



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Full Authority

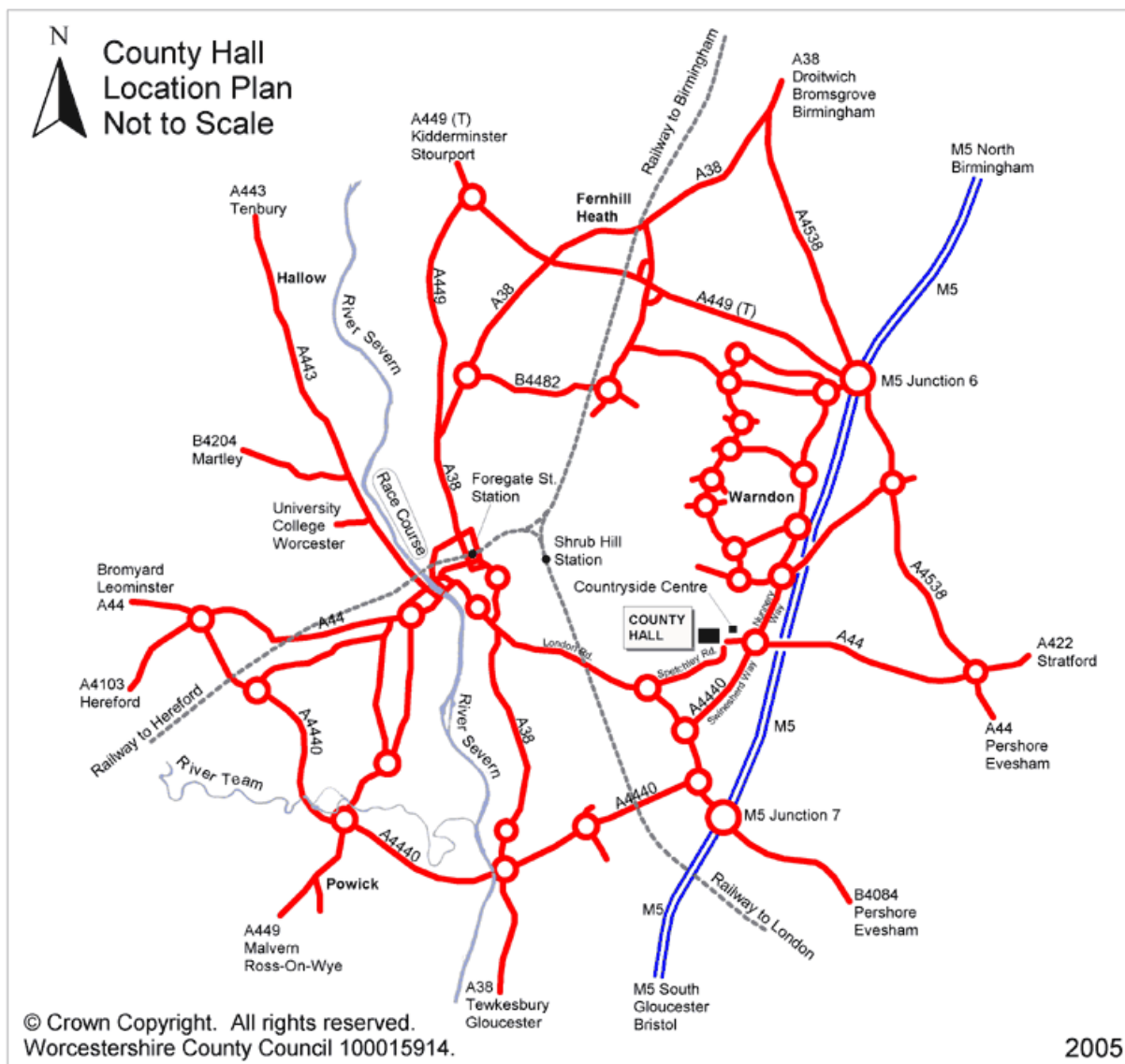
AGENDA

Tuesday, 15 October 2019

12:00

Council Chamber

County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP



From the M5

From J7 of M5 follow A44 to Worcester (follow the brown and white tourist signs) at the roundabout turn right onto Swinesherd Way and continue to the end passing Wildwood Drive on the left and the Countryside Centre on the right.

From J6 of M5 follow A4538 to Evesham, (follow the brown and white tourist signs) turn right at 1st roundabout onto B4636 (to Worcester) then left at the next roundabout (Nunnery Way - A4440) and then right at the next roundabout onto Wildwood Drive.

From Worcester City Centre

Take the London Road away from the centre signposted M5 motorway and Evesham.

