indicators 2022-23: Provisional Out-turn

**Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority**  
**21st June 2023**  
**Revenue Budget 2022/23: Provisional Out-turn**

Col. Line	(2) Quarter 3 Revised Budget £	(3) Forecast Out-turn £	(4) Forecast Variation £	(5) Reserve Funded Projects £		
1	Wholetime Firefighter Pay	14,321,400	14,513,605	192,205	438,527	
2	Retained Fire-fighter Pay	4,241,100	4,434,680	193,580	0	
3	Control Pay	935,800	1,017,135	81,335	78,459	
4	Support Pay	4,647,100	4,758,747	111,647	176,215	
5	Other Employee Costs	90,000	87,063	(2,937)	0	
6	Pension Costs Charged to Revenue Account	1,035,000	1,115,870	80,870	0	
7	<b>Employee Related</b>	<b>25,270,400</b>	<b>25,927,099</b>	<b>656,699</b>	<b>693,202</b>	
8	Strategic Management	107,600	169,772	62,172	0	
9	New Dimensions	55,300	55,541	241	0	
10	Operational Policy	41,100	116,514	75,414	0	
11	Protection	47,000	66,826	19,826	65,690	
12	Prevention	289,700	258,611	(31,089)	54,344	
13	Training	679,800	734,356	54,556	9,655	
14	Operational Logistics	1,149,300	1,316,264	166,964	0	
15	Fleet Maintenance	575,600	722,198	146,598	0	
16	Property/Facilities Management	1,939,100	2,340,184	401,084	0	
17	PCC Charges	461,500	457,057	(4,443)	0	
18	PCC Charges - Capitalised	(99,700)	0	99,700	0	
19	Information & Comms Technology	2,091,900	2,151,924	60,024	0	
20	Policy & Information	81,600	48,534	(33,066)	0	
21	Corporate Communications	48,200	21,474	(26,726)	0	
22	Human Resources/Personnel	513,400	522,211	8,811	0	
23	Invest to Improve Projects	0	0	0	140,697	
24	Authority Costs	59,200	54,700	(4,500)	0	
25	Legal Services	39,000	75,858	36,858	0	
26	Insurances	447,100	467,817	20,717	0	
27	Finance (FRS)	140,700	158,921	18,221	0	
28	Finance SLA	88,200	103,571	15,371	0	
29	<b>Running Costs</b>	<b>8,755,600</b>	<b>9,842,334</b>	<b>1,086,734</b>	<b>270,386</b>	
30	Capital Financing	2,827,000	2,297,189	(529,811)	91,993	
31	<b>Capital Financing</b>	<b>2,827,000</b>	<b>2,297,189</b>	<b>(529,811)</b>	<b>91,993</b>	
32	<b>Core Budget</b>	<b>36,853,000</b>	<b>38,066,622</b>	<b>1,213,622</b>	<b>1,055,581</b>	
33	Funding Grants	(8,153,300)	(8,153,731)	(431)		
34	Council Tax	(25,821,600)	(25,821,586)	14		
35	Business Rates & Grants	(2,035,500)	(2,780,280)	(744,780)		
36	Other Grants	(1,002,000)	(1,185,957)	(183,957)		
37	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(37,012,400)</b>	<b>(37,941,554)</b>	<b>(929,154)</b>	<b>0</b>	
38		<b>(159,400)</b>	<b>125,068</b>	<b>284,468</b>	<b>1,055,581</b>	
39	to/(from) TIG Grant Reserve	(49,000)	(49,000)	0		Total Use of Reserves (49,000)
40	to/(from) Buildings Project Reserve	208,400	(29,374)	(237,774)		(29,374)
41	to/(from) Protection Grants Reserve		154,170	154,170	(175,497)	(21,327)
42	to/(from) Pensions Reserve			0	(15,478)	(15,478)
43	to/(from) On Call Recruitment Reserve			0	(324,348)	(324,348)
44	to/(from) Organisational Excellence Reserve			0	(349,251)	(349,251)
45	to/(from) Fire Control Reserve			0	(78,459)	(78,459)
46	to/(from) ICT Replacements Reserve		(61,020)	(61,020)	(15,000)	(76,020)
47	to/(from) Fire Prevention Reserve			0	(74,046)	(74,046)
48	to/(from) Sustainability Reserve			0	(23,501)	(23,501)
49	to/(from) Budget Reduction Reserve					(139,843)
50	<b>Use of Reserves</b>	<b>159,400</b>	<b>14,775</b>	<b>(144,625)</b>	<b>(1,055,581)</b>	<b>(1,180,648)</b>
51	<b>Net</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>139,843</b>	<b>139,843</b>	<b>0</b>	

**Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority****21st June 2023****Reserves Strategy**

<i>Col</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)</i>	<i>(6)</i>
<i>Row</i>		<b>Actual at</b>	<b>Usage in</b>	<b>Probable</b>	<b>Forecast</b>
		<b>31-Mar-22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>31-Mar-23</b>	<b>in Feb 2023</b>
		<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
	<b><u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u></b>				
1	Capital Projects Reserve	<b>2.015</b>		<b>2.015</b>	<b>2.015</b>
2	C&C Reserve	<b>1.527</b>	(0.078)	<b>1.449</b>	<b>1.477</b>
3	Capital Projects Reserve	<b>1.402</b>	(0.029)	<b>1.373</b>	<b>1.402</b>
4	ICT Replacements Reserve	<b>1.315</b>	(0.076)	<b>1.239</b>	<b>1.200</b>
5	ESMCP Reserve	<b>1.032</b>		<b>1.032</b>	<b>1.032</b>
6	RPE Reserve	<b>1.000</b>		<b>1.000</b>	<b>1.000</b>
7	On Call Recruitment Reserve	<b>0.995</b>	(0.324)	<b>0.671</b>	<b>0.633</b>
8	Organisational Excellence Reserve	<b>0.908</b>	(0.349)	<b>0.559</b>	<b>0.767</b>
9	Property Maintenance Reserve	<b>0.534</b>		<b>0.534</b>	<b>0.294</b>
10	Pension Tribunal Reserve	<b>0.400</b>		<b>0.400</b>	<b>0.400</b>
11	Development Reserve	<b>0.310</b>		<b>0.310</b>	<b>0.270</b>
12	Sustainability Reserve	<b>0.310</b>	(0.024)	<b>0.286</b>	<b>0.310</b>
13	Pensions Reserve	<b>0.260</b>	(0.016)	<b>0.244</b>	<b>0.260</b>
14	Protection Grants Reserve	<b>0.249</b>	(0.021)	<b>0.228</b>	<b>0.102</b>
15	Fire Prevention Reserve	<b>0.230</b>	(0.074)	<b>0.156</b>	<b>0.070</b>
16	Equipment Reserve	<b>0.190</b>		<b>0.190</b>	<b>0.190</b>
17	Safety Initiatives Reserve	<b>0.138</b>		<b>0.138</b>	<b>0.108</b>
18		<b>12.815</b>	<b>(0.991)</b>	<b>11.824</b>	<b>11.530</b>
	<b><u>Other Specific Reserves</u></b>				
19	Operational Activity Reserve	<b>0.600</b>		<b>0.600</b>	<b>0.600</b>
20	Insurance Excess Reserve	<b>0.130</b>		<b>0.130</b>	<b>0.130</b>
21		<b>0.730</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.730</b>	<b>0.730</b>
	<b><u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u></b>				
22	Budget Reduction Reserve	<b>1.836</b>	(0.140)	<b>1.696</b>	<b>1.836</b>
23	TIG Reserve	<b>0.095</b>	(0.049)	<b>0.046</b>	<b>0.046</b>
24		<b>1.931</b>	<b>(0.189)</b>	<b>1.742</b>	<b>1.882</b>
25	<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>15.476</b>	<b>(1.180)</b>	<b>14.296</b>	<b>14.142</b>
26	General (Un-earmarked) Reserves	1.538		<b>1.538</b>	<b>1.538</b>
27	<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>17.014</b>	<b>(1.180)</b>	<b>15.834</b>	<b>15.680</b>



## Prudential Indicators 2022-23 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 2022-23 was as follows:

	Original (Feb 2022) £m	Revised (Feb 2023) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Capital Expenditure	11.268	2.332	2.783

#### **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 2022) £m	Revised (Feb 2023) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Financing Costs	2.587	2.377	2.056
Net Revenue Stream	36.615	37.012	37.215
Ratio	7.07%	6.42%	5.42%

### **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 2022) £m	Revised (Feb 2023) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
CFR at 31st March 2022	24.228	20.873	19.265

### **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 2022/23 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 2022	29.000
Operational Boundary at 31st March 2022	23.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2023	9.046

## **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 2022	30.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2022	9.046

## **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	<b>Actual</b> £m	Upper Limit £m
Under 12 months	0.000	<b>0.000</b>	2.262
Over 12 months but within 24 months	0.000	<b>0.211</b>	2.262
Over 24 months but within 5 years	0.000	<b>0.347</b>	4.523
Over 5 years but within 10 years	0.000	<b>4.000</b>	6.785
Over 10 years	2.262	<b>4.488</b>	8.594
		<b>9.046</b>	

## Report of Chief Fire Officer

### Cultural Issues in the Fire Service

#### Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of the current assessment of the Service's culture and behaviours and assure Members of the measures being taken to drive progress in this area.
- 

#### Recommendation

*It is recommended that Members note this report.*

#### Introduction and Background

2. Members will be aware of the recent publication of the [independent culture review of London Fire Brigade \(LFB\)](#) that was published in late 2022 describing the abhorrent and unacceptable cultural behaviours that were found. Since then there has been a media campaign highlighting similar poor practices and behaviours in a number of other UK Fire and Rescue Services.
3. In the early 1990s a female Firefighter in HWFRS was exposed to institutional mistreatment, bullying and harassment after joining in 1989 as one of the two first female Firefighters in the Service. This is a shameful and embarrassing chapter in HWFRS's history, however the learning from this case was well embedded in management training and cultural improvements throughout the early 2000s and to this current day.
4. In 2021 (prior to the LFB report), as part of the ongoing journey of improving the culture and behaviours of all HWFRS staff (Wholetime, On-Call and Corporate staff) the Service's current Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) adopted the NFCC Core Code of Ethics and made a commitment to review and improve how we support and manage Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). SLB are committed to drive forward an even better level of understanding and improve accountability in how all staff act and behave whilst at work, how they interact with each other and, most importantly, ensure the way they treat and interact with all parts of our communities is of the highest possible standard. It is vital that our communities have confidence in the integrity of their Fire and Rescue Service.



## Current Situation

5. Before the publication of the Independent Cultural Review of LFB, the Service had already commissioned an extensive staff survey, and tendered to outsource a professional training supplier to deliver a bespoke EDI training programme. SLB also undertook a long-term specialist leadership development programme with a company called Trans2Performance, which all managers have undertaken at least twice in the last two years.
6. Trans2Performance also provide an online support portal and coaching sessions for those who need further support. Feedback from staff has been excellent, and there has been a significant improvement in managers becoming more aware of their impact on others in the workplace and how they can better utilise the diverse skills and characters of those they work with.
7. The staff survey is now complete and the results will be published in the near future. The results of the survey are extremely positive and indicate that the Service is on an upward trajectory, Members will receive a separate presentation on the staff survey (Appendix 1).
8. A company called IODA who are experts in EDI training were awarded the contract to provide training which commenced in April 2023, starting with the Strategic Leadership Board. This training is mandatory for all staff and is open to Members should they wish to attend a session.
9. Following the recent LFB report and media attention in early 2023, and prior to the [HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Values and Culture in UK Fire and Rescue Services](#), SLB implemented a new confidential reporting line for staff through a contract with a company called Say So. Whilst most staff are happy to report matters of concern openly and freely to Service managers, Say So provides a confidential third party to support staff who feel they cannot report matters internally. Staff can report confidentially and if they choose anonymously and all reports go directly to an Assistant Chief Officer for initial review. A comprehensive communications plan across the organisation has helped to spread awareness of this new facility.
10. At the time of writing this report Say So has been live for a relatively short period of time and has already proven worthwhile. It has not received a high volume of calls from our staff and some of the issues reported have not been in relation to poor cultural behaviours of staff towards other staff or the public. Members will receive an annual summary report of the issues raised through Say So in the annual report on complaints and concerns.
11. The Service will also be launching a Say So PLUS reporting line. Say So PLUS provides any member of the public with a safe, independent and impartial reporting service in which they can have trust and confidence that the issues

they raise will be listened to and assessed for action at a high level within HWFRS.

12. In February 2023 the Chief Fire Officer took the decision to commission an independent Cultural Audit of the Service, led by Dr Debra Willoughby in conjunction with IODA (our new EDI training provider). Terms of Reference for this Audit are attached to this paper (Appendix 2).
13. At the time of writing this report the independent cultural review team have spoken with over 120 members of staff. The Cultural Audit is not fully complete as yet, although initial early feedback has been positive in regard of highlighting some areas that could be improved, but independently providing high levels of assurance of the generally high standard of behaviour and understanding of most staff and managers across the Service. The final report will be published in full and will be presented to Members at a future meeting. The recommendations will be used to help shape our Cultural Statement and supporting work streams.

## **Conclusion/Summary**

14. Results from the staff survey and looking at the feedback from our staff in regard to the performance of managers and the actions taken to address poor behaviours in the last two years has been overwhelmingly positive. This has given some significant degree of assurance that the endemic cultural issues and managerial neglect being found in other organisations does not appear to be present in HWFRS.
15. IODA were commissioned last year and in April 2023 began a bespoke specialist EDI and cultural training programme, which is mandatory for all staff to attend. This training is delivered by very experienced and professional experts in the field of workplace behaviours, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and will be linked to the outcomes and recommendations of the Cultural Audit.
16. By the end of 2023 all those who hold a management role, and new managers should have undertaken at least two full days of leadership training with Trans2Performance. As well as this training managers have also had access to numerous management training and support sessions. Trans2Performance also provide an online support portal and coaching sessions for those who need further training and development. Feedback has been excellent from staff, and there has been a significant improvement in managers' performance.
17. Say So has proven successful and allowed a minority of staff to report concerns they may not have otherwise reported, and not only in relation to culture and behaviours. Public access to Say So PLUS reporting will be launched in the near future.

18. The Cultural Audit by Dr Debra Willoughby, will provide independent evidence and assurance of the state of the culture and behaviours of staff and management within HWFRS. Initial feedback is positive in that it is finding areas that can be improved, but also not finding some of the endemic and institutionally poor cultures that have been exposed in other Fire Services and public sector organisations.
19. Overall it appears that whilst there are some issues and some staff behaviours fall well below the expected standards at times, the Service does have a positive and mainly good culture with a normally high standard of behaviour in the workplace. Despite this the Service does seem to regularly have to deal with isolated instances of poor behaviour from individuals, as would be expected in any organisation with over 700 employees.
20. However, when issues are reported they are dealt with swiftly and decisively by managers, and staff generally have confidence that this will happen. Reporting of poor behaviours could be improved, especially at an earlier stage and the IODA training programme will increase staff awareness and train staff how to recognise and address these issues when they happen.

### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	NA
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	The content of this paper directly links to efficiently and effectively delivering the CRMP, core Strategies and the People Strategy.  The update on culture directly links to the 5 elements of the Core Code of Ethics.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	NA
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Staff groups have been directly engaged in the work being undertaken to understand culture, behaviour and inclusion.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	EIAs are completed as appropriate.

<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	NA
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### **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 – Report of Findings from Staff Survey

Appendix 2 – Cultural Audit Terms of Reference



Staff Survey 2023

# Summary Report

May 2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



# Introduction

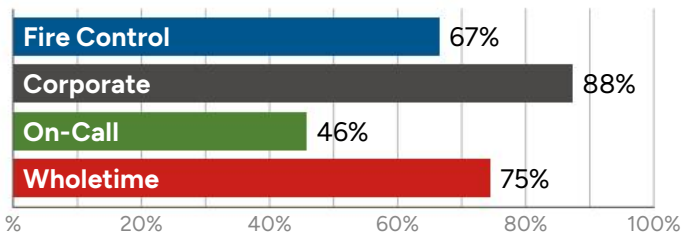
Fantastic response rate



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) values feedback and the opinions of its workforce to plan future development. The results from the staff survey will feed directly back into ensuring the Service is a great place to work, in line with the Core Code of Ethics.

The staff survey was conducted from 16th January 2023 until 3rd February 2023. It asked Service staff about their experiences of working for HWFRS – the full question set is available in Appendix A. Following a successful comprehensive communication about the launch, all employees were sent an email containing a link to the survey. The survey could also be accessed via a link on SharePoint or a QR code displayed on posters throughout Service locations. The survey was developed and administered by an external provider, People Insight, on behalf of the Service.

There was a fantastic participation rate with 65% (440) of employees taking part in the survey. This is higher than the average Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) sector response rate, which is between 50-55%. The majority of responses were from Wholetime (176), followed by On-Call (133) and then Corporate staff (113), which reflected the size of the differing work groups. The chart below shows the percentage of staff who responded by workforce group.



# Technical Details

Summary indicators have been created from the responses to survey questions. These indicators are scored on a scale that ranges from 0 to 10, where a higher score always equates to a more positive outcome.

Results for individual questions may be reported as the sum of two response options. HWFRS scores are compared to a FRS Sector benchmark. The data reflects 18 Fire and Rescue Services who have completed 41 staff surveys with People Insight since 2014.



## Survey Indicators

The survey used the PEARL model, which informs the questionnaire design and reporting. The organisational characteristics that drive engagement are represented by 5 global factors: Purpose; Enablement; Autonomy; Reward and Leadership. These, added to the 5 key indicators of engagement: Pride; Advocacy; Endeavour; Longevity and Care, form a comprehensive, actionable, and lean model of engagement.

Within the global factors, specific questions identify the BELONG Index, which indicates the level that staff feel that they belong to an organisation.

## PEARL Model



**5 global factors**

**10 key factors underpin each global factor**

**34 survey questions**

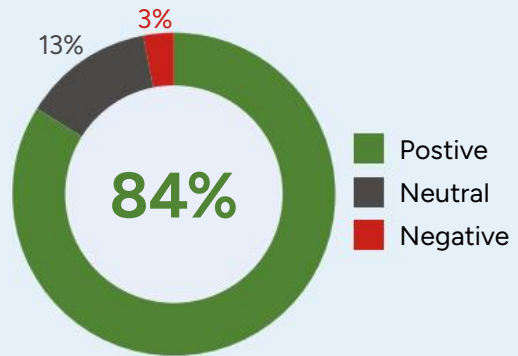
# Engagement Score

Highly engaged workforce, higher than FRS Sector benchmark

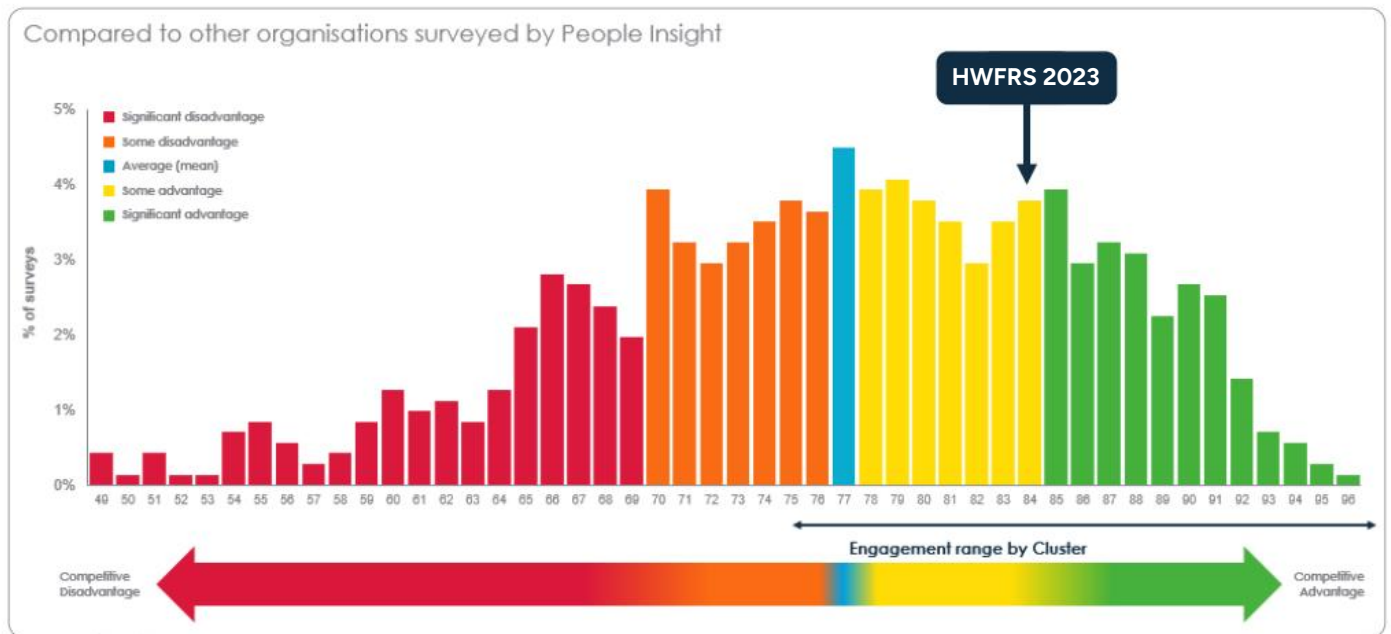


The engagement score measures overall staff engagement. This is a calculation of the average score for the 5 indicators of engagement questions. As the core areas of Pride; Advocacy; Endeavour; Longevity and Care are most likely to measure engagement.

**The workforce at HWFRS is highly engaged, with an employee engagement score of 84% which is +5 above the FRS benchmark.**



HWFRS performed well when compared to all other organisations surveyed by People Insight, including Public and Private Sector companies. HWFRS engagement score (indicated below) was significantly above the average and at the top of the 'some competitive advantage range', only 1% off being deemed as having a 'significant competitive advantage'.





# Engagement Score

Employees have a strong commitment to HWFRS



HWFRS received excellent engagement results, with advocacy (recommending HWFRS as a good place to work) and feeling proud to work for HWFRS performing most favourably when compared to the FRS benchmark. There is strong employee commitment with 95% of employees caring about the future of HWFRS and 81% intending to still be working at HWFRS in 2 years' time.

The following survey questions have the strongest relationship with engagement. Improvements in these areas are likely to enhance engagement scores:

	HWFRS Score	FRS Benchmark
I feel like I belong at HWFRS	66%	n/a
Senior leaders make the effort to listen	49%	n/a
The Strategic Leadership Board is open and transparent	34%	-2
I feel I can be my true self at work	70%	n/a
HWFRS provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions	56%	n/a

The responses to the openness and transparency of the Strategic Leadership Board were mostly neutral (48%) rather than unfavourable, and the result is aligned to the FRS Sector benchmark.



# Survey Themes

HWFRS is creating a positive employee experience



Theme scores demonstrates that HWFRS is creating a positive employee experience, with the majority of scores well above 60%. Higher results were achieved than the FRS sector benchmark, most notably around autonomy and reward. There are **high levels of engagement**, a **strong sense of purpose** and **high satisfaction with governance**. Leadership is the least favourable theme, however has the largest 'sitting on the fence' response group.

Themes	Response favourability			Survey Overall	FRS Benchmark
	Favourable	Neutral	Unfavourable		
Purpose	76%	15%	9%	0	0
Enablement	65%	21%	15%	0	+5
Autonomy <small>n=440</small>	65%	20%	15%	0	+7
Reward	63%	22%	15%	0	+7
Leadership	44%	36%	20%	0	+1
My Manager	79%	13%	8%	0	+5
Governance	81%	8%	11%	0	n/a
BELONG	66%	24%	11%	0	n/a
Engagement	84%	13%	3%	0	+5




# Relative Strengths


Employees care about HWFRS future



The questions below were scored the highest, reflecting extremely positive responses to a question within engagement, governance, reward and line manager factors.

 <b>Highest Scoring</b>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I care about the future of HWFRS	+3	95%
	I know how to report inappropriate behaviour	n/a	95%
	I find my work interesting and challenging	+3	89%
	I am proud to say I work for HWFRS	+7	88%
	My line manager treats me fairly and with respect	+3	88%

The questions below scored the highest in comparison to the FRS Sector benchmark. Numerous scores are significantly higher, with the most favourable scores for reward, engagement and enablement factors.

 <b>Most Above Benchmark</b>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I have opportunities to learn and develop at work	+20	75%
	I would recommend HWFRS as a good place to work	+14	75%
	Different parts of HWFRS are trying to work better together	+12	57%
	I feel the work I do is valued and recognised	+10	59%
	People try to communicate openly here regardless of position or level	+10	54%




Employees have opportunities to learn and develop







# Relative Weaknesses

HWFRS' lower scores are aligned to the FRS Sector Benchmark 

The questions below were scored the lowest, mainly from the leadership factor, although more responses to each question were rated neutral than unfavourable, and the results are aligned to the FRS sector benchmark..

 <p><b>Lowest Scoring</b></p>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	The Strategic Leadership Board is open and transparent	-2	34%
	I believe action will be taken as a result of this survey	+7	34%
	The recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS are transparent	n/a	37%
	The strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS	-3	49%
	Senior leaders make the effort to listen to staff	0	49%

The questions below scored least in comparison with the FRS Sector benchmark, however the scores are roughly aligned with minimal difference, ranging from -2 to -5. The range of scores HWFRS achieved most above the benchmark had a greater variance, with +10 to +20.

 <p><b>Most Below Benchmark</b></p>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I know what I need to do in order to progress my career within HWFRS	-5	55%
	The strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS	-3	49%
	I can get the training and development I need to do my job	-2	67%
	The Strategic Leadership Board are open and transparent	-2	34%
	I understand the three core Service Strategies of HWFRS	-2	81%





# BELONG Index

Most employees feel like they belong at HWFRS and can be their true self



Question	Response breakdown		
	Favourable	Neutral	Unfavourable
I feel like I belong at HWFRS	66%	24%	10%
I feel I can be my true self at work	70%	19%	11%
People with backgrounds like mine are able to succeed at HWFRS	62%	28%	10%

HWFRS has an overall BELONG Index score of 66%, which suggests that most staff feel like they belong at HWFRS. 24% of responders provided a neutral response and 10% responded unfavourably. The BELONG Index scores for individuals from underrepresented staff groups were generally aligned to the overall score, with the following results:

- Females – 76%
- Ethnic minority groups – 67%
- Staff who declared that they have a disability – 59%

The staff who had the lowest BELONG Index scores (41-45%) opted to not disclose any equality monitoring information.





# Results in Action

## Using your feedback

Overall excellent feedback has been received. Key areas where HWFRS can make further improvements are outlined below:

### Leadership and Communication



You would like...

- Increased openness and transparency of SLB
- Further engagement opportunities, where SLB can listen to staff
- Clearer vision of the overall direction of HWFRS
- Enhanced understanding of Core Service Strategies

We are improving...

- Engagement opportunities with SLB e.g. 'Ask the Chief' live session
- Communication methods e.g. triple play rolls screens are being rolled out throughout the Service
- Opportunities for staff to engaged at a Service wide level e.g. staff networks and working / steering groups



### Innovation and Psychological Safety



You would like...

- To believe that action will be taken as a result of the survey
- To feel that you belong at HWFRS and can be your true self
- Improvements to processes and Technology / IT

We are improving...

- Organisational culture – through conducting a Cultural Audit, forming a Culture & Ethics Steering Group
- The range of methods for staff to make a report i.e. a third-party staff reporting line provider (Say So)

## Conclusion

Overall an extremely positive staff survey, with an excellent participation rate and an exceptional overall employee engagement score. HWFRS consistently scored higher than the FRS sector benchmark and performed significantly above the average for all other organisations surveyed by People Insight. The results demonstrate that HWFRS is considered a good place to work, creating a positive employee experience, and that employees are highly committed and proud to work for HWFRS. Employees enjoy working with colleagues and most feel that they belong at HWFRS, including employees from under represented staff groups.

The feedback will be used to further develop engagement within the workforce, linking into wider cultural organisational development work. The key focus areas for improvement are Leadership and Communication, Innovation and Psychological Safety, as well as maintaining the excellent 2023 outcomes. The survey will be repeated in 2 years (2025) to re-assess engagement levels.





# Appendix A

## Full Question Set

PEARL	Items
Purpose	I understand the three core Service Strategies of HWFRS
Purpose	I know how the work I do helps HWFRS to achieve the three core strategies
Purpose	HWFRS tries to ensure that all people are treated fairly and equally
Purpose	I feel like I belong at HWFRS
Purpose	I believe the behaviours of everyone at HWFRS is of a high standard
Purpose	HWFRS is committed to doing high quality work that puts the community first
Purpose	The Service Values and vision aligns with my own values
Enablement	I can get the training and development I need to do my job
Enablement	I have the equipment and resources I need to do my work properly
Enablement	I know where to go to access general information and updates from HWFRS
Enablement	The processes we have enable effective working
Open text	If the above is disagreed with: 'What could be done differently to help you work more effectively?'
Enablement	I am satisfied with my physical work environment
Enablement	We are open to new ways of thinking and doing things
Enablement	People try to communicate openly here regardless of position or level
Enablement	Different parts of HWFRS are trying to work better together
Autonomy	At a local level, my opinion is sought on decisions that affect my work
Autonomy	I have the professional flexibility I need to get on with my job
Autonomy	HWFRS provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions
Autonomy	I am comfortable to speak up and constructively challenge how things are done
Autonomy	I feel I can be my true self at work
Autonomy	I feel my workload is manageable
Autonomy	I feel enabled to manage my wellbeing at work
Open text	For those who disagree to the above: What do you feel stops you at work from managing your wellbeing effectively?
Reward	I feel the work I do is valued and recognised
Reward	The recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS are transparent
Open comment	If the above is disagreed: 'What could change to make recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS more transparent?'
Reward	I find my work interesting and challenging
Reward	I feel I get the right training and development to make me an effective manager/leader (please skip this question if you are not a manager)
Reward	I have opportunities to learn and develop at work
Reward	I know what I need to do in order to progress my career within HWFRS
Reward	People with backgrounds like mine are able to succeed at HWFRS
Leadership	The Strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS

# Appendix A

## Full Question Set

PEARL	Items
Leadership	The Strategic Leadership Board are open and transparent
Leadership	Senior Leaders make the effort to listen to staff
Leadership	I believe action will be taken as a result of this survey
Leadership	Senior Leaders at HWFRS are accessible
Open text	What could be done differently to help create more opportunities for people to speak up and share their views?
My manager	My line manager treats me fairly and with respect
My manager	My line manager takes time to support me and develop my skills
My manager	My line manager gives me regular feedback on how I am doing, as necessary
My manager	If I were to make a mistake, my manager would be supportive in helping me learn from it
Governance	I know how to report inappropriate behaviour
Governance	If I reported inappropriate behaviour I believe appropriate action would be taken
Governance	Have you witnessed or experienced inappropriate behaviours in the workplace in the last two years?
Governance	If yes: What happened next?
Open text	If reported through another route: Please provide further details
Governance	I feel my concerns were listened to
Governance	If you did not report or raise the matter locally, why did you not do this?
Open text	HWFRS may wish to follow-up on your responses to the questions on inappropriate behaviour directly with you. If you are happy to be contacted in confidence, please provide your name and email address below and People Insight will pass on your details
Engagement	I am proud to say I work for HWFRS
Engagement	I would recommend HWFRS as a good place to work
Engagement	Working here makes me want to do the best work I can
Engagement	If I could, I would still like to be working at HWFRS in two years' time
Engagement	I care about the future of HWFRS
Open comment	What is the best thing about working for HWFRS?
Open comment	What is the one thing you would change about HWFRS?
Open comment	What three words would you use to describe the culture here?



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Terms of Reference

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Cultural Audit to Understand People, their Behaviours and Workplace Practices

17 March 2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





# Foreword

The Fire Authority and I are rightly proud of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), our culture and our staff, and we truly believe we have a progressive culture in which staff can feel safe, secure and respected in their work places. However, recent national events have brought into question the culture of the UK Fire and Rescue Service and unfortunately there have been too many examples of simply abhorrent behaviours by UK Fire Service staff whilst at work.

We recognise that the Service does also have cases of poor behaviour, these are limited to a small minority of staff and we do not believe they are endemic. We firmly believe we have a positive culture in regards to reporting poor behaviour and that management takes concerns seriously and deal with these issues robustly, as has been evidenced in our recent staff survey results. However, these occurrences do show us that there continues to be a minority of staff that simply do not understand that their behaviours are not welcome and will not be tolerated in our workplaces.

As a result of this the Chairman, Vice Chairman and I are pleased to be able to announce that we have agreed to commission and launch an Independent Cultural Audit which will be led by Dr Debra Willoughby. We have given Dr Willoughby complete autonomy, discretion, and open access for this audit and have also given a commitment to publish the report in full and act on any recommendations as a result of her findings. This Cultural Audit will also take into account and support the planned comprehensive mandatory training programme commencing in April 2023 by ioda, the recent implementation of SaySo in March 2023 (our confidential independent reporting line), and the incredibly informative and positive results of our recent staff survey which highlighted many areas of our culture that we should be proud of.

HWFRS staff and our communities should not fear the outcome of this Audit, conversely we should all welcome and truly value this opportunity to improve our Service and make HWFRS an even better place to work. Our communities should have complete confidence in our professionalism and behaviours when we access their homes, buildings and vehicles during their worst times, and when our staff come to work they should know their colleagues will act, behave and treat them with respect and dignity at all times, regardless of who they are.

Our strategic vision for our culture is underpinned by the belief that despite how much we train and support our staff, there may still be occasions where mistakes are made that need to be addressed. It is therefore our duty to be tolerant and supportive in helping our staff understand when they need to modify, change or cease their actions or behaviours, but likewise where these behaviours cannot be tolerated and do not align with our values, we will take swift and decisive action.

Our vision means that we need to ensure that each and every member of staff plays their role in challenging and reporting unacceptable behaviours at source, and that this is properly managed. Management will always listen and carefully consider each issue raised, and act appropriately and proportionately when these matters cannot be resolved at a local level.

I hope you will all make Dr Willoughby and her team feel welcome and that you will be as open and honest as you can be, as this way we can ensure we portray a rich and true picture of our organisation. Your view is important and I would urge you to get involved in this Cultural Audit when the opportunity arises as it will be helping us to grow and improve as a team and organisation.



**Jonathon Pryce**  
*Chief Fire Officer*



**Kit Taylor (Cllr)**  
*Chair of Fire Authority*



**Roger Phillips (Cllr)**  
*Vice Chair of Fire Authority*

# Terms of Reference

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<b>Objective</b>	<p>To develop a culture where every member of staff takes ownership for challenging and reporting poor behaviours at earliest possible level and when poor behaviours are identified management will act promptly and proportionately to address the concerns raised and we will always strive to grow, learn and develop our culture to continually improve our behaviours at work underpinned by the NFCC Core Code of Ethics.</p>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>To undertake an audit across the organisation to gather detailed information and data on organisational culture and practices, staff and management views and levels of understanding of Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion to inform future development.</p> <p>To highlight and evidence the positive cultural elements, progressive nature of the organisation and demonstrate how the majority of staff behave to a high standard.</p> <p>To identify areas of poor behaviour and help management to target these areas for improvement.</p> <p>The results of this audit should therefore provide a holistic view of the organisation in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as providing information to develop future refined strategies to help deliver targeted cultural benefits for the organisation, the workforce and ultimately the service provided.</p>
<b>Background</b>	<p>The Service is deeply committed to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda and the importance it places on ensuring all its employees are exposed to a healthy and fair working environment.</p> <p>The Service began this initiative to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation and its culture towards EDI by engaging specialist support early in 2022 starting with a senior leadership workshop facilitated by an EDI expert consultant to revise, improve and create a bespoke mandatory training package to replace the previous dated programme of training.</p> <p>As a result of recommendations from this event HWFRS undertook a comprehensive procurement process to identify an expert training and consultancy provider to facilitate an organisational wide cultural audit and deliver bespoke training to all staff.</p> <p>This was and continues to be a proactive initiative driven by the Chief Fire Officer. As a result, it has already put in place a mandatory comprehensive EDI training plan for all employees (uniform and non-uniformed including on call staff) and wishes to ensure that the training content and approach is fully bespoke to the needs of the Service, its employees and ultimately deliver benefits to the communities it serves.</p>
<b>Accountable to</b>	Chief Fire Officer

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## Terms of Reference (continued)

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<b>Duration</b>	<p>Audit will commence on 16 March 2023 until mid-April 2023.</p> <p>The bespoke inclusion training will follow commencing from 28 April to take place over an 18 month period.</p>
<b>Method of Delivery</b>	<p>The audit will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a desktop review of relevant policy, procedure and documents</li><li>• a review of previous cases relating to culture and behaviours</li><li>• a number of confidential focus groups across the Service to ensure all staff groups have the opportunity to take part in providing feedback</li><li>• for those wanting to take part but unable to attend one of the focus groups a selection of confidential one to one's are available for staff to speak individually with Dr Willoughby across the geography of the Service</li></ul>
<b>Single Point of Contact</b>	<p>To ensure appropriate strategic support is provided to this key project the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention will act as main point of contact.</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To undertake an audit across the organisation to gather detailed information and data on organisational culture and practices, staff and management views and levels of understanding of Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion to inform future development.</li><li>2. Undertake a desktop review of relevant documents, strategic plans and national best practice and guidance to include but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant HWFRS policies such as Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity and Work</li><li>• HWFRS Employment and Gender Pay Gap Report</li><li>• NFCC Core Code of Ethics and related Fire Standard</li><li>• HMICFRS State of Fire Reports</li><li>• Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade</li><li>• AFSA – Letter to Chief Fire Officers</li></ul></li><li>3. Gather a suitable robust sample of data from over 30% of the workforce including both qualitative and quantitative data using the following methods:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus Group interviews</li><li>• One to one interviews</li><li>• Quantitative questionnaire</li></ul></li><li>4. Hold one to one interview's away from normal Service premises and not in uniform, if requested by respondents.</li><li>5. Conduct focus groups in normal working location such as HQ and local stations.</li></ol>

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# Terms of Reference (continued)

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<b>Objectives (continued)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Review historical conduct cases, investigations &amp; outcomes and correlate results against findings to inform the final formative document and strategic recommendations.</li><li>7. Review HR/people practices (including previous and recent cases) to identify strengths, lessons learned potential areas for improvement.</li><li>8. Review data and information gathered from the HWFRS staff survey 2023.</li><li>9. Publish the results of the audit, and produce a comprehensive action plan in response to the recommendations.</li></ol>
<b>Reporting requirements to SLB</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Produce a report which includes clearly interpreted charts and text, providing a well-defined qualitative and quantitative picture of the data.</li><li>2. Report to reference relevant supporting/original data in line with academic best practice.</li><li>3. Submission of a comprehensive final evaluation report within two clear days of the receipt of any final feedback.</li><li>4. Presentation of report findings to key stakeholders through a PowerPoint presentation that summarises the findings.</li></ol>
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b>	<p>The results of the cultural audit will be reported to the Fire Authority and will directly link to ensuring the Service can better enact the requirements set out in the Community Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>In addition, it will support the People Strategy and align to the Core Code of Ethics and the five ethical principles.</p>
<b>Administration</b>	<p>To support the review administration to arrange focus groups and interviews will be provided directly by the CFO / Principal Officer Personal Assistants</p>
<b>Team Conducting the Audit</b>	<p>Two long-standing ioda consultants have been appointed to carry out this important audit based on their experience, qualifications, and personal qualities – Dr Debra Willoughby working with Research interview specialist and EDI Trainer, Emily Mellors.</p>

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## Team Conducting the Audit



### **Dr Debra Willoughby**

Twenty-five years in police and justice development leadership roles including international projects as part of UK sponsored aid programmes.

As the proposed lead consultant, Dr Debra, served as a UK police officer for two decades until 1994, when she began working with ioda. An internationally recognised consultant, researcher, evaluator, equalities advisor, trainer and development expert with over 40 years, Debra's experience is enhanced by a Doctorate focusing on communication in sensitive environments and a Master's Degree in Education and Evaluation, concentrating on the reduction of bias and discrimination in equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace.

Debra's roles that relate specifically to this project include but are not limited to: delivering training and/or strategic organisational guidance on the Equality Act of 2010; investigating discrimination cases in the UK with a view to finding constructive solutions without the need to seek redress in a tribunal. She has carried out a number of cultural audits post the MacPherson report into equality and fairness across the public sector including the Police and Fire Services. She also has training and mentoring inexperienced research teams; writing the 'Guidelines & Framework for the Saferworld In-Country Team to Carry out the End Evaluation of the Kenyan Police Reform Programme', which included guidelines on interviewing and carrying out Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); and researching, writing then supporting the implementation of a Training Needs Analyses Toolkit for the Jordanian Police Family Protection Department to enable them to effectively and efficiently utilise a variety of research methodologies to accurately identify training needs. Specific examples include:

- Debra has recently finished research into the preparation of case papers regarding complex UK harassment cases (redacted documents regarding the case are available if required).
- In 2022 she provided support and executive coaching to leaders working within Palestine as part of their role in providing inclusive and non-discriminatory medical aid to the local communities.
- In 2015 and 2016 she completed a comprehensive research and development assignment on behalf of UNICEF Jordan.
- In 2015 Debra completed the end evaluation of a Saferworld programme in South Sudan covering community security/protection focusing on the mobilisation and strengthening of vulnerable communities – including women and girls – and conflict-sensitive aid/development.
- Earlier in 2015 she completed the final evaluation of Saferworld's Police Reform Programme in Kenya including the programme's impact on VAWG particularly female genital mutilation, early marriage, rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- During 2014 Debra led the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Saferworld's four-year, multi-country community security programme (CSP) in South Sudan, Bangladesh and Yemen. The review found that the CSP had contributed to an improved environment for reconstruction and development in those countries by creating more active, informed and inclusive societies, and more effective and accountable institutions – in turn increasing public safety and security.

## Team Conducting the Audit (continued)



### **Emily Mellors**

#### ***Research interview specialist and EDI Trainer***

Emily is a senior EDI trainer and practitioner within ioda and delivers training and support across the UK including Fire Services. Emily currently delivers professional standards training within West Yorkshire FRS as well as Equality and Inclusion and leadership training with South Yorkshire FRS. Emily inclusion as a research interviewer is designed to ensure a practitioner's oversight and assessment of the information gathered and analysed.

Emily has been a member of the ioda EDI training and consultancy team since 2011 and across the UK in this field. She works closely with Debra (lead researcher) in areas such as learner development and assessment.

Before joining ioda Emily had a strong background in EDI and conflict resolution within the social care setting, providing training and consultancy to local authorities and third sector charities. Her proficiencies include handling sensitive situations, conflict resolution, logistics planning, prioritising tasks, meeting deadlines, resourcefulness, problem solving and managing difficult or stressful situations.

Emily is highly proficient when working within sensitive areas, particularly when it comes to creating a safe atmosphere ranging from organisational harassment and bullying through to working with women affected by violence and sexual harassment.