Travelling eastwards along London Road, passing through a set of traffic lights at the bottom of the first large hill, climb to the top of the next hill. Approach the large roundabout and take the first left (almost straight ahead if you remain in the inside lane) into Spetchley Road.

Travel along Spetchley Road for approximately 1/3 of a mile. At the mini roundabout turn left into the County Hall Campus.

Fire Alarm

- The fire alarm is tested every Tuesday at 13:45. Should the alarm sound at any other time you will need to leave the building via the nearest safe exit.)
- You will need to follow Officers to Assembly Point E (Northside) which is located outside the building.

Toilets

- There are male and female toilets with baby change facilities in reception and a disabled toilet within the Register Office at the entrance adjacent to reception.

Parking

- If you have parked in the visitor car park please collect a token from Reception upon leaving.
- Once the token has been inserted please wait for the traffic light to change to green before driving off. The barrier will lower only when the light is green.

Smoking Policy

- Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the building. There is a smoking shelter located by the cascades which are situated between the upper and lower lakes.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Cafe

- There is a cafe located on the ground floor, a short distance from Reception which you are welcome to use. It sells a range of hot and cold foodstuffs as well as having a coffee bar.
- The Lakeview Cafe is open for business 08:00 to 15:00 Monday to Friday. The area is available for informal meetings unless specifically booked for an event although we ask that you only do so outside the busy lunchtime period when diners are given priority use.

Shop

- There is a shop adjacent to the cafe and stocks a range of sandwiches, snacks, sweets and newspapers.
- The shop's opening hours are 08:00 to 14:00 Monday to Friday
- There is a snack/cold drink vending machine immediately outside the shop for use during and outside of the shop's hours of business. There is also a KLIX hot drinks machine.

Grounds/Site traffic

- Please note that County Hall and its grounds are public therefore there may be any number of people walking around the site including those walking their dogs or travelling to the nearby schools.
- Due to this we have a site wide 10 mph speed limit

Public Transport

- There are two bus stops within the grounds of County Hall, one adjacent to each of the site entrances. Both have timetables and as a guide there are generally four buses per hour into the city centre.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 15 October 2019,12:00

Agenda

Councillors

Mr R J Phillips (Chairman), Mr P A Tuthill (Vice Chairman), Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Dr C A Hotham, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Dr K Pollock, Mrs J Potter, Professor J W Raine, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs D Toynbee, Mr R M Udall

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

4 Public Participation

To allow a Member of the public to present a petition, ask a question or make a statement relating to any topic concerning the duties and powers of the Authority.

Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal Services in writing or by email indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation to be received no later than 2 clear working days before the meeting (in this case 10 October 2019). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

1 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019.

6 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Interim Update

13 - 15

To provide an early update on the Medium Term Financial Plan and the financial context in which any decisions on Day Crewing Plus should be considered.

7 Strategic Fire Alliance – Alliance Agreement and projects update

16 - 20

To approve the adoption of a formal Fire Alliance Agreement and to update Members on progress in preparing priority projects developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire and Rescue Services.

8 Employee Relations Update

21 - 23

To update Members on the recent progress that has been made in respect to employee relations issues currently faced by the Service.

9	Day Crewing Plus Consultation and Options	24 - 84
	To agree and mandate the implementation of appropriate duty system(s) for the three fire appliances currently operating the Day Crewing Plus (DCP) system at Hereford, Worcester and Bromsgrove Fire Stations, in light of the recent legal challenge brought against South Yorkshire Fire Authority (linked to the Working Time Regulations (WTR)) by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the limitations of the Service's medium and longer-term financial position.	
10	HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Update Quarter 1, 2019-20	85 - 107
	To update Members on progress in implementing HMICFRS Improvement Plan.	
11	Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee	108 - 116
	To receive the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 1 May 2019 and 19 September 2019.	
12	Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee	117 - 122
	To receive the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 July 2019.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 12 June 2019, 11:00

Chairman: Cllr R Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Cllr P Tuthill

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Dr C A Hotham, J Kenyon, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Dr K Pollock, Mrs J Potter, Professor J W Raine, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall

Also in Attendance: Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

217 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Mr R J Phillips be elected as Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year, to hold office until his successor becomes entitled to act.

218 Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Mr P Tuthill be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year, to hold office until his successor becomes entitled to act.

219 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos, Cllr I Hardiman and Cllr P Tuthill.

220 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was a member of the Firefighters' Scheme Advisory Pensions Board, an employer member of the Fire NJC and a representative on the LGA Fire Commission.

Cllr Oborski declared that she was an additional representative on the

LGA Fire Commission for the Liberal Democrats.