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



© 2023 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service  
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## **Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Prevention**

### **Annual Service Review 2022-23**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2022-23.
- 

#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Review 2022-23 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 2022-23**

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 8,132 incidents during 2022-23, an increase of 9 per cent on the previous year. This was largely accounted for by a 22 per cent rise in the number of Fire incidents attended, particularly Outdoor Fires, which increased by 38 per cent largely due to the hot, dry summer of 2022.
5. The Review also includes articles on the Leadership work we have been investing in, how we have focussed on Driving Operational Excellence and how this has translated to providing an effective emergency response to our communities. It also includes a look at our achievements in developing our Protection and Prevention services, along with progress made in supporting our workforce and driving efficiency. The Review has also been expanded to highlight progress made in delivering the service objectives set out in the 2022-23 Annual Service Plan.

6. The draft Review is included as Appendix 1.

### Conclusion/Summary

7. This report presents the Annual Service Review 2022-23, 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 report will be published on the Service website.

### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (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.
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (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 2022-23. The Review also highlights the Service's alignment to the Core Code of Ethics.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	The Review reports on activity from the previous year.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Strategic Leadership Board consultation.
<b>Equalities</b> (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.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (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 2022-23 – separate enclosure

HWFRS

# Annual Service Review

2022-23



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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Unless stated, figures used in this Review are as at 31 March 2023, rounded to the nearest 100 where appropriate. Population and household data are based on Census 2021 estimates.



# Foreword

We are pleased to introduce our Annual Service Review for 2022-2023. We hope it 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.

The Review is a look back over the last twelve months (April 2022 – March 2023) focusing on the main headlines and highlights of the year.

Over the year, our 24/7 emergency response service dealt with fires, road traffic collisions, flooding and many other emergencies. This year, we saw a 9% increase in the overall number of incidents we attended, rising from 7,477 in 2021-22 to 8,132 in 2022-23.

Not surprisingly given the record-breaking heatwave over the summer months, much of the increase related to a 22% increase in the number of fires we attended, of which we saw a 39% increase in outdoor fires. There was also a small 1% increase in the number of Special Service incidents attended, including a 31% increase in flooding incidents. We also saw a 7% increase in False Alarm calls attended.

In this year's Annual Review, we have highlighted the substantial work we have been doing towards achieving our aim of driving excellence throughout the Service – in ourselves, and in everything we do.

We have also included a new section on the progress made in delivering the Service objectives we set for the year.

You'll find out a lot more about the wide range of our work on the News and Events page of our Website.

This Review sits alongside our Annual Service Plan for 2023-2024, which you will find on our Publications page.

Finally, we'd 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 2022-23

## Core Purpose

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



**686 (764 roles)**  
Staff Members



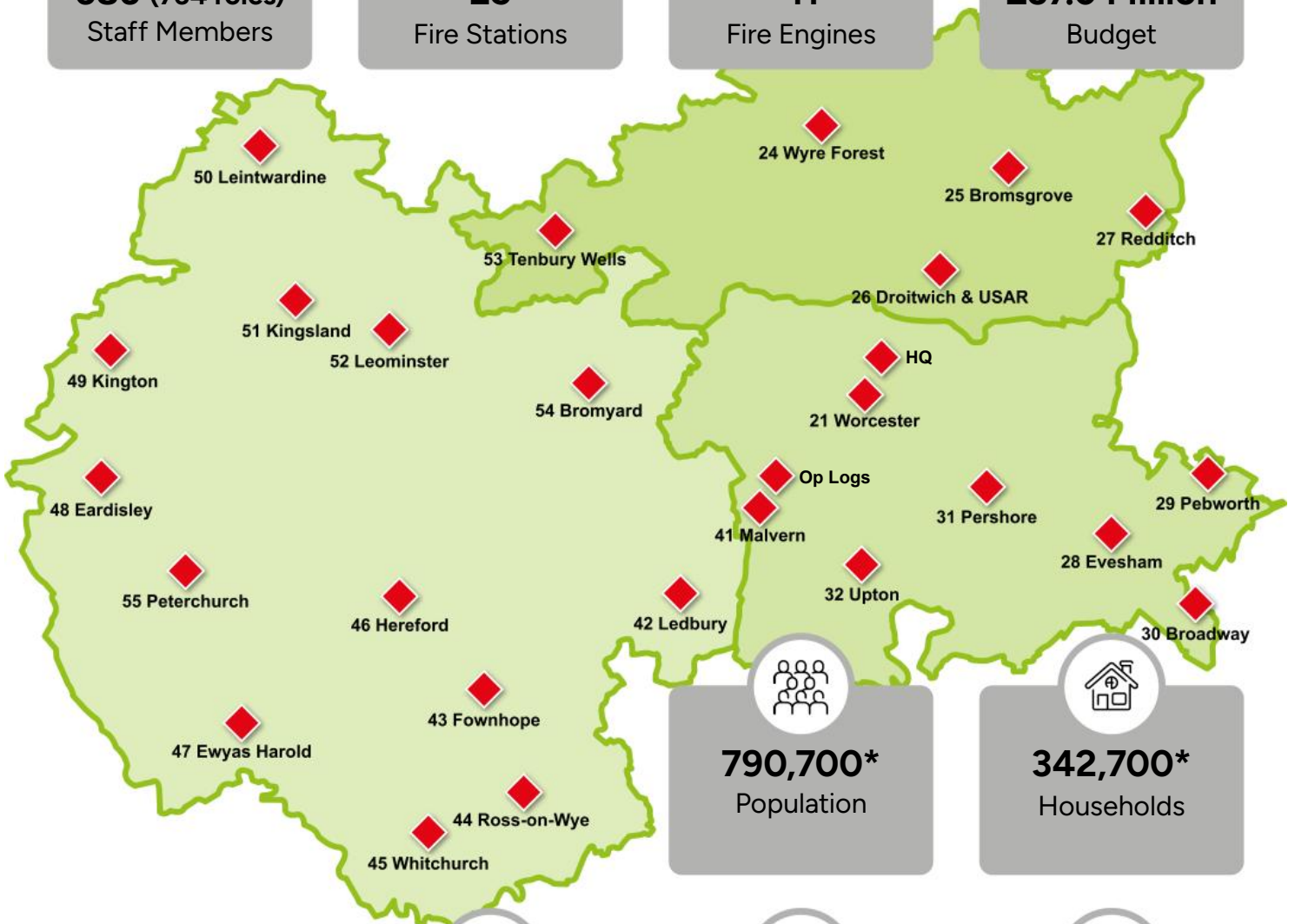
**25**  
Fire Stations



**41**  
Fire Engines



**£37.0 Million**  
Budget



**790,700\***  
Population



**342,700\***  
Households



**392,000**  
Area in Hectares



**43,805\*\***  
Businesses



**4,755**  
Road length  
in Miles

\*Census 2021

\*\*Office for National Statistics 2022-23

# 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 686 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 financial, human resources and legal services. The 24 Fire Control firefighters are the frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. There are also 15 active volunteers supporting community safety activities.

## Gender Balance

This is an improvement from 18% female - 82% male ratio recorded in March 2022.



**19%**



**81%**

## Ethnic Minority Representation

Ethnic minority representation in the Service remains the same as at March 2022.



**10%**

Within the community\*



**6%**

Within the Service

## Staff Sickness

**12.95** days/shifts were lost per person in 2022-23, an increase of 6.36% compared to 2021-22. The 2022-23 figure includes Covid-19 sickness absence, while the 2021-22 figures did not.



\*Census 2021



# Our Purpose

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission represents our commitment to putting the community 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.



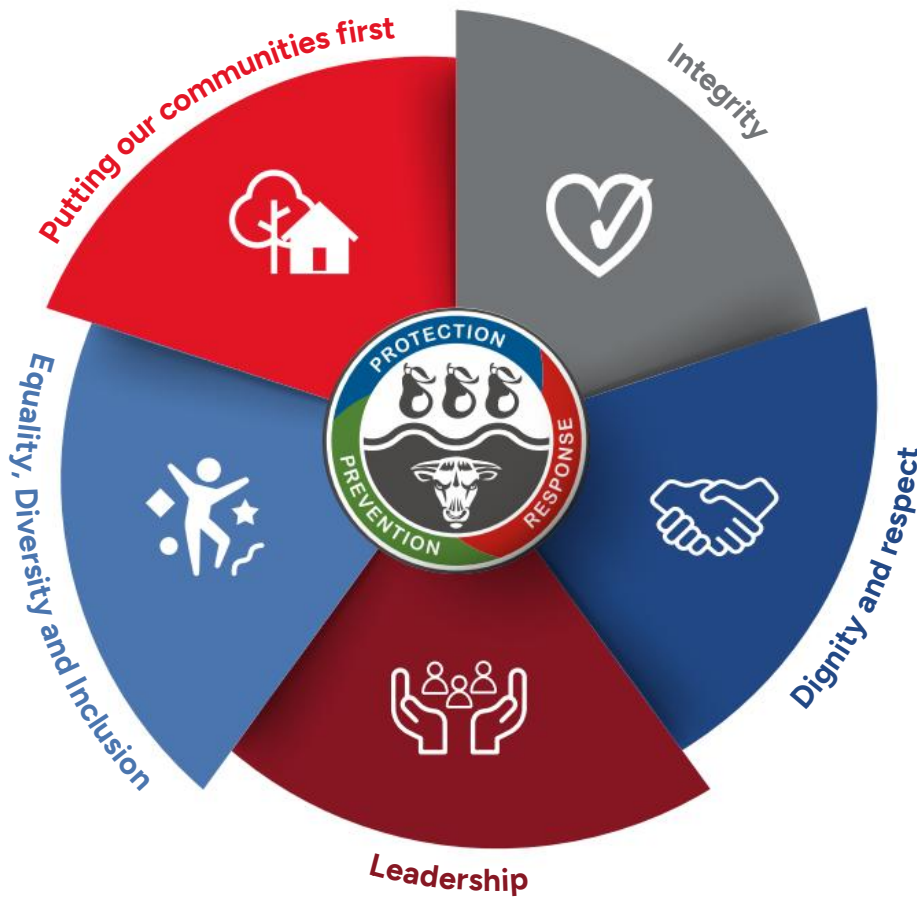
# Our Ethical Principles



NFCC  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council



Over the year, we have been working towards formally adopting the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England. Jointly developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Code consists of five clear ethics principles, which provide the basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. By adopting the Code as our guiding set of values, we are committed to championing ethical behaviours that help 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 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 make sure 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 Finance 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 are some examples of how we have been driving organisational and operational excellence over the year.

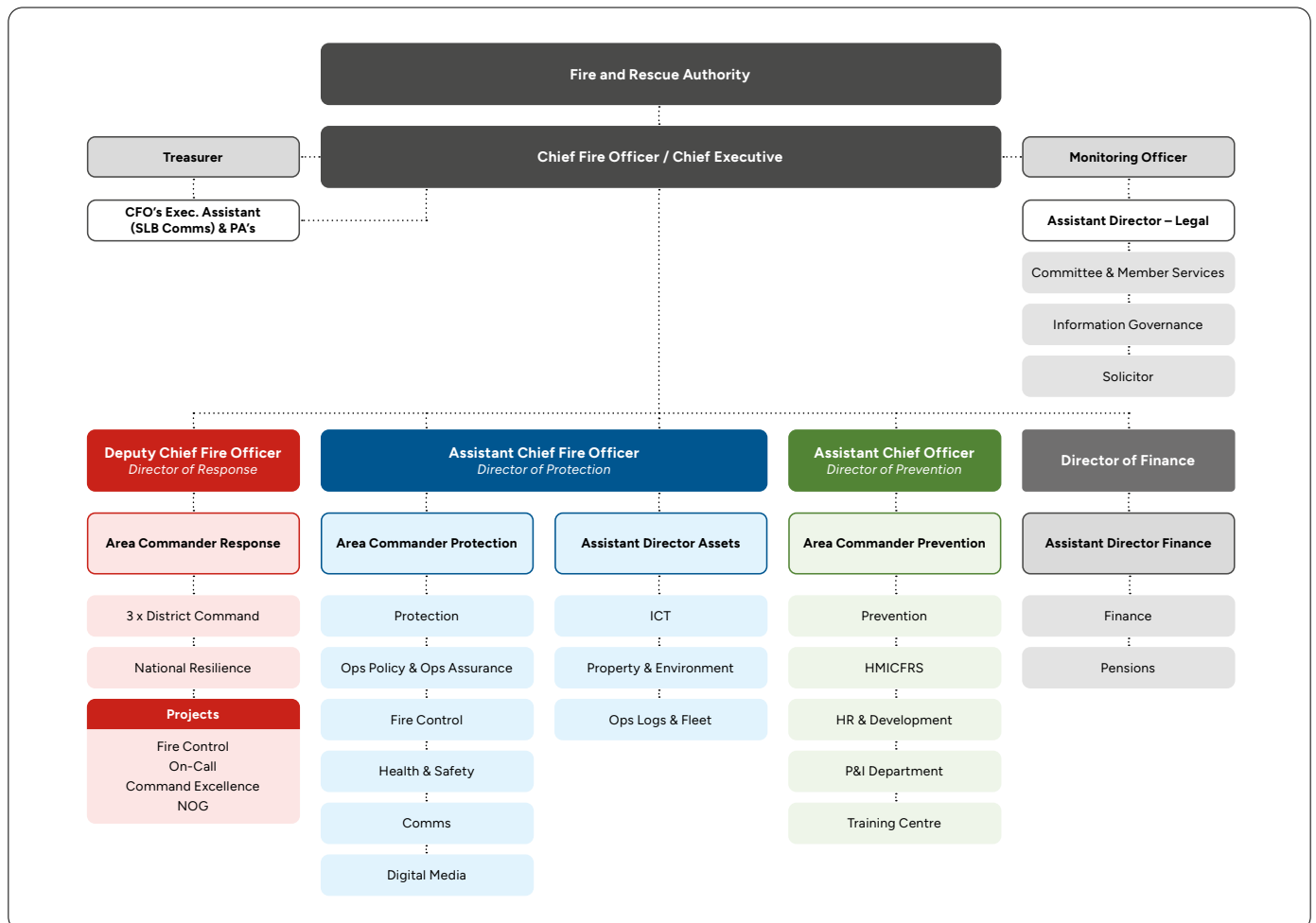
## Leadership

At the beginning of April 2022, we reshaped the Strategic Management Board into a new Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). The role of the SLB is to implement the strategic direction of the Fire Authority, leading and setting the strategic vision and direction for the Service. It has a primary focus on leading, managing and driving the Service's core and enabling strategies.

Alongside the SLB is a new Statutory Officers Group (SOG), which has been created to enable our governance, political and Fire Authority matters to be scrutinised separately from our leadership and management roles.

We have also made a number of small but significant adjustments to our 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 HMICFRS inspect and assess the Service.





# Focusing on Excellence

## Response – Driving Operational Excellence

Making small changes to our operational approach, such as using more assertive firefighting tactics and putting sustained resources into the early stages of an incident, is helping us to deal with incidents more quickly, reducing damage and risk to life, and minimising our impact on nearby businesses, communities and the environment.

At the end of the year, following extensive public consultation, we adopted a new Attendance Performance Measure (APM) to replace the old 2009 Attendance Standard. The new APM will give residents across both counties a more realistic picture of the response times they can expect in the event of an emergency incident, and will help to give our fire and rescue crews the opportunity to review those occasions when attendance falls outside the expected response times.

The record-breaking high temperatures in July and August 2023 brought tremendous pressure to fire and rescue services across the country, with 15 services calling 'a state of major emergency'. Our own Service was equally challenged dealing with an unprecedented number of wildfires across difficult terrain in extreme heat, including five hectares of the Lickey Hill and twelve hectares of Hartlebury Common. To put it in context, in July and August we attended 374 secondary fires (mainly outdoor fires that aren't property fires), an increase of over 220% on the same period in 2021.

We are pleased to say our firefighting crews and officers supported by Fire Control Firefighters continued to provide an effective and professional response throughout the difficulties faced. The many letters of appreciation we received from local communities are a true testament to that.



## Focusing on Excellence Protection

Departmental Fire Safety Inspectors inspected over 1000 complex premises in 2022-23 to ensure fire safety compliance. In addition, operational managers are being trained to level 3 Fire Safety Certificate standard, to enable them to inspect less complex premises.

In 2022-23 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 have implemented new Fire Safety legislation, 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 saw continuing improvement and progress in our Prevention services, including last year's HMICFRS Cause of Concern for Prevention being completely discharged, with all areas of improvement fully addressed, ensuring that we can provide an even better service to the public.

With the launch of the new Home Fire Safety Visit programme at the start of the year, the number of targeted checks carried out has shown a substantial increase from 1,392 in 2021-22 to 6,519 in 2022-23.

During the year, the Service also introduced an internal quality assurance process, in line with the NFCC Person-Centred Framework, to help to improve standards and ensure consistent high quality levels when carrying out Home Fire Safety Visits.



## Focusing on Excellence

### Valuing our Workforce

Adopting the national Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services will provide a clear, consistent message to our communities about the ethical standards they can expect from us. As a Service, we are committed to supporting our workforce to be empowered to do what's right, make responsible decisions, and create a safe environment to speak up when ethical challenges arise. The Code helps us to do this and to maintain the continued trust and confidence placed in us by our communities.

There was a huge response to our Staff Survey. Overall the results have been positive but there are areas where we can improve. The feedback is helping to make positive changes towards creating a working environment where staff can be best supported to perform their best and thrive.

In February 2023, we commissioned an independent review of our organisational culture, behaviours and management to help to highlight any issues that need to be addressed to ensure we challenge unwanted behaviours and maintain a welcoming and inclusive working environment.

At the same time, we have implemented an externally-hosted confidential reporting line to help to give staff and the public the opportunity to report any issue anonymously.

We also continue to invest in our managers by enrolling them on to the Trans2 leadership programme which allows those in leadership positions to build self-awareness and understand areas of strength and development needs. Trans2 has also been directly working with the Senior Leadership Board, provide 360 degree feedback and has delivered sessions at the Leadership Away Days.

## Focusing on Excellence

### Value for Money

Significant progress was made over the year in our major projects schemes:

- Planning application submitted for the new Hereford fire station (now approved in April 2023)
- Good progress on the development of a new joint Redditch Fire and Police Station
- Progressing plans for a new Strategic Training Facility in Leominster

Together, these schemes represent an investment of around £16 million in key infrastructure providing modern, high quality facilities for the Service.







# The Year In Numbers

## Response



**8,132**

Total Incidents  
Attended



**9%**

Increase  
(655 incidents)



**17,163**

Calls to  
Fire Control



**6%**

Increase  
(951 calls)

The increase is largely due to a 22% increase in the number of Fires attended. Of these, there was a 39% increase in outdoor fires (to a total of 1,033 fires) as the record-breaking summer heatwave crossed the UK.

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



Increase since 2021/22



Decrease since 2021/22



**1,991**  
Fires



**22%**  
**Increase**  
(365 incidents)



**1,363**  
Accidental Fires



**21%**  
**Increase**  
(233 incidents)



**628**  
Deliberate Fires



**27%**  
**Increase**  
(132 incidents)



**549**  
Primary  
Building Fires



**2%**  
**Increase**  
(365 incidents)



**1,033**  
Outdoor Fires



**39%**  
**Increase**  
(289 incidents)



**54**  
Non-Fatal  
Casualties from  
Fire Incidents



**46%**  
**Increase**

While there were 6 fire fatalities in 2022-23, the fire fatality rate in Herefordshire & Worcestershire remained low at **0.75 per 100,000** population.



Increase since 2021/22



Decrease since 2021/22



# The Year In Numbers

## Response



**2,435**  
Special Service  
Incidents



**1%**  
**Increase**  
(30 incidents)



**663**  
Road Traffic  
Collisions



**0%**  
**No change**  
(1 incident)



**176**  
Flooding  
Incidents



**31%**  
**Increase**  
(42 incidents)



**320**  
Assisting Other  
Agencies



**10%**  
**Decrease**  
(35 incidents)



**117**  
Animal Rescues





**7%**  
**Decrease**  
(9 incidents)



**76**  
Rescues From  
Water



**4%**  
**Increase**  
(3 incidents)

 Increase since 2021/22  
 Decrease since 2021/22



**3,706**  
False Alarms



**7%**  
**Increase**  
(260 incidents)



**2,789**  
False Alarms  
due to Apparatus



**9%**  
**Increase**  
(231 incidents)



**856**  
Good Intent  
False Alarms



**6%**  
**Increase**  
(45 incidents)



**61**  
Malicious  
False Alarms



**2%**  
**Increase**  
(1 incident)



Increase since 2021/22



Decrease since 2021/22

# The Year In Numbers

## Protection



**1,219**  
RBIP \*/ Visits  
Post Fires



**439**  
Building Reg.  
Consultations



**107**  
Enforcement



**260**  
Licencing Applications  
Completed



**83**  
Fire Investigation



**59,653**  
Twitter



**46**  
Media Campaigns



\*RBIP = Risk-Based Inspection Programme



# The Year In Numbers

## Prevention



**6,519**

Home Fire Safety Visits



**2,708**

Referrals from  
External Agencies



**236**

Signposting  
Referrals



**68**

Safeguarding  
Referrals



**39**

Firesetter  
Referrals



# Incident Breakdown by District

## North District

Population  
**287,000**



**122,000**  
Households



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 1,373 incidents or 40% of incidents in the District.

SOS

**3,399**

Incidents  
attended



**882**

Fires



**931**

Special Service  
Incidents



**1,586**

False Alarms



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

# Incident Breakdown by District

## South District

Population  
**310,800**



**136,700**  
Households



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 1,512 incidents or 54% of incidents in the District during the year.

SOS

**2,810**

Incidents  
attended



**640**

Fires



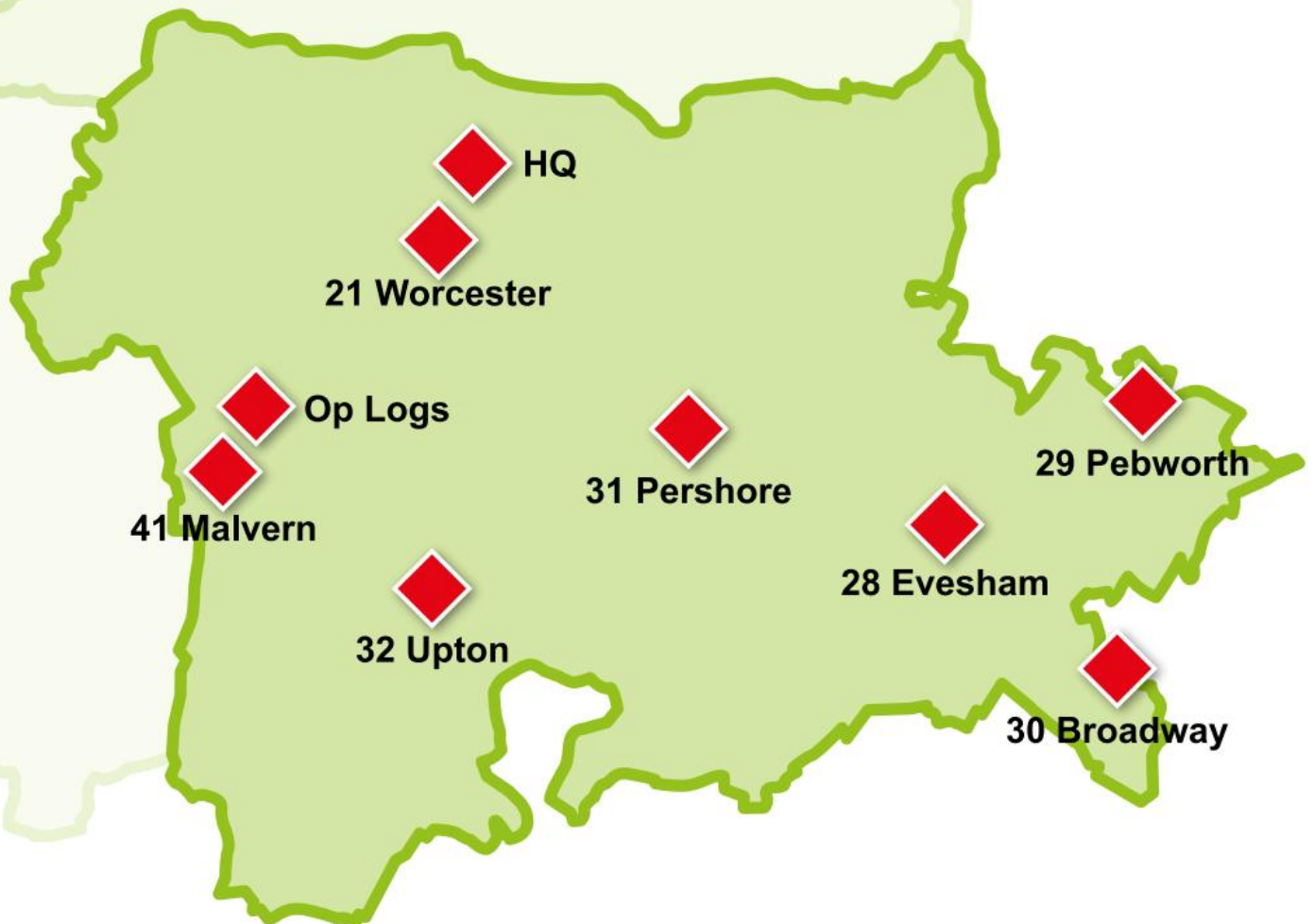
**833**

Special Service  
Incidents



**1,337**

False Alarms



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



# Incident Breakdown by District

## West District

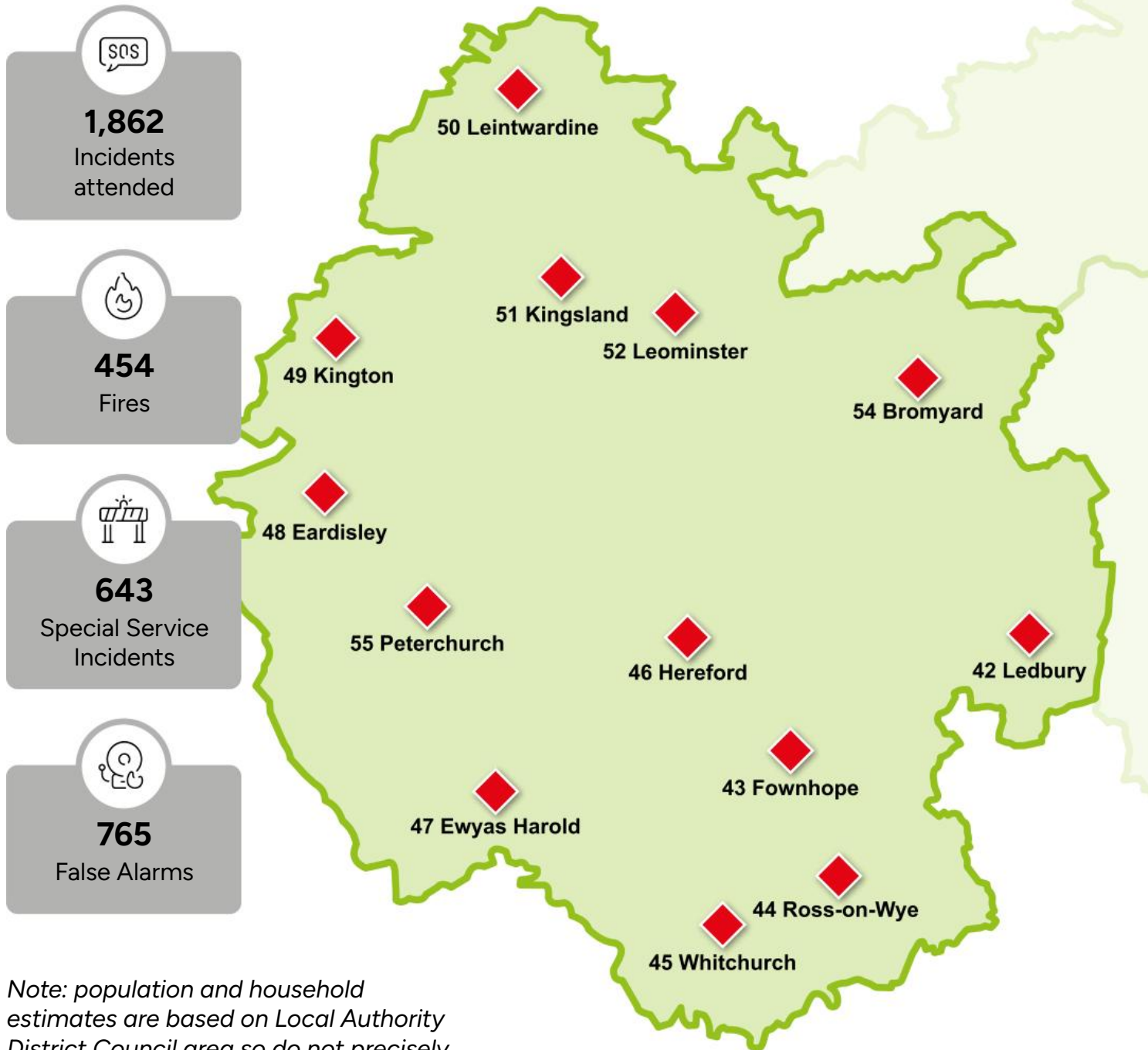
Population  
**192,900**



**84,000**  
Households



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 880 incidents or 47% of incidents in the District.



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



# Delivering our 2022-23 Service Objectives

In our 2022-23 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 2022-23 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 2022-23	What we did
	<p><b>Water First Responders:</b> we will embark on a major three-year programme to ensure all our fire stations have a Water First Responder capability to enhance our response to water-related incidents.</p>	<p>The programme is underway and Water Team types have been identified. We began to make infrastructure changes and equip three fire stations during the year - Leominster, Whitchurch and Fownhope. Leominster is now on the run, but due to awaiting PPE and storage, both Whitchurch and Fownhope have not yet completed their training. Three more fire stations are being identified for the programme in 2023-24.</p>
	<p><b>Working at Height:</b> we will aim to provide more Working at Height training facilities to ensure firefighters at all fire stations have the ability to train at height.</p>	<p>A working at height training facility review has been completed at all existing fire station locations. New Working at Height facilities are included at Hereford, Redditch, Leominster and Leintwardine fire stations. The planning permission process is currently underway to provide a working at height facility at Ross-on-Wye fire station, with plans already drawn up. An implementation plan for the next locations has been agreed.</p>
	<p><b>Wildfire Response:</b> we will be enhancing the Service's wildfire response capability.</p>	<p>Following last years busy summer period we have had to delay this work to review the outcomes and feedback from August 2022. We have completed a review of our capabilities and whilst highlighting some areas we could enhance we believe we predominately have the right assets and people to effectively manage wildfires effectively and safely. Further work will continue on this objective in 2023-24</p>

# Delivering our 2022-23 Service Objectives

Response	What we said we would do in 2022-23	What we did
	<p><b>New Vehicles:</b> we aim to introduce a number of Restricted Access Vehicles and Fire Engines during the year.</p>	<p>A number of vehicles were procured during the year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Restricted Access Vehicle – in use at Whitchurch fire station.</li> <li>• A Compact 4x4 Appliance – in use at Ross On Wye fire station</li> <li>• Four 18-tonne appliances – in use</li> <li>• Two Welfare vehicles – in use located at Tenbury and Upton upon Severn fire stations</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Incident Command Project:</b> we will aim to provide immersive learning opportunities to develop command confidence, technical understanding and teamwork in a safe environment. Based at the Service’s new simulation suite at Worcester Fire Station and using state-of-the-art simulation software and e-learning materials, the project will assist in developing skillsets at firefighter, team and command levels.</p>	<p>The Incident Command Suite is being well used for incident commanders at all levels within the Service. The Suite will also be made available to use collaboratively with multi-agency partners. The site can also be utilised as a bronze/silver cell function for significant or major incidents.</p>
	<p><b>Attendance Performance Measure:</b> we will undertake public consultation on a revised Attendance Performance Measure.</p>	<p>Following public consultation a new Attendance Performance Measure was approved to be introduced from April 2023.</p>



### What we said we would do in 2022-23

**Fire Safety Inspections:** we aim to increase the number of Fire Safety Inspections. We will utilise additional Fire Safety Inspectors and operational staff upskilled in fire safety qualifications in 2021-22 to carry out more inspections of commercial premises.

**New Intel System:** we aim to upgrade the Service's risk premises (Intel) database and integrate with Command and Control and Fire Safety systems to improve information available to operational crews attending incidents.

**Fire Investigation:** we will undertake work to accredit our Incident Commanders and specialist Fire Investigation Officers to Skills for Justice standards for Fire Investigation. We will continue to work with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service to standardise our response and improve collaborative working and resilience. We will explore collaborative opportunities to support West Mercia Police to deliver their forensic Fire Investigation requirements for criminal investigations.

**Fire Safety Continued Professional Development:** we have been granted Affiliate Organisation Membership of the Institution of Fire Engineers. This enables our fire safety staff and managers to work towards accreditation of their continued professional development to a global professional membership body to ensure that they maintain fire safety and fire engineering best practice.

### What we did

This work is progressing well, with operational staff being trained to an accredited Level 3 Fire Safety course. Crews carried out 164 additional Fire Safety inspections in 2022-23, exceeding the target of 150. Incremental increases have been agreed, with inspections rising to 1,000 in 2026-27.

An upgrade module has been procured and is being implemented, including training and alignment to National Operational Guidance.

All Fire Investigation (FI) Officers have been trained to Skills For Justice Level 5. A programme of continued professional development is in place and embedded through a FI Lead Officer. FI training and resilience is in place with Shropshire FRS. Collaborative opportunities have been fully explored with West Mercia Police.

Operational and Corporate Fire Safety staff have been enrolled in the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE). Continued Professional Development is being maintained in line with IFE requirements.

# Delivering our 2022-23 Service Objectives

Prevention	What we said we would do in 2022-23	What we did
	<p><b>Person Centred Framework:</b> we will adopt all elements of the National Fire Chiefs Council’s Person-Centred Framework, which will ensure that a consistent and evidence-based approach to conducting a person-centred home safety check is developed. Areas of the Framework include a standard Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV), the collection of standard data, evaluation and feedback and a National Definition of Risk.</p>	<p>We adopted the standard Home Fire Safety Visit and standardised the way it collects data in line with the NFCC’s Person-Centred Framework.</p> <p>We also adopted the NFCC’s Definition of Risk for Dwelling Fires; this will give the Service guidance on targeting those most at risk of fire.</p>
	<p><b>Partnership Working:</b> we will increase the number of Home Fire Safety Visits we complete on an annual basis and will collaborate with local partners to ensure we are targeting those individuals who are most at risk of fire. We will review and assess partnership activity and monitor referrals to ascertain if activities are effective and efficient. An online referral tool (Safelincs/HFSV) has been implemented on the Service website for members of the public and partners to make accessing our services easier.</p>	<p>We increased the number of Home Fire Safety Visits completed and carried out – over 6,500 visits in 2022-23.</p> <p>The Prevention team supported various local events to promote fire safety and have worked with partners to inform them of the services we can offer and how we can support them. Fire crews and Prevention staff also worked with local GPs by attended Covid-19 booster vaccination clinics to generate HFSV referrals for vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>We completed a review of the Dying2Drive campaign and realigned our commitment to this campaign with our partners through the development of a new plan for delivery of this campaign in the future.</p>
	<p><b>Evaluation:</b> we will develop an evaluation system to help ascertain if all areas of Prevention activity are meeting the needs of communities. This will include feedback from members of the public, internal staff and partner agencies on the services we deliver, with a view to reviewing and improving the approaches we take. We will work alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council and other regional Services to consider a standard evaluation framework, so that we can measure the impact of HFSV visits.</p>	<p>To ensure there is continual improvement in the service we provide, feedback has been obtained from partners, internal staff and members of the public on our Prevention related activities. As a result, improvements have been made to ensure the best service continues to be provided.</p> <p>Quality Assurance of the HFSV service has commenced, and this will assist in ensuring a consistent delivery of intervention.</p>



## What we said we would do in 2022-23

**HMICFRS Action Plan:** we will deliver a comprehensive action plan to address feedback from the 2021 inspection report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

## What we did

The Service had the HMICFRS 'Cause of Concern' discharged in January 2023. The Cause of Concern related to a number of areas for improvement required in our prevention activities. Our action plan has addressed all areas identified and there is no longer a significant concern. This helps to give us confidence that we are delivering effective and efficient prevention services for our communities.



# Delivering our 2022-23 Service Objectives

## What we said we would do in 2022-23

**People Strategy 2022-25:** we will implement the People Strategy 2022-25 to support the delivery of the Response, Protection and Prevention Strategies and the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** we will promote EDI within the Service and embed the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services.

## What we did

We continued to develop our People Strategy Action Plan for 2022-23 to support our core organisational strategies and the CRMP.

We continued to invest in the development of our staff, aligned to the objectives in the People Strategy, including implementation of the aspiring leaders programme for Firefighters wanting to develop to Crew Commanders, Trans2 sessions delivered by employment law specialist, Veena Alison, enrolling those in leadership positions on to leadership courses including ILM Level 5 and CMI level 7, to name but a few areas.

We continued to develop our organisational culture by conducting an independent review of our culture, behaviours and management.

We also:

- Commissioned an externally provided Service-wide inclusion training programme for all staff,
- Created a Core Code of Ethics Steering Group to support the Service to transition to adopt the NFCC Core Code of Ethics,
- Enhanced the speaking-up processes available for staff through an externally-hosted confidential reporting line and online tool,
- Conducted a "Your Opinion Counts" Service-wide staff engagement survey,
- Recruited an Inclusion & Organisational Development Manager to support us in our ambitions for our Service culture,
- Introduced and developed two Staff Networks; Women@HWFire and the Neuro-Diverse Network.

What we said we would do in 2022-23

**Health and Resilience:** we will maintain a healthy and resilient workforce, including implementing an action plan to promote and improve mental health in the workplace.

What we did

We developed an action plan to deliver our Mental Health at Work Commitment, implemented mental health annual surveillance for specific roles, and introduced Menopause Workshops to raise awareness and support options for improving health and wellbeing.



What we said we would do in 2022-23

**Continue plans to modernise and improve efficiency at fire stations:** to include new fire station at Broadway, refurbishment of Pershore and Leominster fire stations, the joint Redditch Police-Fire station project, planning applications for Hereford fire station and Leominster Strategic Training Facility, and feasibility work for relocating the Training Centre to the Wyre Forest hub.

What we did

A comprehensive programme of improvements as part of the invest to improve project has completed on existing sites.

The capital build programme is a significant piece of work and is progressing well into the next stages of RIBA design stages with planning permission. Building has started at Broadway and Redditch fire stations. Planning permission has been approved at Hereford fire station and submitted at Leominster fire station for a strategic training facility. A proposal to move Training Centre to Wyre Forest fire station is progressing from initial feasibility to planning permission stage.



# Delivering our 2022-23 Service Objectives

## Value For Money

### What we said we would do in 2022-23

**Continue to implement the ICT Strategy 2021-24:** complete the installation of the wide area network across all fire stations, a new ICT disaster recovery (DR) facility at Defford and further development of connectivity and data-driven intelligence including the full launch of Microsoft 365.

**Maintain a balanced and sustainable budget:** aligning available resources with the level of identified risk, enabling us to deliver high quality services.

### What we did

The new SD WAN has all of the circuits installed and we are currently setting up the new network configurations. This will allow us greater resilience and the ability to optimise traffic types across the networks. It will also provide the additional functionality of being able to aggregate connections together to increase bandwidth appropriately.

The DR Site at Defford is operational and we are currently working with the resilience team to develop working scenarios for when DR will be invoked. We have the capability to run all essential services from this location currently.

Power BI dashboards have been created for Watch Commanders, Station Commanders and Group Commanders for various information sets required by the Service. New performance dashboards have also been created. We are in the process of migrating this service to the Cloud; at present its running from internal servers, but following migration the service will be relaunched to all relevant staff.

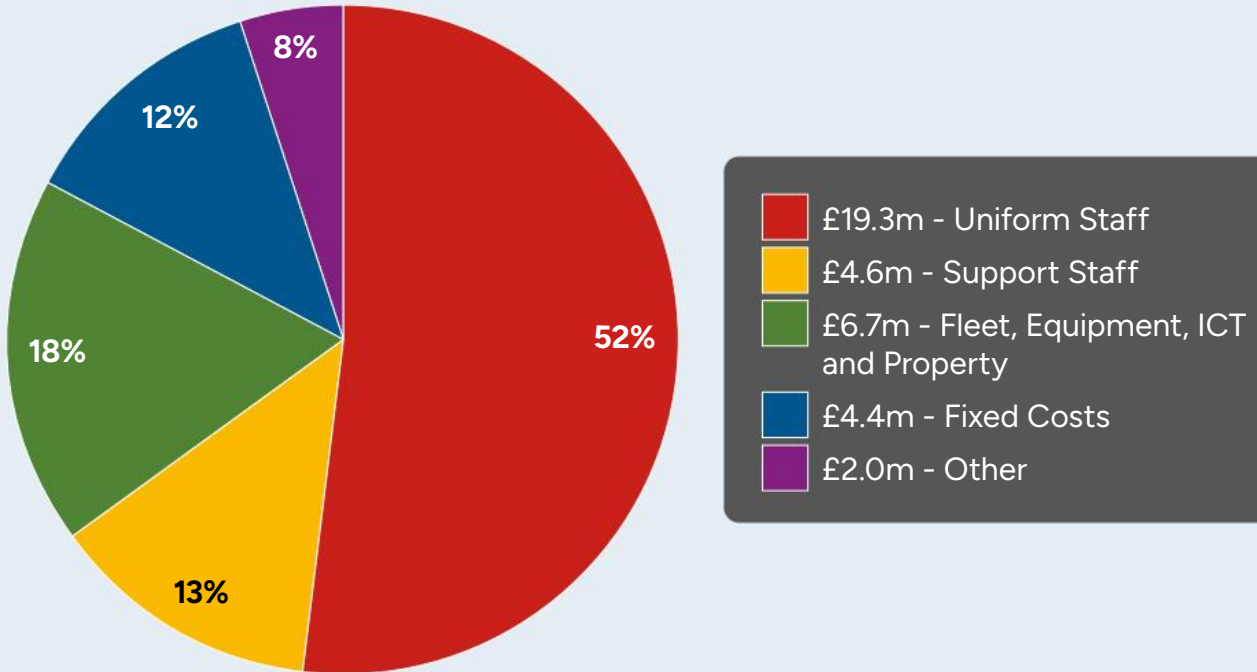
Microsoft 365 is currently being rolled out to the entire organisation and will be completed before the end of May 2023.

We led joint work with other Services to establish a common resource analysis and bench marking approach, and at the same time being more explicit as to how our own resources are allocated between the three Core Strategies and to relevant support costs.

As far as possible in an environment of financial uncertainty the Fire Authority has continued to make the necessary decisions to secure the maximum resource to deliver services to our communities.

# Finance 2022-23

## Fire Authority Budget 2022-23



## How the Service was funded

H&W Council Tax	£25.8m
Funding Grants	£8.2m
Business Rates, etc.	£2.0m
Special Grants	£1.0m
Reserves	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£37.0m</b>

The annual Band D Council Tax was £89.40 or less than 25 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](http://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](mailto: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

**If you would like this information in an alternative language or format such as large print or audio, please contact us on 0345 122 4454**



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



## **Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Prevention**

### **Annual Service Plan 2023-24**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Plan 2023-24.
- 

#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Plan 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 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 2023-24**

4. The Annual Service Plan highlights the key priorities for the Service in 2023-24 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 2023-24, which sets out our key priorities and activities for the coming year.
8. Subject to Fire Authority approval, the finalised report will be published on the Service website.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Annual Service Plan provides information on resources necessary to support the implementation of Fire Authority objectives and priorities.
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	The Plan highlights proposed priority activities in 2023-24 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.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	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.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Strategic Leadership Board consultation.
<b>Equalities</b> (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.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	No personal data is processed in the Plan.

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Service Plan 2023-34 – separate enclosure



HWFRS

# Annual Service Plan 2023-24



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





## Contents

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Our Ethical Principles	3
Our Priorities	4
Service Objectives for 2023-24	5
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# Foreword

Welcome to our Annual Service Plan for 2023-24. The Plan looks forward over the next twelve months (April 2023 – March 2024) and focuses on some of the key priorities and objectives we have set for the coming year.

The Annual Service Plan sits alongside the Annual Service Review 2022-23, 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 years' Service Plan priorities. You will find the Review on the [Publications page](#) of our Service website.

The Service priorities and objectives for 2023-24 are built around delivering our overall plans as set out in the Community Risk Management Plan 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 2023-24

Our focus remains firmly fixed on driving organisational and operational excellence throughout the Service.

Driving organisational and operational excellence is about making sure we focus on delivering the best services we can to the communities of our two counties. It is about constantly learning and improving, taking ownership and responsibility for our performance, and challenging and asking ourselves if we could do better.

We want to do the best we can across the three core areas of our work, Response, Protection and Prevention. We want to make sure our workforce is empowered to make a positive difference for our communities. And we want to ensure that we are using our resources in the best ways to deliver value for money for the public.

We have set out our high level aims to keep people safe in our Community Risk Management Plan and our Core Strategies. This Annual Service Plan provides more detail on what we will be doing this year towards delivering our aims.

## 2023 HMICFRS inspection

It should also be noted that the next HMICFRS inspection process began in May 2023. The inspection looks at all aspects of our Service and provides an informed and independent view on how well we serve our communities. In addition to how effectively we deliver our services, how efficiently we use our resources and how well we support our staff, it considers our progress and achievements as we continue our improvement journey. We will report the outcome on our website when the inspection report is available. More information about the work of the HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services) can be found on their website.

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.



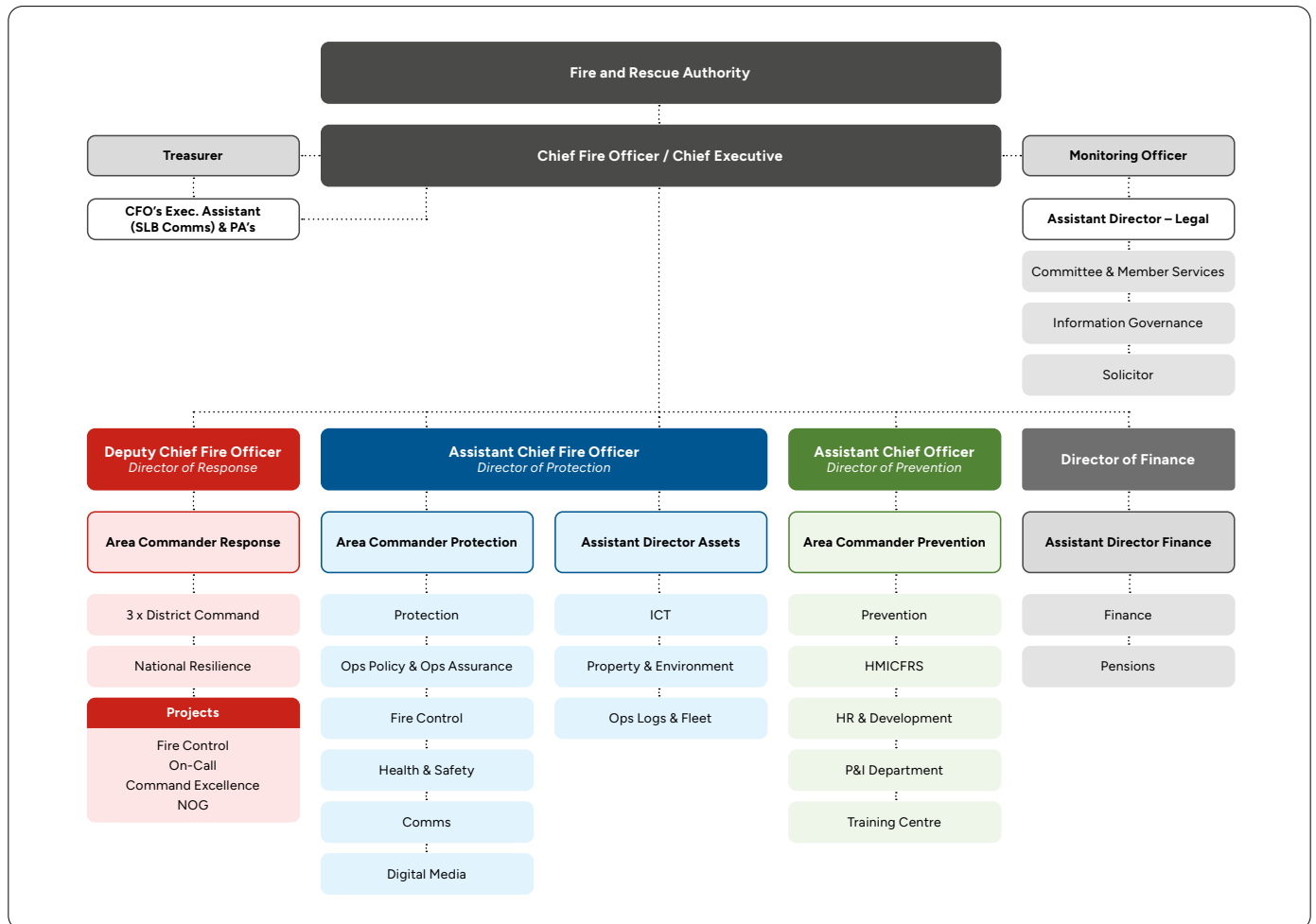
**Councillor Kit Taylor**  
*Chairman of the Fire Authority*



**Jonathon Pryce**  
*Chief Fire Officer/  
Chief Executive*

# Service Structure

We have made a number of small but significant adjustments to our 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 HMICFRS inspect and assess the Service. You can find more about each Department on the Service [website](#).



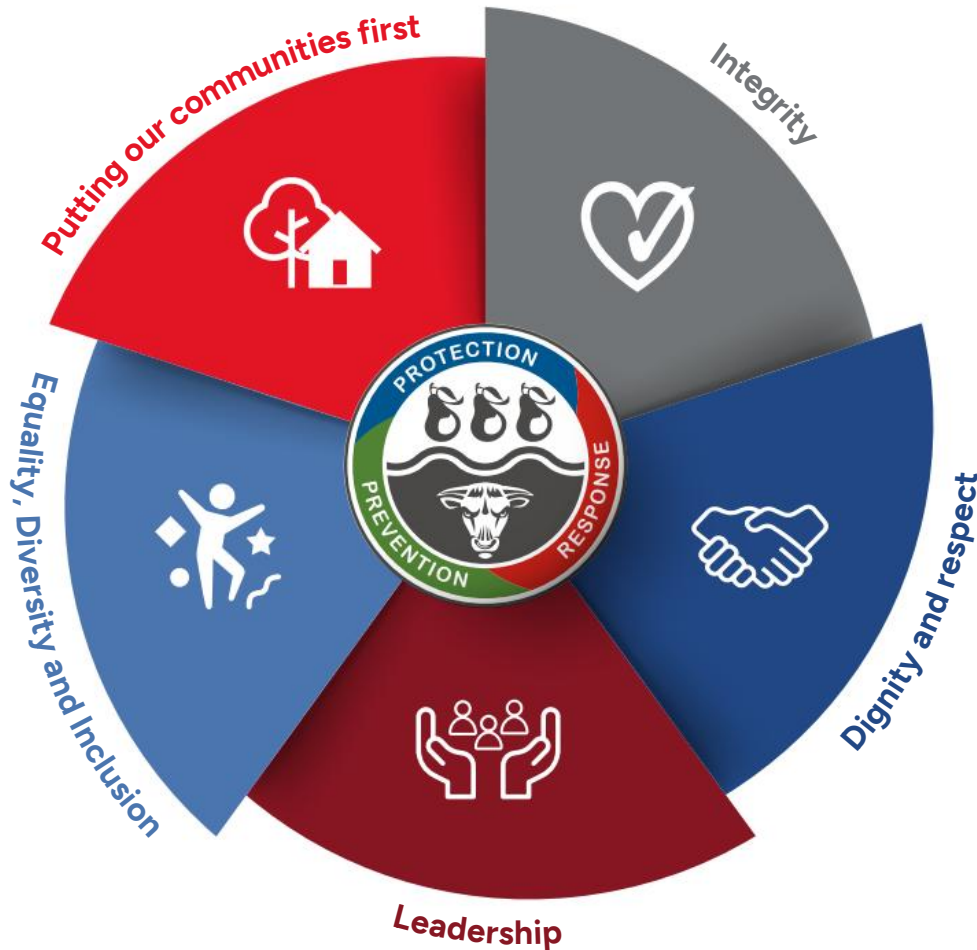
# Our Ethical Principles



NFCC  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council



The Service has adopted the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England. The Code is underpinned by five clear ethical principles, which provide the basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. By adopting the Code as our guiding set of values, we are committed to championing ethical behaviours that help 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.

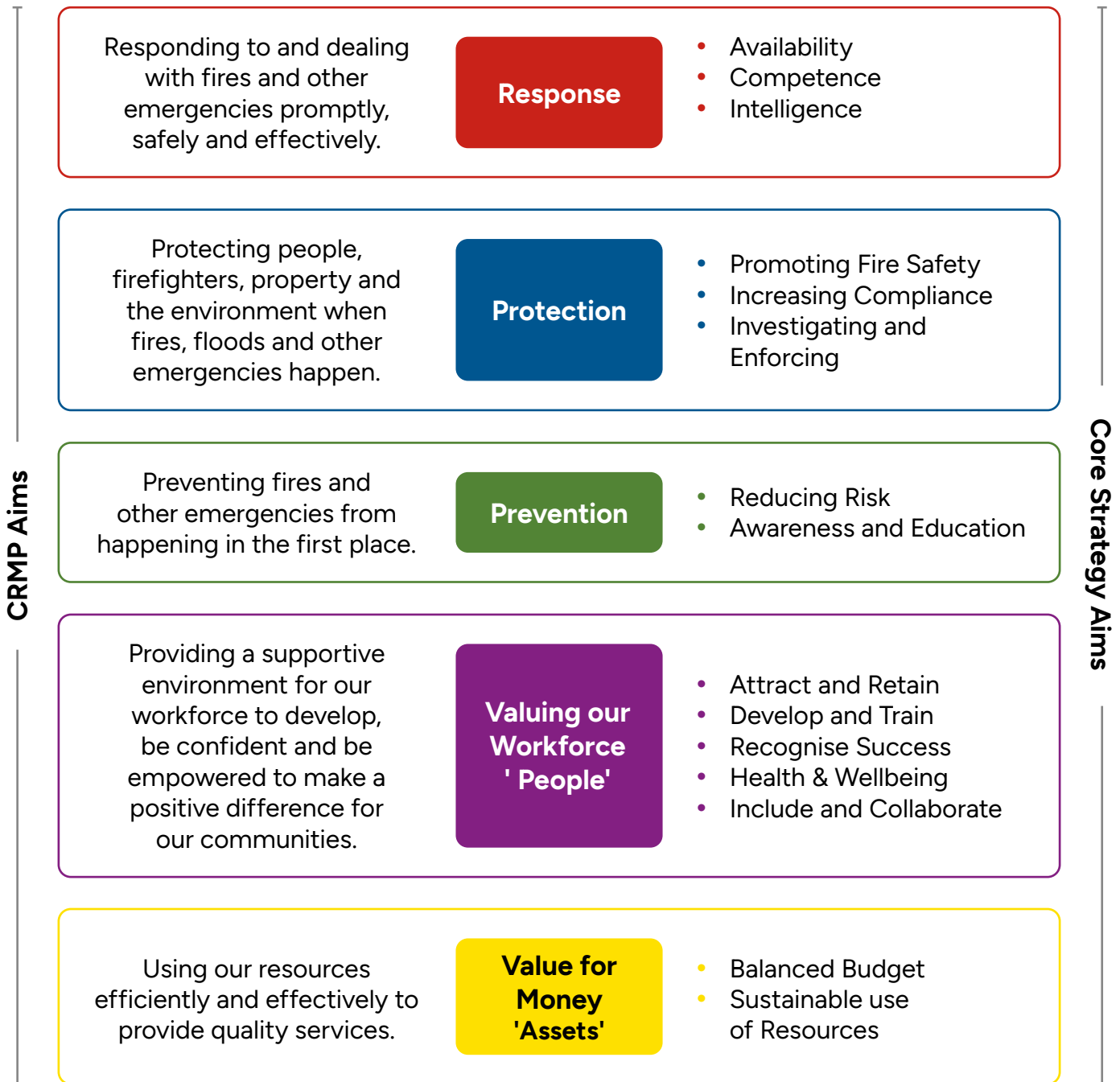
## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



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 in to 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 Finance Plan.



# Service Objectives for 2023-24

## Response

Priority Focus

### Delivering Operational Excellence



#### On-Call Recruitment

- We will drive up the availability of our On-Call resources by a targeted, intelligence/evidenced 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.

#### 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.

#### National Operational Guidance – Digital Training

- We will introduce digital training across the Service to embed and support National Operational Guidance to support firefighter safety.

#### Working Practices and Time Management

- 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.

#### Attendance Performance Measure

- 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.



# Service Objectives for 2023-24

## Protection

Priority Focus

### Ensuring Compliance



#### Risk Based Inspection Programme

- 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 Compliance

- 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.

#### Intelligence Based Inspections

- 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.



# Service Objectives for 2023-24

## Prevention

Priority Focus

### Promoting Awareness and Evaluation



#### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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 commence the evaluation of behaviour change related to the HFSV intervention and will evaluate youth engagement activities using interactive tools.

#### 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.

# Service Objectives for 2023-24

## 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 Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25.

#### Culture and Inclusion

- 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.

#### Health and Resilience

- We will deliver our Mental Health at Work Commitment action plan to improve the support available for staff.

#### Staff Development

- 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.

# Service Objectives for 2023-24

## Value For Money

Priority Focus

### Driving Efficiency



#### Continue plans to modernise and improve efficiency at fire stations through our Invest to Improve programme

- 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.

#### Continue to implement the ICT Strategy 2021-2024

- We will rationalise our Microsoft 365 Licencing 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

#### 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.

# 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](http://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](mailto: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

**If you would like this information in an alternative language or format such as large print or audio, please contact us on 0345 122 4454**



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



## **Report of the Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention**

### **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update Q4 2022 / 2023**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. This report is to update Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 15 Dec 2021.
- 

#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the Authority notes the progress achieved towards addressing the HMICFRS Improvement Plan. In particular that 66% of actions are now complete and a further 20% are on track to be completed by the end of Q1 2023/24.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. At the Fire Authority meeting on 15 February 2022, Members received a paper advising that the Service were developing an Improvement Plan to address the findings of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection report dated 15 Dec 2021.
3. Progress against the Improvement Plan is reported on quarterly to address the 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI) identified during the inspection.

#### **HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Progress Update**

4. The delivery of the Improvement Plan is overseen by members of the Performance and Information (P&I) team, who meet regularly with senior managers responsible for each Area for Improvement to prepare updates on actions proposed and completed. The P&I team also ensure that actions carried out are fully evidenced and available for evaluation and audit. The fifth update, covering up to the end of March 2023 (Q4), is attached to this report (see Appendix 1).
5. The Strategic Leadership Board have oversight of the improvement plan and are provided with quarterly updates.
6. The update shows that action plans are progressing to address areas identified within the three themes covered in the HMICFRS report:
  - Effectiveness,



- Efficiency
- People

7. There has been notable progress made against the Improvement Plan in Q4, particularly in the People pillar which has seen a number of actions progressed to completion. As of the end of Q4 2022/23, the Service has completed 62% of the actions in the Improvement Plan – up from 38.3% in Q3.
8. Quarterly updates will continue to be provided to the Strategic Leadership Board and also to the Fire Authority.
9. HMICFRS have confirmed the date for the next inspection – with the initial document request received in May 2023 and inspection fieldwork to commence in June 2023.

### **Conclusion/Summary**

10. Members are recommended to note the progress made in the delivery of the HMICRS Improvement Plan. Further progress updates will be reported each quarter.
11. Subject to any matters arising following consideration by the Fire Authority, the update will be published on the Service website.

## Corporate Considerations

<p><b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>The Improvement Plan highlights areas for improvement relating to effectiveness, efficiency and people. Actions to address these areas are likely to have resource implications, which will be identified in the Improvement Plan.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (Identify how proposals link with current priorities &amp; policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>Actions proposed in the Improvement Plan are likely to have an impact on both the CRMP and the MTFP. All proposals directly align with discharging the three core strategies, and align with the Core Code of Ethics.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through the Improvement Plan.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Proposals to deliver the Improvement Plan have the full participation of Senior Managers in relevant Service departments. The Improvement Plan is publicly available on the Service website.</p>
<p><b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>An EIA is not required for this report. EIAs will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.</p>
<p><b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>Impact assessments will be completed as required for specific actions related to the Improvement Plan.</p>

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – FRA HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2021-22; Update Q4 2022/23



# HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2021/22

Updated: Q4 2022-23





During April to May 2021, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspected Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). The Service was selected as one of the first services to be inspected in round 2. This is the third inspection of HWFRS following the first inspection in July 2018 and the Covid-19 inspection during the autumn 2020.

The inspectors from HMICFRS carried out their in-depth review of our Service, focusing on how effective and efficient we are and how well we look after our people. Their report was published in December 2021, and this is [the link to the report](#).

The inspection considered three main questions for this cycle of inspections:

**Effectiveness** – *the operational service provided to the public (including prevention, protection, and response);*

**Efficiency** - *the efficiency of the service (how well it provides value for money, allocates resources to match risk, and collaborates with other emergency services);*

**People** – *how well the service looks after its people (how well it promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for the workforce, and develops leadership and service capability).*

The Service was found to be 'requiring improvement' when considering effectiveness, efficiency and people. The inspection report highlighted 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI) and recommended that action be taken to address them. Therefore, the Service has prepared an Improvement Plan. This Improvement Plan is owned by senior managers and is updated on a quarterly basis and published as progress is made.

This report provides an update of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan up to the end of March 2023 against the identified AFI's noted in the HMICFRS report.

**HMICFRS Inspection – Improvement Plan 2021-22 Update: Q4 2022**

<b>Effectiveness – ES1</b>	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure that the aims and objectives of prevention, protection and response activity are clearly defined in its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
<b>HWFRS Action Proposed</b>	
<b>Target Date</b>	
Publish Core Strategies for Protection, Prevention and Response linked to delivery of the CRMP, communicate across Service and develop understanding.	Complete
Business Planning cycle and process embedded across Service linked to delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan and three Core Strategies. Digital tracking process set up electronically to monitor progress.	Complete
CRMP Fire Standard to be analysed and a gap analysis produced and shared with the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). Learning defined and mapped into clear recommendations for implementation into the new CRMP process for launch in 2025.	Complete
Develop an evidential based resource to risk assessment. Clearly identifying areas of risk, resource and people assets that can be utilised.	Complete
Key Performance Indicators (KPI) identified and agreed specifically linked to delivery of the CRMP and Core Strategy. An approach to be mapped out to identify trends and exception reporting.	Complete
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

**Effectiveness – ES2**

**Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date temporary risk information.

**HWFRS Action Proposed**

**Target Date**

A risk management system procurement process to be initiated.

Complete

Data cleanse of data in preparation for transfer to a new system to be commenced.

Q2 2023/24

Upon procurement of a new system, a comprehensive training and communication programme to support embedding of a new system to commence.

Q2 2023/24

Explore development of an internal and external audit process of the information held within the Service.

Q2 2023/24

**Strategic lead**

*Assistant Director: Protection*



Effectiveness – ES3	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should evaluate its prevention work so that it understands what works.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
There will be a process to ensure targeting of prevention activity meets the needs of the community.	Complete
A clear reporting framework on the performance and evaluation of prevention activity will be developed.	Complete
A quality assurance process for Home Fire Safety Visits will be agreed.	Complete
Investigate a body to conduct a peer review or external assessment of delivery against the prevention Cause of Concern Action Plan.	Complete
The University of Worcester Evaluation of Safe and Well Visit Report will be reviewed and suggested improvements to delivery / recommendations mapped out into an action plan.	Complete
Working with the Corporate Communications department develop and publish a Prevention Communications Plan and introduce a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns to ensure continuous improvement.	Complete
The Service will undertake an annual process to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention activity utilising available appropriate methodologies.	Q1 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

Effectiveness – ES4	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure that it has an effective quality assurance process in place, so that staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Performance appraisals with employees in the Technical Fire Safety team of the Protection Department are being booked in and a peer review of audits for the purposes of quality assurance to be scheduled aligned with these dates.	Complete
Technical Fire Safety quality assurance proforma finalised.	Complete
Agree an external peer review schedule with neighbouring Services in order to quality assure processes.	Complete
Experian data being merged with Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) data to ensure Protection Services applied equitably.	Complete
Conduct external peer review quality assurance process, and consider recommendations.	Q1 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

Effectiveness – ES5	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce the risk.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
HWFRS to ensure its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the premises at the highest risk.	Complete
Fully complete alignment to the NFCC competency framework for Fire Safety Regulators.	Q1 2023/24
Arrange specialist legal training for L4 Diploma staff (to include prosecution case studies)	Complete
Finalise prosecution support agreement with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and Telford and Wrekin Council legal services (We are no longer pursuing this agreement)	Complete
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

Effectiveness – ES6	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure it effectively addresses the burden of false alarms.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
Commence a review of how we respond to unwanted fire signals.	Target Date Completed
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

Effectiveness – ES7	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure its Response Strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Response Strategy linked to the risks in the CRMP published.	Complete
Response annual and three-year Business Plan (linked to delivery of the Response Strategy) finalised.	Complete
Special appliances review report and evaluation finalised.	Complete
Commence the process to identify an external agency to provide risk data mapping.	Q4 2023/24
Review the previously used Fire Cover research methodology, ensuring it is adaptive enough to meet new and emerging risks.	Q1 2023/24
Prepare a report on the review of Water First Responders capability across the Service (Response)	Complete
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Response</i>

Effectiveness – ES8	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Compare the number and types of incidents requiring a debrief against returns for the last 12 months and identify potential themes and target areas to improve organisational learning and adoption of debriefing.	Complete
Identify replacement AIM & Debrief system options.	Complete
Review current practises and procedures for the triggering of and submitting debriefs.	Complete
Develop a communication proforma to improve organisational awareness of the Debrief process and its outcomes to improve organisational adoption.	Q1 2023/24
Develop robust sharing mechanisms to ensure learning is shared to multi agency and regional partners incorporating JOL & NOL systems.	Complete
Review current policy and identify potential options to improve on scene Active Incident Monitoring (AIM) & Debrief processes.	Complete
Implement new AIM & Debrief systems	Q1 2023/24
Implement an update monitoring process to improve on scene monitoring.	Q1 2023/24
Introduce an assurance process to assure the adoption and use of the AIM & Debrief systems and processes.	Q2 2023/24
Publish a Debrief report service wide on a quarterly basis	Q2 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>



Effectiveness – ES9	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure it understands what it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance, including joint and national learning, and put in place a plan to do so.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Enrol Digital Training Project Team	Complete
Integrate new Learning Management System (LMS)	Q2 2023/24
Integrate the National Operational Guidance’s Service Integration Tool (SIT) (This project has been cancelled by the National Fire Chiefs Council due to external software issues)	Complete
Develop eLearning suite referenced to National Operational Learning (NOG)	Q3 2024/25
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

**Effectiveness – ES10**

<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist incident, and its procedures for responding are understood by all staff and are well tested.	
<b>HWFRS Action Proposed</b>		<b>Target Date</b>
Develop presentation covering responsibilities of FRS' and specifically non-specialist responders when attending potential Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTA) incidents. To include overview of statutory responsibilities This has been delayed due to the impact of the Commonwealth Games on regional NILO working.		Complete
Review of Pre-Determined Attendances (PDA's) for MTAs and other like incidents		Complete
National Inter-Agency Liaison Officer (NILO) Cadre to deliver presentation to all operational staff including Fire Control and Officer Groups		Complete
As part of Regional Group establish exercising programme with other Fire & Rescue Services' and responding agencies (Police/Ambulance)		Complete
Test knowledge and understanding through District exercising and assurance programme		Q2 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Response</i>	

Efficiency- EY1	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection, and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risk and priorities set out in its CRMP.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Identify good/outstanding practice and conduct a gap analysis	Complete
Identify how we currently allocate resources to Prevention, Protection and Response	Complete
Apply the outcomes as part of the upcoming Risk Review Project	Q1 2023/24
Identify organisational leads/key stakeholders for workforce resources across the three core strategies.	Complete
Conduct a supply analysis to understand current workforce headcount, skills and budget.	Complete
Conduct a demand analysis to project resources needed (headcount, skills, budget).	Complete
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Finance Director and Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

Efficiency- EY2	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure there is a testing programme for its business continuity plans, particularly in high-risk areas of service.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Testing of fall-back arrangements for Fire Control involving all watches.	Complete
Incorporate business continuity questions into the station assurance process for 2022/23.	Complete
Develop an exercise program for station and department fall-back plans.	Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

Efficiency- EY3	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Work with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) implementation officer to investigate what national good practice looks like. Ongoing.	Complete
Review and define collaboration with other Fire & Rescue Services' and other emergency services	Q1 2023/24
Evaluate benefits of Fire Control Project – to procure a system	Complete
Establish a process within areas of business planning to ensure collaboration is a key factor in planning and projects	Q1 2023/24
Establish an evaluation process/tool for reviewing the effectiveness of collaboration on business planning, programmes and projects.	Q1 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Prevention</i>

Efficiency- EY4	
<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should ensure that its fleet and estate strategies are regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiencies.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Provide draft / re-format existing Fleet Strategy to new format, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish.	Q1 2023/24
Provide updated draft / re-format of existing Property Strategy dated 2018-23, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish	Q1 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Assets</i>



**People – P1****Area for Improvement**

The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviours.

**HWFRS Action Proposed****Target Date**

Strategic Leadership Board visits for the year have been programmed with every watch and department

Complete

The Service will commission an external organisation to undertake a review of internal communications and provide recommendations for improvement.

Complete

Whole leadership meetings scheduled for the year every quarter.

Complete

The Service will commission a service wide inclusion training programme to further embed understanding of inclusion as a core element linked to values.

Complete

The Service will carry out a full staff survey and review the feedback received and implement changes as required.

Complete

The Service will fully implement the FRS Core Code of Ethics (CCoE).

Complete

The Service will develop a more regular method of surveying staff opinion and gathering feedback.

Complete

**Strategic lead**

*Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*

**People – P2**

**Area for Improvement**

The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.

<b>HWFRS Action Proposed</b>		<b>Target Date</b>
Review Appraisal template to include discussion prompt on secondary contracts and/or additional roles within the Service.		Complete
Establish a process to monitor compliance with the Secondary Employment policy.		Q1 2023/24
Establish a method to monitor total working hours of those with secondary contracts and/or additional roles, to highlight when working hours are excessive.		Q1 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>	

**People – P3**

<b>Area for Improvement</b>	The service should make sure it has a robust system in place to update and review its operational incident (analytical) risk assessments.	
<b>HWFRS Action Proposed</b>		<b>Target Date</b>
Review current guidance for the completion of Analytical Risk Assessments (ARA).		Complete
Review training levels and provided training to crews to carry out ARA and the associated reviews.		Q1 2023/24
Develop and introduce an assurance process to assure the completion of ARA's.		Q2 2023/24
<b>Strategic lead</b>	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>	

**People – P4****Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure itself that records for risk critical competencies, such as breathing apparatus, driving fire engines and incident command are accurate and up to date.

**HWFRS Action Proposed****Target Date**

Complete audit of assurance processes.

Q1 2023/24

Review fire control training to ensure recording of training is up to date.

Q1 2023/24

Integrate a new learning management system to improve recording and monitoring of skills.

Q2 2023/24

**Strategic lead**

*Assistant Director: Protection*

**People – P5****Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the Community Risk Management Plan.

**HWFRS Action Proposed****Target Date**

Develop and publish a Workforce Planning Policy.

Complete

Review and evaluate workforce planning process to strengthen links with business planning cycle.

Q1 2023/24

Develop Workforce Planning Toolkit for managers to support workforce planning at a departmental level.

Q2 2023/24

**Strategic lead**

*Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*

**People – P6****Area for Improvement**

The service should make sure it has appropriate ways to engage with and seek feedback from all staff, including those from under-represented groups.

**HWFRS Action Proposed****Target Date**

Identify and review current methods of engagement with staff (Refer to P1 actions).

Complete

Ensure staff survey collates equality data to inform which groups are engaging and identify the best methods to do this in the future.

Complete

**Strategic lead**

*Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*



**People – P7****Area for Improvement**

The service should improve all staff understanding and application of the appraisal review process.

<b>HWFRS Action Proposed</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Review current appraisal process (link with Training).	Complete
Establish completion rate reporting mechanism to monitor appraisal completion rates.	Complete
Implement identified amendments to appraisals process.	Complete
Publish refreshed appraisal toolkit for managers.	Complete
Develop appraisal training for managers.	Complete

**Strategic lead***Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*

**People – P8****Area for Improvement**

The service should make sure it has mechanisms in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation.

**HWFRS Action Proposed****Target Date**

Establish clear links to appraisal process (career conversations) – links to P7.

Complete

Develop a talent management strategy.

Q2 2023/24

Develop a framework for managers to use to identify and develop high-performing staff (appraisal) in line with NFCC talent management toolkit.

Q2 2023/24

Review Promotion process.

Complete

Develop and implement temporary promotion toolkit for managers.

Q1 2023/24

Complete interim review of Aspiring Executive Leaders programme.

Complete

Scope out “Aspiring Leaders” programme for Middle Managers.

Complete

**Strategic lead***Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*

## Report of the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention

### Change Function Support

#### Purpose of report

1. This report summarises steps that have been taken to review options to support the Authority's significant change portfolio and propose a collaboration arrangement with West Mercia Police.
- 

#### Recommendation

***It is recommended that the Authority enter into a collaboration arrangement with West Mercia Police to support the delivery of change management within the Service.***

#### Introduction and Background

2. The Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 (CRMP) and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) guide and direct the overall strategic aims of the Service. These drive everything we do and underpin our mission of delivering high quality and sustainable services to our communities.
3. To complement and focus our strategic aims, the Authority has a high level of ambition to change and transform key elements of its business, which was funded in June 2021 and has been referred to as the 'invest to improve' programme. There are currently 2 programmes and 15 projects of different scales and levels of complexity at different stages of development. These programmes and projects are being delivered predominantly by uniformed and corporate staff, either as part of their role, or on secondment. It is envisaged that further projects will be identified and commissioned over the next three years.

#### Collaboration

4. To support the delivery of these projects it has been identified that there is now a need for a higher level of support and oversight than can be delivered within the current internal staffing resources and skill levels. It is anticipated that there is not a long term requirement for the support, therefore a short term option to collaborate with a partner to provide the staffing and skills has been identified as the most efficient way forward.

5. Having considered options to further enhance the significant change ambitions West Mercia Police (WMP) has been identified as a preferred partner to deliver support, where it is identified as good value to do so, particularly where specialist change management skills are required.
6. WMP have stated they are willing to collaborate, subject to an acceptable contract, allowing for the Authority to “buy in” just the right level of strategic advice, project management office support, project manager / business analyst capability for the change programme at reasonable cost.
7. This proposal compliments the existing wider collaboration with WMP that is varied and longstanding, and is based on a hosted services model, accommodated by WMP.

## **Benefits**

8. Potential benefits of this collaboration are:
  - Economies of scale
  - Ability to draw down only the resource required, and end the support when it is no longer needed.
  - Sharing of expertise
  - Enhanced resilience
  - Two-way knowledge-sharing
  - Increased effectiveness of project governance, management and delivery.
9. An important distinction between this arrangement and a traditional supplier/provider relationship is the nature of the collaboration. Although there will be a legal framework, the two organisations would be collaborating and influencing each other on approach and developing the maturity and capability of the function in partnership.
10. As a public body, collaboration partners are not able to make a profit from providing a service. However, they can legitimately charge for management overheads and for system licences and usage, thereby reducing their overall cost-base. The service would be provided by the host partner’s employees (or potentially contractors for very specialist roles).
11. This allows the Authority to optimise the level and capability of outsourced resource and to make the best use of its inhouse change capability. There is also a duty to collaborate enshrined in legislation and the pending HMICFRS inspection will also be seeking to identify how the Authority has collaborated with partners.

## Costs and Framework

12. It is proposed that level of spend is capped £120k, and resources are drawn down on a needs basis up to that cap. All costs will be met from the existing collective programme and project budgets. An initial contract for 12-months service provision is envisaged, leaving a clear exit opportunity or either Authority if desirable. It should be noted the expenditure of the projects being managed under this support proposal will be in the region of £3m.
13. The proposal aligns with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Regulation 12(7).

## Conclusion

14. To further enhance the Authority's significant change ambitions, West Mercia Police (WMP) has been identified as a preferred provider to deliver strategic advice, project management office support, project manager / business analyst capability for the change programme at reasonable cost.
15. It is recommended that the Authority approve the proposed change management function collaboration.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Costs will be met from the collective programme and project budgets.
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	<p>The areas included directly link to achieving the strategic objectives of the Service as outlined in the CRMP, MTFP, the three Core Strategies and the People Strategy.</p> <p>This aligns with the ethical principles of acting with integrity and putting our communities first by ensuring adequate support for our change agenda.</p>
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Relevant data is fed into the Health & Safety Committee as appropriate.

<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	No, the report concerns an overall proposal. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as required for projects, and programmes linked to delivering the relevant strategy.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	Relevant data sharing agreements will be put in place.



## Report of Chief Fire Officer

### Invest to Improve Programme

#### Purpose of report

1. To inform Members on the progress of the Invest to Improve Programme and assure Members of the measures being taken and positive impact of this programme.
- 

#### Recommendation

*It is recommended that Members note this report*

#### Introduction and Background

2. Members approved a programme of investment mainly from the reallocation of reserve funding in June 2021. In addition to existing allocated revenue and capital funding, the Authority released additional funding to support and drive forward some key areas of investment and improvement for the Service.
3. Outlined below are the key areas that have been included in the Invest to Improve programme:
  - On-Call marketing and recruitment programme.
  - Development of a new digital on-line training platform that is modern, interactive, and compliant with new National Operational Guidance (NOG).
  - Delivery of a Command Training Excellence programme.
  - Implementation of a new digital equipment tracking and testing tool.
  - Development of a new intelligence management and gathering system for the recording and supplying of risk critical 'Intel' and building specific information of known risks.
  - Development of the environmental and sustainability improvement programme.
  - Improvement of organisational communications and development of an improved new digital capability to communicate better with staff and the public.
  - Implementation of body worn camera technology.
  - Delivery of a complex and challenging new building programme.
  - Delivery of a new training facility in North Herefordshire.

- Delivery of a new Fire Control system.

## **Current Situation**

4. Progress has been made in all the areas listed above. In some cases, progress has been slower than hoped, mainly due to staffing and recruitment issues or the inability to recruit or appoint staff with the necessary skillset. Despite this, all projects now have a managed programme delivery schedule and are mainly fully staffed.
5. Key areas of progress to note are:
  - The On-Call marketing and recruitment team are now on the ground across the Service area seeking to promote employment opportunities and recruit new On-Call staff from a range of diverse backgrounds using new data and tools. Support has been contracted to a specialist company to provide data research and digital marketing tools targeting specific areas of businesses and the local communities. It is anticipated that the initial results of this work will be available for analysis in early 2024.
  - The new digital on-line training platform is due to launch its first new National Operation Guidance (NOG compliant) training package in June 2023, with other packages already developed that will be launched later in the year. This project function will become a core part of the Training Centre once the platform and processes are fully tested and stable, and staff feedback has been reviewed.
  - The Command Training Excellence programme was launched in late 2022 when the new Incident Command training facility was opened in Worcester, and improved training and development has been growing ever since. With some staffing issues having been resolved the development programme for operational Commanders will now be extended even further aiming to provide one of the most modern and forward-thinking training programmes for operational Commanders in the UK.
  - A tender for a provider for a new digital tool to test and track over 16,000 pieces of operational equipment will be launched in the very near future.
  - The development of a new digital tool for gathering 'Intel' on all known risk premises within our borders, and in nearby counties, is now completing its research phase and due to move to the development phase in the near future.
  - Members will receive a separate update on progress on the Environment and Sustainability Plan (2021-2026). Whilst progress was initially slow due to lack of staffing, this plan has been revised and is now on track for delivery in key areas. Some success has been achieved with successful

bids for government funding, and a baseline of a carbon footprint has now been established.

- An external company specialising in communications has completed a full staff engagement process and provided a comprehensive report regarding our internal communications systems, which has now been published alongside an action plan. This is now in the process of delivering some key elements to improve how we communicate with staff and the recruitment of a new Communication and Digital Manager is underway. Digital transformation is now key to how we deliver this action plan.
- Body worn cameras are currently being researched and this project is still in the early stages of development.
- Members receive separate and regular updates on progress of the building projects; however it is well acknowledged the fantastic progress that has been made in the last two years towards delivering new fire stations in Broadway, Redditch and Hereford.
- The new Fire Control system project is making good progress with the tender process for a new supplier being completed at the time of writing of this report. This project will be reported through the alliance programme with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and it is worth noting that two other Fire Services in the north of England have also joined this project, led and facilitated by HWFRS staff.

## **Conclusion / Summary**

6. Barriers to progress have primarily been due to staffing and specific skill requirements, however it is pleasing to see significant progress in many areas.
7. A key outcome of this work has been to highlight the need for an improvement and investment in the Service's digital capabilities. Whilst investment in ICT in recent years has undoubtedly been beneficial, and has created a foundation of modern and resilient ICT infrastructure, there now needs to be a significant investment in how the ICT infrastructure is used to unlock the digital tools that will enable improvements across the Service. This is not only reliant on investing and changing some systems, but increasingly reliant on the people and skills to use and develop these digital systems. The Service is exploring all avenues to optimise this from upskilling staff, employing new staff and using specialist and expert external providers and partners.

## Corporate Considerations

<p><b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>This programme has a carefully managed investment plan that is monitored through the project and programme/improvement boards.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (Identify how proposals link with current priorities &amp; policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>All areas of this paper link to deliver key improvements in all areas to drive the core strategies and improve Response, Prevention, Protection and deliver improvements in safe and efficient working of all our staff.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Not applicable to this paper directly</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Not applicable to this paper</p>
<p><b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>Not applicable to this paper</p>
<p><b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>None of the projects directly involve personal data</p>

## **Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Director of Protection & Assets**

### **Feasibility of Droitwich Training Centre / Wyre Forest**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To update Members on the feasibility to relocate Training Centre (currently based in Droitwich) to Wyre Forest Fire Station.

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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the feasibility update and progress is noted, and Members approve the progression of a proposal to potentially sell part of the accommodation on the Droitwich site to fund the Training Centre relocation, if feasible and efficient.***

#### **Background**

2. The Service's main Training Centre is located at Droitwich Fire Station. The existing site is relatively compact with limited facilities, making any future development difficult on the site. The location of the Training Centre on the Droitwich site also complicates any future potential development or relocation of the Droitwich Fire Station in the future.
3. The new Wyre Forest Fire Station already has excellent facilities on site including a new 'hot fire house', and extensive space for future development. The current location is no longer fit for purpose, outdated and would not be able to deliver a modern Training Centre even if refurbished due to the limited available space.
4. It was reported to the Policy & Resources Committee in September 2021 of the intention to assess the potential future relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station. A paper proposed to investigate the feasibility of relocating the Training Centre to Wyre Forest. Approval was sought to appoint architects to complete a feasibility options and planning appraisal.
5. Officers were authorised to: "appoint architects to complete a feasibility options appraisal to relocate Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station, and submit a planning application if feasible." It is the intention of officers to submit a planning application in 2024.
6. The estimated fees to complete a feasibility options and planning appraisal and application were provided to members in a confidential appendix. The Director of Finance advised the costs could be financed from within the reserve approved in June 2021. It was noted that an initial project reserve of £650k had

been allocated. However, if proposals were acceptable then additional funding would be required to enable the scheme to progress, and this could be phased over a number of years if funding is not immediately available.

### **Feasibility Options Update**

7. It was noted in May that the architects who completed the Wyre Forest scheme had visited the existing Training Centre in Droitwich and met centre managers to commence initial scoping works, and formulate accommodation schedules for the proposed requirements of a new facility.
8. A number of sketch site spatial layouts have been reviewed, and architects are now reviewing comments and preparing preferred layouts for further review. Once approved by officers, additional documents will be drafted in preparation to submit a planning application. A detailed cost analysis will be completed at this stage, enabling proposed project costs to be explored, and it is envisaged this project may cost up to £2.5m, based upon current estimates in today's climate.
9. As part of the options appraisal work the property team are also exploring the potential value of the existing Droitwich Fire Station site. It is noted that this could be a two-phased approach to initially release funds to facilitate the move of the Training Centre. Two options are being considered;
  - i. the estimated value of the whole site, and
  - ii. to carry out an initial feasibility report on the value of the five houses that sit on the boundary of the existing site.
10. Should Training Centre move to Wyre Forest, then the current Droitwich site would be left with some redundant space. The Authority currently owns five houses on the boundary of the site which are used for Training, USAR, and Fire Cadets. However, as adjoined cottages they have never been ideal and truly fit for purpose.
11. Officers intend to explore the option of selling these properties (should planning permission be achieved for the Wyre Forest Training Centre buildings) to partially fund the proposed move. Officers are confident the site can be adjusted to relocate the function carried out in the cottages into the main Droitwich building, without compromising the future use of the Droitwich site as a Fire Station / USAR facility after Training Centre has moved.

### **Conclusion / Summary**

12. The existing Training Centre at Droitwich Fire Station is very constrained. It was therefore proposed to investigate the feasibility of relocating the Training Centre to the Wyre Forest Hub. These proposals would be subject to identifying additional funding, and the project could be phased over a number of years.
13. Sketch proposals have been reviewed, and architects are now reviewing comments and preparing preferred layouts, and costs have been identified, in preparation to submit a planning application. Further work is being progressed

concerning project costings, and the potential to release funds from the existing Droitwich site. The Treasurer will review the financial predictions to allow a viable plan (phased if necessary) to enable the new Training Centre to be built at the Wyre Forest Fire Station.

### Corporate Considerations

<p><b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).</p>	<p>An initial reserve of £650k has been allocated for the relocation of Training Centre to the Wyre Forest Fire Station site. However, project completion would be subject to identifying additional funding.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (identify how proposals link with current priorities and policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics).</p>	<p>Training of staff and maintenance of skills in a realistic environment is a key element of Service strategy, and therefore investing in new and improved training facilities is essential.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).</p>	<p>Not applicable at this stage.</p>
<p><b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p><b>Data Protection Impact</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling).</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>



## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

### Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025 Update

#### Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the progress in delivering the actions set out in the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025.
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#### Recommendation:

##### *It is recommended that:*

- i) The Fire Authority note the progress to deliver the action plan set out in the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25 (see Appendix 1),*
- ii) Approve the updated action plan for 2023-25 (see Table 1), and*
- iii) Approve the publication of the revised actions in an updated Environmental Sustainability Plan.*

#### Introduction & Background

2. At the Fire Authority meeting on 24 February 2021, Members approved the Environmental Sustainability Plan\* (ESP) (2021-25) and its publication (see Appendix 2). *\*Members will note that the format has been updated to match other Service core strategies.*
3. The ESP sets out how the Service will improve the ways in which it uses resources to ensure the least harm to our environment. The plan put in place some prompt measures to assess and address our energy usage. It also established the foundations to enable future changes and improvements to the way the organisation uses and disposes of carbon-based resources, water, and minimises pollution and waste.

#### Action Plan Update & Notable Achievements

4. The ESP (2021-25) has been reviewed at its mid-point, and shows excellent progress against the identified actions. Appendix 1 provides an overview, with over 95% of actions either completed / partially completed (14 completed, 9 on-going / partially completed, and only 1 not yet started).
5. The Fire Authority approved £300,000 from reserves for Environmental Sustainability projects in June 2021. The reserve was allocated for use on carbon reduction projects across the estate. Since the last update, the Service have appointed a Property and Environment Manager, who is responsible for delivering the capital build projects, property maintenance

programme, and importantly numerous aspects of the ESP 2021-25 action plan.

6. In January 2021 the Service commissioned Erebus Environment Limited (EEL) to carry out a high-level energy audit of 22 fire stations. Written reports were provided to the Service highlighting quantified energy saving opportunities in decarbonising our built estate and wider actions to support the Services' journey towards net zero. The report(s) identified a possible 13.7% reduction in emissions through energy management and renewables projects. It noted that further reductions might be achievable if subsequent fossil fuel heating replacement schemes are delivered aligned with the anticipated decarbonisation of the national grid.
7. EEL summarised that if all recommended projects were implemented this would result in a 43% total reduction in the Services' emissions by 2030. This evidence base has been, and will continue to be used to identify opportunities to improve equipment, building fabric and the management of energy use throughout the period of the ESP 2021-25. This will form part of the targets and objectives for the 2025-30 plan.
8. Grant funding, to the sum of £83,166 from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme has been used to provide heat decarbonisation projects at Upton-upon-Severn and Tenbury Wells Fire Stations. The project involved the removal of the gas boilers and radiators, the installation of electric heating systems, and the introduction of solar PV panels at both locations. This project has resulted in a reduction in our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from gas usage by approximately 25.5 tons a year, 9.3% of the current estate. Both projects were finally commissioned in May 2023, and will be reviewed at six and twelve months.
9. An additional application for grant funding from the Government's Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund was submitted in May 2023. This bid, totalling £80K, concerns decarbonisation design project fees at; Malvern, Pebworth, and Pershore fire stations, and Operational Logistics at Malvern. If successful, and then progressed to completion, these projects would reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from gas by a further 66.2 tons a year, an additional 24% across the estate.
10. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) has been used to assess our capital build projects at; Broadway, Redditch, and Hereford. BREEAM is a voluntary scheme that aims to quantify and reduce the environmental burdens of buildings by rewarding those designs that take positive steps to minimise their environmental impacts. The new build projects incorporate environmental sustainability measures such as; solar PV panels, EV charging points, and safe and secure cycle parking, and all three schemes have been designed to achieve an overall BREEAM rating level of 'Good.'

11. LED lighting continues to be installed at fire stations as part of our planned programme of work, and will continue to be installed as we carry out further refurbishments at existing fire stations.
12. The Service has purchased 8 electric vehicles in 2022/23; 5 Vauxhall Corsa's and 3 Toyota Proace vans. These are due to be delivered during Q1 of 2023/24, and meet the objective set in the Fleet Plan 2021-2025, that where appropriate electric vehicles will be considered when replacing the ancillary fleet.
13. A total of 30 EV charging points have been included in projects (12) / installed (18) in 2022/23. Installations include; Worcester (5), Evesham (2), Malvern (3), Operational Logistics (3), Leominster (1), and Wyre Forest (4). Included in capital build projects; Broadway (1), Redditch (4), Hereford (4), and Leominster STF (3).
14. An initial review and analysis of our most purchased consumables has been carried out which has enabled the consideration of alternative options for products. This includes the rollout of refillable water bottles and reusable insulated cups to all operational staff. This initiative will reduce the use of single use plastic on the incident ground by an estimated 6000 cups annually.
15. MS Teams and video conferencing has enabled meetings and training events to be held virtually. This has reduced our carbon emissions from vehicular movements. In addition, we have developed and adopted a hybrid working approach which includes agile and remote working for corporate and office-based staff.
16. In 2022/23 the Service carried out a comprehensive decontamination programme of its fire fighting foam tanks on all its fire appliances. The Service conducted trials as part of research carried out by ProDecon UK to investigate the methodology and effectiveness of the proposed decontamination process. As such, HWFRS was committed to leading the sector in its scientific approach to establish the most appropriate protocols when dealing with persistent organic pollutants, now known to be in legacy fire fighting foams. The Service is now using fluorine free foam, and has published a position statement on the website concerning the use of fire fighting foams at operational incidents.

### **Proposed Action Plan 2023-25**

17. Subject to Fire Authority approval, it is recommended the completed actions to date are published in a revised Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25. Additionally, a revised action plan (see Table 1 below) outlining the 12 remaining / on-going actions be included. Further updates would then be provided to the Fire Authority as appropriate.

**Table 1.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Update 2024/25</b>
1. Service-wide engagement and communication to raise awareness and encourage ideas for carbon reduction.	Assistant Director Assets	On-going to 2024/25	
2. Improve recording, monitoring and reporting of all carbon impacts across the Service	Property & Environment Manager	On-going to 2024/25	
3. Liaise with various internal HWFRS groups to establish how this will continue to be driven through the organisation.	Assistant Director Assets	On-going to 2024/25	
4. Include environmental impact awareness on induction and development programmes.	Assistant Director Assets / GC Training	On-going to 2024/25	
5. Work with our Property and Estates function to deliver this plan and improve the impact of our estate on the environment over the next five years.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going to 2024/25	
6. Complete the programme of LED light installation across all of our sites.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going to 2024/25	
7. Complete the programme of smart meters for all of our sites.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going to 2024/25	
8. Investigate drying rooms technology to reduce energy on station.	Property & Environment Manager	Commence Review 2024/25	
9. Move towards a paper free environment.	Director of Protection & Assets	On-going to 2024/25	
10. Maximise external funding opportunities to facilitate carbon reduction / environmental projects.	Director of Protection & Assets	On-going to 2024/25	
11. Revise our Asset Strategy for estates to target greater energy efficiency, CO <sub>2</sub> reductions*, and water usage solutions, within budgetary limitations. *subject to funding approval target a 15% reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from gas usage.	Assistant Director Assets / Property & Environment Manager	Review in 2023/24 and report 2024/25	
12. Investigate grey water harvesting systems.	Property & Environment Manager	Commence Review 2024/25	

## Conclusion / Summary

18. Members are recommended to note the substantial progress made in delivering the actions set out in the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025. Subject to Fire Authority approval, it is recommended the completed actions to date are published in a revised Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25, and an updated action plan outlining the remaining / on-going actions be included.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Resourcing for Environmental Sustainability projects is identified at project inception. Upgrades to LED lighting across the estate is funded via the property programme budget, and additional costs associated with ancillary electric vehicles has been included within the capital fleet budget.
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (identify how proposals link with current priorities and policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics).	The Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25 directly links with the Climate Change Act 2008. It is also directly linked to the Asset Management Strategy 2021-2025, the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25, and the three core strategies of; Prevention, Protection and Response.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Not applicable.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	Not applicable.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as required for specific actions related to the Environmental Sustainability Plan.
<b>Data Protection Impact</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling).	Not applicable.

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25: Action Plan Update, June 2023.

Appendix 2 - HWFRS Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25, dated February 2021.

## Appendix 1

### Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-25: Action Plan Update, June 2023.

Action	Owner	Date	Update
1. Service-wide engagement and communication to raise awareness and encourage ideas for carbon reduction.	Assistant Director Assets	On-going 2023/24	A number of bulletin items have been published to raise awareness of the ESP 2021-25 since its publication. Further items, including environmental aspects of property projects will continue to be published throughout 2023/24.
2. Allocate specified reserves for use on carbon reduction projects including establishing a lead manager for the development and delivery of key aspects of this plan.	Director of Finance	✓ Completed 2021/23	The Fire Authority approved £300,000 from reserves for Environmental Sustainability projects in June 2021.
3. We will utilise expertise where appropriate to evaluate our estate and identify where we can invest to improve our energy usage and reduce our energy loss.	Assistant Director Assets	✓ Completed 2021/22	In January 2021 the Service commissioned Erebus Environment Limited to carry out a high-level energy audit of 22 fire stations. Reports quantified energy saving opportunities in decarbonising our built estate and wider actions to support the Services' journey towards net zero.
4. Following the CRMP process we will review our operational and prevention resources and assets to ensure we are suitably prepared to deal with increasing activity in relation to climate change.	Assistant Director Response	✓ Completed 2022/23	A review of flooding response has been completed, and a decision to increase Water First Responder (WFR) teams to all fire stations has been approved. A review of 'wildfire' capabilities has been completed, equipment reviewed, and the number of NFCC trained tactical advisors increased.
5. Improve recording, monitoring and reporting of all carbon impacts across the Service	Property & Environment Manager	On-going 2023/24	This action is being reviewed / progressed, as a number of different sources record data across HWFRS.
6. Liaise with the ODC Group to establish how this will be driven through the organisation.	Assistant Director Assets	On-going 2023/24	Liaison with various internal groups will continue throughout the period of the ESP 2021-25.
7. Include environmental impact awareness on induction and development programmes.	Assistant Director Assets / GC Training	On-going 2023/24	From 2023, environmental impact awareness will be incorporated into induction and development programmes where appropriate.
8. Introduce into the annual awards a process to recognise and reward the greatest positive impact on progressing this plan.	Director of Protection & Assets	✓ Completed 2021/22	Following review this action is not being taken forward, as the existing awards process allows for staff to be nominated for areas of work / projects.
9. Work with our Property and Estates function to deliver this plan and improve the impact of our estate on the environment over the next five years.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going 2023/24	Work completed to date and recorded in this mid-point review will continue to 2025.

10. Complete the programme of LED light installation across all of our sites.	Property & Environment Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2022/23	The following fire stations have been refurbished, with LED lighting upgrades included; Whitchurch, Fownhope, Kington, Ledbury, Pershore, Tenbury Wells, and Leominster.
		On-going 2023/24	As refurbishments continue at fire stations across the estate, LED light installation will continue.
11. Work with specialists to undertake energy audits on our sites to identify most suitable and appropriate energy sources, within budgetary costs parameters.	Assistant Director Assets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2021/22	In January 2021 the Service commissioned Erebus Environment Limited (as item 3. above).
12. Complete the programme of smart meters for all of our sites.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going 2023/24	A replacement programme has commenced across the estate, and is linked to energy suppliers. Final installation at all location is due for completion in 2024/25.
13. Investigate drying rooms technology to reduce energy on station.	Property & Environment Manager	2024/25	Not started.
14. Review and improve our current waste / recycling collection provisions.	Property & Environment Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2023/24	A tender / procurement process has been completed between HWFRS & WMP for all waste / recycling collection for the next 3 years (2023-26). The new contract commences in July 2023, and includes; general waste and recycling. A separate contract is being progressed for compostable waste.
15. Explore the use of all type of powered vehicles for the Service's light vehicle fleet.	Assistant Director Assets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2022/23  Note: this item will continue as part of the Fleet Plan 2021-25.	The Fleet Plan (2021-25) references ancillary fleet (cars and vans) and confirms that Electric Vehicles (EV) will be considered in all future replacement programmes. Eight EV ancillary vehicles have been ordered in 2022/23, due to be delivered in June 2023, and will replace Prevention & Protection fossil fuelled vehicles.
16. Provide electric vehicle charging points where possible on our sites.	Property & Environment Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2022/23  Note: this item will continue as part of the ESP 2021-25.	A total of 30 EV charging points have been included in projects (12) / installed (18) in 2022/23. Installations include; Worcester (5), Evesham (2), Malvern (3), Operational Logistics (3), Leominster (1), Wyre Forest (4). Capital build projects; Broadway (1), Redditch (4), Hereford (4), and Leominster STF (3).
17. Reduce the frequency and duration of car journeys for work purposes, where possible.	Head of HR & Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2021/22	Introduction of MS Teams and other digital platforms, alongside a new hybrid / agile working policy.
18. Develop a workplace plan, to include agile and remote working and usual place of work.	Head of HR & Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2022/23	Introduction of hybrid / agile working policy.



19. Embed whole life, ethical and sustainable approach to equipment and supplies, wherever possible.	Assistant Director Assets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2021/22	Referenced in published Asset Management Strategy 2021-25, and associated plans; Fleet, Equipment, ICT, and Property.
20. Include environmental impact considerations into our procurement processes and suppliers to include goods and services.	Assistant Director Assets / Procurement Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2021/22	Environmental impact considerations are included in all procurement / tender processes. For example, the capital build projects have specifically included reference to the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). All projects have been specified / designed to achieve a 'Good' rating.
21. Move towards a paper free environment.	Director of Protection & Assets	On-going 2023/24	A reduction in printing and paper use has been implemented. Examples include; access to online training materials for new recruits, and the use of tablet devices to replace paper reports at meetings.
22. Maximise external funding opportunities to facilitate carbon reduction / environmental projects.	Director of Protection & Assets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed 2021/22	A successful grant bid has been achieved via the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (circa. £83K). This has facilitated decarbonisation projects at Upton-upon-Severn and Tenbury Wells Fire Stations, reducing our CO <sub>2</sub> emissions by approximately 25 tons a year.
		On-going 2023/24	A further bid totalling £80K has been submitted for decarbonisation detailed design fees for proposed projects at; Malvern, Pebworth, and Pershore fire stations, and Operational Logistics at Malvern.
23. Revise our Asset Strategy for estates to target greater energy efficiency, CO <sub>2</sub> reductions, and water usage solutions, within budgetary limitations.	Assistant Director Assets / Property & Environment Manager	On-going 2023/24	As noted in item 22 above, further grant funding has been applied for to progress further CO <sub>2</sub> reduction initiatives across the estate.
24. Investigate grey water harvesting systems.	Property & Environment Manager	On-going 2024/25*	*This item has been considered during the RIBA design stages as part of the capital build projects. But a review has not started for existing buildings.

*Planning for our future.  
Caring for the environment.  
Leading by example.*



# Environmental Sustainability Plan

2021-25



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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## Foreword

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) recognises how important it is to make sure we are committed to reducing our carbon emissions and the impact we have on the environment in everything we do. This Environmental Sustainability Plan (2021-2025) sets out how we will continue to improve the ways in which we use our resources to ensure the least harm to our environment. Each year this grows in importance as our awareness is raised on the critical importance of changing our behaviours with regard to climate change and sustainability. Legislation and regulation reflect this priority and we are committed to ensuring we meet our requirements and where possible exceed expectations.

Whether we are thinking of how we travel to work, what we do in our daily work, how we design a new service, where we hold a meeting and the myriad of choices we make in our daily lives, having sustainability underpinning every choice we make and every action we take must be integral to us delivering our vision, mission and strategic goals. The use of environmental impact assessments must become a common practice, at all levels and across all areas of the organisation, if this plan is to be fully embedded in the organisation.

We also recognise that many of the measures we plan to take to cut our carbon footprint will also help us operate more efficiently in some ways through the ability to use less energy and therefore reduce those costs and offset the inevitable future increases to fuel and energy costs. However the potential additional costs of investment in infrastructure, monitoring our impact, and using environmentally friendly services (such as recycling, or purchasing biodegradable or recyclable materials), may actually be more expensive overall than current working practices. Using the information that will be gathered in the first two years of this plan, and working with our dedicated staff, we will be able to set challenging targets and report our progress on the journey to become a more environmentally conscious and sustainable organisation.

# Introduction



It cannot be stated strongly enough that to meet the ambition of Government to become carbon neutral will be incredibly challenging. It is not yet clear whether it is an achievable goal, however, it is an ambition that Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is prepared to pursue and in endeavouring to achieve the goal will take us further forward and improve the Service rather than choose to ignore the challenge. The evidence available shows that the scale of change is unprecedented; global and national system change will be needed to support local system change.

This is not therefore another Service performance goal for members and officers where control and accountability is clear, this is a challenge where the totality of the solutions needed is not clear and the approach taken will be emergent. We will need to put in place appropriate governance arrangements to ensure accountability, scrutiny and support through existing decision making processes.

Climate change is already upon us. While there are visible impacts of this through increased flooding, wind, rain and storm intensities, there are also hidden impacts such as droughts, biosecurity with the risk of invasive species, and seasonal changes to the food chains for species. The summer of 2018 was one of the hottest ever recorded and summer temperatures could increase further in parts of the UK if the current trajectory global warming continues.

While certain parts of the world will have more severe and imminent impacts (such as low lying areas in South East Asia), the UK is not immune. These impacts only highlight the need to act now on reducing our emissions. The details set out in the Action Plan require us to make good decisions about what to invest in with our limited resources, therefore we must understand the consequences of climate change with and without action.

The World Health Organisation identifies climate change as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. The impacts for the UK, although less than for some other parts of the world, will still be significant. There will be an increase in heat wave days and a longer heat wave season, resulting in greater risk of wildfires and there will also be periods of heavier rainfall increasing the likelihood of widespread flooding. Such events will have significant impact on our Service; therefore it is important that we act and set an important example by reducing our impacts on the environment.



# Context



Climate change is a real and immediate threat for us all. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels have already reached their highest level for almost half a million years and are rising faster than ever. Like all public sector organisations, HWFRS has a key role to play in both mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change – both as a respected community service and through the services we provide.

HWFRS is a considerable consumer of energy and a direct source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions arising from our activities and buildings, therefore we need to act now to adapt and manage risks to service delivery, local communities, infrastructure, businesses and the natural environment. The Authority's climate change challenge falls into:

- Cutting the Service's carbon footprint;
- Preparing for the impacts of a changing climate on our communities.

Aside from the moral and environmental case for taking action to tackle climate change there are many other drivers for the Service to address this issue. These include:

- the considerable scope for more efficient use of energy to realise cost savings
- the future impact of the increase in energy and fuel prices

Specifically these will have three main impacts on the Service:



## Service Delivery

Climate change has a significant effect on the services we provide and how we provide them. We have already seen the impacts of prolonged periods of grass fires in recent summers and the severe flooding events across many parts of our counties in the last two decades. It is imperative that through our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) we consider how we can improve and/or adapt the services we provide to be able to respond and protect our communities against the threats caused by climate change. In support of this, we need to ensure that the way we deliver our services also has the least impact on the environment through energy usage and pollution control and environmental protection measures.

## Financial

Projects to reduce carbon emissions will more often than not come with the requirement of financial investment. However, some schemes, especially those that target energy and fuel efficiency, can lead to savings through a reduced amount of energy being used in the longer term. These whole life saving will be considered but this policy should be seen as an opportunity to invest in improving the way we work and our impact on the environment, which may not necessarily always cost less.

## Reputational and the Service's role as a Community Leader

As a community leader with an outstanding reputation HWFRS has a significant role to play in ensuring all of our communities lead lower carbon lifestyles. The Service recognises that it cannot do this in isolation but by promoting best practice and working with others in all sectors we can make positive impacts for the future.

# Context (continued)



## Size of the Challenge

For us to truly know the size of the challenge we face as an organisation we need to assess our current usage and costs and develop plans to prioritise areas where investment and change will have the greatest impact with the aim of reducing our carbon footprint through better energy usage, waste management and reducing pollution. We aim to do this in the first two years of this plan.

The Service's carbon footprint will mainly be based on the energy use and fuel use from our estate, activities undertaken in our service provision and the waste we generate. It will also take into account an estimate of the emissions from our supply chain and staff business and commute mileage and a proportion of business travel on public transport. We will endeavour to adopt strategic directives into easy to understand headlines, such as Reduce, Repair, Reuse and Recycle.



## What have we done already?

With the available resources at our disposal for this area of improvement we have already started our journey towards becoming a more environmentally friendly organisation through the following:

- Adding environmentally efficient solutions to new build and renovated buildings within the budgetary constraints of the projects, such as Pebworth, Malvern, Worcester and the Wyre Forest and ensuring they are as efficient as possible with new building materials.
- Recycling at all locations.
- Adopting systems to reduce paper usage and waste paper.
- Investing in newer vehicles with the most efficient engines and highest environmental ratings.
- Undertaking to install electric vehicle charging points at selected sites to enable a phase over of some combustion engine cars and vans to all-electric vehicles.
- Planning to install LED lighting across our estate in 2021.
- Planning to install Building Management Systems to monitor and control energy usage across our estate.
- Developing a plan to assess how and why parts our estate are heated, and aim to remove outdated inefficient systems, and not use energy unnecessarily.

# Strategic Approach



Our Service priorities are aligned to delivering the best Fire and Rescue Service to our communities that we can sustainably afford with the available resources. To highlight our commitment to mainstreaming carbon reduction and protecting the environment we aim to inform our staff and our communities of our commitment and allocate sufficient resources to we deliver our objectives and achieve the challenging targets, alongside our core strategies and goals.

The following objectives have been identified for 2021-22:

- To research and explore alternative methods and systems to reduce our energy usage.
- To reduce our usage of single use materials.
- To explore the use of electric vehicles and begin the investment in the necessary infrastructure to achieve this.
- To reduce the amount of waste produced.
- To promote biodiversity and habitats on our properties.
- To consider how our activities impact on the environment and linked to our CRMP review how we respond to climate change events operationally.
- To lead our communities by demonstrating and promoting good environmental practices and ensure our workforce has an improved understanding of the need to become a more environmentally conscious organisation and undertake a long term change programme to achieve this.

To ensure sustainability is embedded into the Service, strategies and projects should support environmental impacts by considering energy efficiency, waste reduction, less travel and reuse and recycle products whenever possible.

## How are we planning to deliver these priorities and reach our targets?

We will adopt an environmental sustainability plan and raise awareness of the issues and impacts at a political level, alongside optimising the use of the available allocated resources to deliver the foundations required to drive this agenda for the next five years.

## How will we measure our success?

We aim to set targets in 2023 once the baselines for carbon emissions, water and waste have been established in the first two years of the plan.

- Carbon emissions through lower energy usage will reduce.
- Renewable and low carbon energy sources will increase reaching or exceeding our targets.
- Waste will be reduced and recycling will increase.
- Critical adaptation measures will be implemented.
- New planned developments/equipment/supplies will have minimal environmental impact.

### The following principles will guide us on our journey through carbon reduction:

- Learn from others and become an example of best practice.
- Develop carbon reduction projects that are effectively programme managed.
- Identify any risks and opportunities from carbon reduction plans.
- Embed environmental implications into our decision making.
- Ensure sustainable procurement practices apply to all areas of the Service.
- Encourage, engage and support others in reducing their carbon footprints.
- Raise awareness and commitment.
- Regular monitoring and reporting of our performance.



# Areas of Focus



## Property

A large proportion of the opportunities for the Service to reduce its carbon footprint will come from how we operate and maintain our estate. We will utilise dedicated expertise to evaluate our estate and identify where we can invest to improve our energy usage and reduce our energy loss.

## Technology

New technology will play a significant role in developing and streamlining working practices, which will ultimately have a positive effect in reducing our carbon footprint. The ability for flexible, agile and remote working supports less travel.

## Fleet

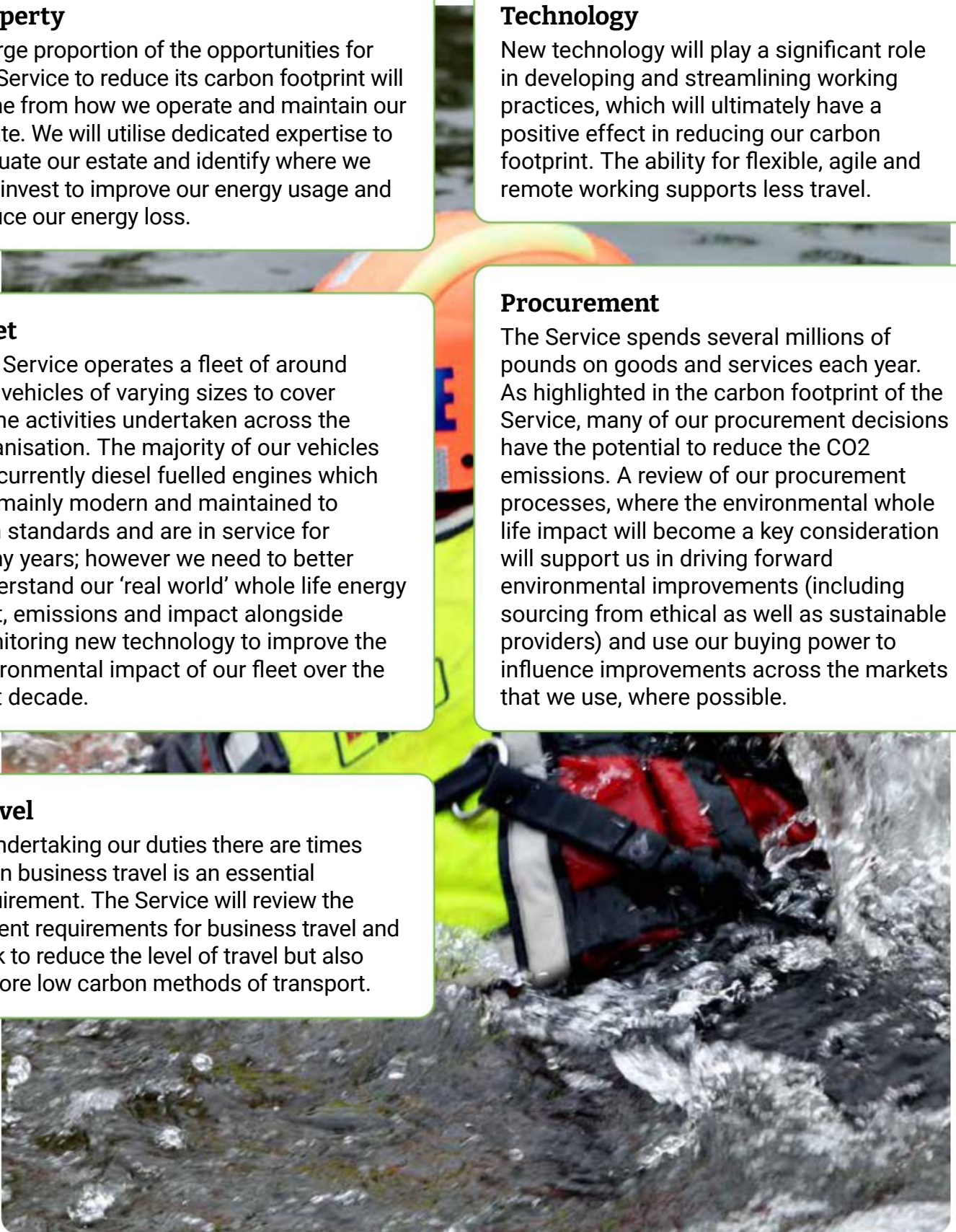
The Service operates a fleet of around 150 vehicles of varying sizes to cover all the activities undertaken across the organisation. The majority of our vehicles are currently diesel fuelled engines which are mainly modern and maintained to high standards and are in service for many years; however we need to better understand our 'real world' whole life energy cost, emissions and impact alongside monitoring new technology to improve the environmental impact of our fleet over the next decade.

## Procurement

The Service spends several millions of pounds on goods and services each year. As highlighted in the carbon footprint of the Service, many of our procurement decisions have the potential to reduce the CO2 emissions. A review of our procurement processes, where the environmental whole life impact will become a key consideration will support us in driving forward environmental improvements (including sourcing from ethical as well as sustainable providers) and use our buying power to influence improvements across the markets that we use, where possible.

## Travel

In undertaking our duties there are times when business travel is an essential requirement. The Service will review the current requirements for business travel and seek to reduce the level of travel but also explore low carbon methods of transport.



# Areas of Focus (continued)



## Waste

Waste production adds to the level of carbon emissions and therefore our waste practices are influenced by the carbon reduction agenda. We need to reduce the volume of waste which is sent to landfill but also increase the volume of waste currently recycled, alongside considering the whole life impact of things we purchase and use.

## Supplies and Equipment

The replacement of all supplies already ensures that a whole life approach is taken. This ensures that all costs from purchase, use of the items through to disposal considerations are captured in the initial decision making process. Where possible recycled products will be used and, at the end of life, consideration given to reuse or recycle.

## Finance

The economic climate has proved challenging for the whole of the public sector especially when considering the requirements to fulfil the potential to address environmental impacts; however with appropriate planning and through seeking sustainable investment opportunities for carbon reduction and other initiatives, progress can be made. We will therefore seek opportunities for external funding streams, prioritise spend on measures which should give a higher return (carbon and financial) and embed the principles of invest to save and the circular economy.

## Behaviour Change

The majority of plans to reduce the Service's carbon footprint are viewed from an organisation level; individual behavioural changes from all of our personnel can make huge impacts on reducing our carbon emissions. Raising awareness of the scale of the challenge will act as a catalyst to encourage all personnel to support the organisation's efforts by making small changes where they can to reduce energy, reduce travel, reduce waste and recycle more.

## Water

Climate change is likely to increase water demand while shrinking water supplies. HWFRS will review its non-operational water usage, and consider how it can use potable water more effectively and reduce wastage.

## Prevention and Mitigation of Emergencies

Where possible the Service will explore opportunities to support our communities in the prevention and mitigation of climate change related emergencies, through working with partner agencies. From our estate, activities undertaken in our service provision and the waste we generate. It will also take into account an estimate of the emissions from our supply chain and staff business and commute mileage and a proportion of business travel on public transport. We will endeavour to adopt strategic directives into easy to understand headlines, such as Reduce, Repair, Reuse and Recycle.



# Action Plan 2021 & 2022



ACTION	OWNER	DATE
Service-wide engagement and communication to raise awareness and encourage ideas for carbon reduction		
Allocate specified reserves for use on carbon reduction projects including establishing a lead manager for the development and delivery of key aspects of this plan		
We will utilise expertise where appropriate to evaluate our estate and identify where we can invest to improve our energy usage and reduce our energy loss		
Following the CRMP process we will review our operational and prevention resources and assets to ensure we are suitably prepared to deal with increasing activity in relation to climate change		
Improve recording, monitoring and reporting of all carbon impacts across the Service		
Liaise with the ODC Group to establish how this will be driven through the organisation		
Include environmental impact awareness on induction and development programmes		
Introduce into the annual awards a process to recognise and reward the greatest positive impact on progressing this plan		
Work with our Property and Estates function to deliver this plan and improve the impact of our estate on the environment over the next five years		
Complete the programme of LED light installation across all of our sites		
Work with specialists to undertake energy audits on our sites to identify most suitable and appropriate energy sources, within budgetary costs parameters		
Complete the programme of smart meters for all of our sites		
Investigate drying rooms technology to reduce energy on station		

## Action Plan 2021 & 2022 (continued)



ACTION	OWNER	DATE
Review and improve our current waste/recycling collection provisions		
Explore the use of all type of powered vehicles for the Service's light vehicle fleet		
Provide electric vehicle charging points where possible on our sites		
Reduce the frequency and duration of car journeys for work purposes, where possible		
Develop a workplace plan, to include agile and remote working and usual place of work		
Embed whole life, ethical and sustainable approach to equipment and supplies, wherever possible		
Include environmental impact considerations into our procurement processes and suppliers to include goods and services		
Move towards a paper free environment		
Maximise external funding opportunities to facilitate carbon reduction/environmental projects		
Revise our Asset Strategy for estates to target greater energy efficiency, CO2 reductions, and water usage solutions, within budgetary limitations		
Investigate grey water harvesting systems		

## Next Steps

The environmental sustainability plan and identified actions are a very good starting point on our journey to becoming carbon neutral. The plan will continue to be a live document over the coming years and updated as new information and ideas emerge.

The following areas will be the next steps for the coming year.

- Fire and Rescue Authority approval of the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025.
- Publication of our Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-2025.
- Use the Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG) to help champion this across all areas of the Service to promote behaviour change.
- Carry out climate impact assessments on our functions.
- Support our supply chain to better understand their carbon footprint and the impact it has on our Service.



## Ownership of the Environmental Sustainability Plan

The Service's Senior Management Board will:

- Champion and provide leadership on climate change.
- Prioritise projects and measures and allocate appropriate capital investment and ongoing revenue commitments to underpin the development of this plan.
- Monitor and report progress.
- Remove obstacles to the successful implementation of carbon reduction projects.
- Review and champion plans which require financial investment.
- Ensure a coordinated approach to projects to deliver our carbon reduction objectives and targets.



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Wednesday, 19 April 2023, 10:30

**Chairman: Mr M Hart**  
**Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr D Boatright, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Mr R J Morris

### **0271 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos and Cllr D Toynbee.

*[Cllr Boatright entered the meeting at 10.31am].*

### **0272 Named Substitutes**

There were no named substitutes.

### **0273 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

There were no interests declared.

### **0274 Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

In respect of minute 0260 External Audit Findings Report 2021/22 (to make representations regarding property valuations), the Treasurer advised that this was delayed pending the completion of the audit. Having received confirmation on 13 April that this was complete, the Treasurer advised that this will now be done.

### **0275 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 2022/23.

Members were pleased to note that there were no high priority recommendations reported. With regard to the review of Payroll, Members were assured that there was a clear management plan now in place to address the points identified. All finalised reviews will be reported to Committee in due course.

***RESOLVED that the report be noted.***

**0276 Internal Audit Plan 2023/24**

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with the 2023/24 Audit Plan Revision.

Following the Audit and Standards Committee meeting on 18 January, the Strategic Leadership Board considered some revisions to the Plan which were accepted by Internal Audit that reflected the current risk and changing environment. Members were assured that there should be no issues reporting the annual opinion at the end of 2023/24.

***RESOLVED that the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan Revision be noted.***

**0277 Annual Governance Statement**

The Head of Legal Services presented the draft Annual Governance Statement 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 Code of Good Governance.

There were no areas where immediate action was required and there were no areas where the direction of travel had decreased during 2022/23 or where the status was less than satisfactory.

Members were pleased to note that for another year all areas were 'green' which gave the assurance necessary to approve the draft annual statement. Members gave compliments for all the work that was done to ensure compliance.

***RESOLVED that the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved.***

**0278 National Fraud Initiative 2022/23**

The Treasurer updated Members on the National Fraud Initiative.

Members were informed that this was a biennial exercise for local government and other public bodies currently undertaken by the Cabinet Office to identify data matches to eliminate the possibility of fraud and/or error.

It was anticipated that the results of this year's exercise would mirror previous exercises, none of which had identified any frauds involving HWFRS.

A final report would be brought to the next Audit and Standards Committee to provide final details in relation to the outstanding matches.

**RESOLVED it be noted that:**

**i) the process of examining all National Fraud Initiative matches is underway and that no fraud has been detected; and**

**ii) a further update relating to the completion of the fraud initiative will be brought to a future meeting.**

**0279 Annual Compliments, Complaints, Concerns and Requests for Information 2022/23**

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.

There was concern over the number of driving incidents, however reassurance was provided by the Chief Fire Officer that these were low level incidents and were in proportion to the number of miles that were driven. All incidents were analysed and investigated.

***RESOLVED that the Committee notes that during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023:***

***i) a total of 297 requests for information containing 774 queries***

***about the Service were received. No requests were passed to the Information Commissioners Office for review.***

***ii) a total of 60 compliments were received from the public;***

***iii) 39 complaints or concerns about Service activities were made; and***

***iv) 26 complaints or concerns were received about activities carried out by other organisations or individuals;***

***v) 4 of the complainants appealed the response provided but none were passed to the Local Government Ombudsman for further investigation***

***vi) the Service has recently implemented an external, confidential reporting line for complaints and concerns which will be included in future reports.***

**0280 Health and Safety Committee Update: October to December 2022  
(Quarter 3)**

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

Members were pleased to note that the number of safety events recorded in Quarter 3 had decreased by 3 compared to the previous quarter. The most significant decrease was in the personal injuries category which decreased by 6.

The Chief Fire Officer provided an explanation into the national review of contaminants. It is possible there could be legal cases in the next few years as some research had shown there are a certain type of cancers that firefighters may be more likely to contract. Over recent years a range of measures have been introduced for cleaning so as to minimise the risk to staff.

Members were pleased to note that fitness equipment had now been introduced across most stations and with the help of newly qualified in-house Personal Trainers, the Service was now in a position to work with employees to make sure their fitness is maintained.

Members were pleased that the violence against staff was at zero, which it hadn't been over the past few years. The Chief Fire Officer reaffirmed that violence was very tame within the two communities and was very rare.

**RESOLVED that the following issues, 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 2022 (Quarter 3); and**
- iii) Workforce Health & Wellbeing performance (Quarter 3).**

**0281 Late item: Statement of Accounts 2021/22**

**The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this Late Item pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency on the grounds that**

- a decision is required before the date of the next scheduled meeting of the Committee so as not to impact upon the preparation of the 2022/23 accounts.**

The Treasurer presented Members with the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 to be approved. Members were reminded that at the last meeting in January the Auditors had expected the remaining work to take 2 weeks, however this had actually taken 3 months and notification was only given on Thursday last week that the audit of the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 was complete.

Members were informed that the Accounts were fundamentally unchanged from the draft version issued in January and the audit findings report was similarly unchanged. Therefore the Accounts were ready for approval by Members.

**RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 be approved.**

The Meeting ended at: 11:32

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 03 May 2023, 10:30

**Chairman: Mr R J Phillips**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr D Chambers, Mr J Hardwick, Mrs K Hey, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor

### **0222 Apologies for Absence**

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

### **0223 Named Substitutes**

There were no named substitutes.

### **0224 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).

### **0225 Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

### **0226 Budget Update 2023-24**

The Treasurer updated Members on the 2023/24 Budget following the settlement of the Grey Book Pay Award.

Members were informed of the five changes that had an impact on the budget since the Fire Authority meeting in February. Namely:

- i) Grey Book pay award had been settled at 7% for July 2022 and 5% for July 2023.
- ii) Green Book offer, which was in excess of the original budgetary provision for April 2023 had been rejected, but the cost of this revised offer has been included.
- iii) Retained Business Rate changes.
- iv) Distribution of Grants was slightly different.
- v) New Dimensions USAR grant amendments.

Members were still disappointed that central government were not providing any financial support for the pay award but it was recognised there was little benefit in trying to lobby government again on this point.

Members were advised that whilst it would not be prudent to rely on the use of reserves to close a budget gap in the long term, the planned use to avoid unnecessarily early service impacts, whilst developing a cost reduction plan, could be seen as a sensible use of reserves.

***RESOLVED that the revised budget be approved.***

**0227 Pensions Board Update (Fire Pension Schemes)**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented an update on the establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Members were pleased to note that there had been no conflicts of interest or breaches reported to The Pensions Regulator.

*[Cllr D Morehead entered the meeting at 10.44am].*

***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.***

**0228 Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2023/24**

The Treasurer presented the Efficiency and Productivity Plan which was required by standalone Fire Authorities under the National Framework to

be published and submitted to the Home Office by 31 March 2023. This was part of the evidence gathering exercise for the Home Office to demonstrate to HM Treasury that the sector had delivered on commitments.

The Treasurer did not use the Home Office's template as it was felt to be confusing, complicated and did not align with the format of information that Members were used to receiving. This view was also shared with other Fire Treasurers in the region. Following submission of the Plan, the Home Office requested that the template be completed (and made the same request of other Treasurers as well).

Members noted that the template had not been published on the website but was included as an appendix to the report for information.

***RESOLVED that the Committee notes that the Efficiency and Productivity Plan was published on the Authority's website on 31 March 2023.***

#### **0229 Serious Violence Duty Update**

The Assistant Chief Officer (Director of Prevention) provided an overview of the introduction of the Serious Violence Duty and the impact on Fire and Rescue Services.

The Serious Violence Duty came into effect in January 2023, following the government's public consultation in July 2019, to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence.

Members were pleased to note that the Assistant Chief Officer (Director of Prevention) was the nominated lead representative for the Service.

***RESOLVED that the introduction of the new Serious Violence Duty and the Fire and Rescue Service involvement was noted.***

#### **0230 Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2022/2023**

The Assistant Chief Officer (Director of Prevention) presented the annual Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2022/23 for adoption.

The Statement set out the steps that the Service had taken to prevent modern slavery in its supply chains and own business.

***RESOLVED that the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2022/23 be approved and published on the Service's website.***



**0231 2022-23 Performance Report: Q4 (01 January – 31 March 2023)**

The Assistant Chief Officer (Director of Prevention) presented a revised report correcting errors in the original summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 4, 2022-23 that had been published with the agenda.

Members were pleased to note that the total number of incidents had decreased slightly to 1,733 compared to the same quarter of 2021-22 and there had been a significant increase in Home Fire Safety Visits, of which there were 1,878, a 143% increase compared to the same quarter of 2021-22. Inspections of business premises had also increased, 379 were completed compared to 241 in the previous year. This reflected the various restrictions on working arrangements in 2021 following Covid-19.

***RESOLVED that the Q4 2022-23 performance headlines set out in Section 4 of the report, with further details available in Appendix 1, be noted.***

**0232 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 15 November 2022.

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) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Contracts/Policy - Outcome of National Review***
- ii) Duty Systems - 12hr days and Day Crewing***
- iii) Fitness and Attendance Management Policies***
- iv) Promotion Processes***
- v) Industrial Action***
- vi) Core Code of Ethics Steering Group***
- vii) Safeguarding Training Competency Framework***
- viii) Time in Motion Review***

***ix) Staff Survey Update***

***x) Property Update***

***xi) Project Updates - National Operational Guidance (NOG), On-Call,  
and Unwanted Fire Signals***

***xii) Mid-term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update***

The Meeting ended at: 11:49

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman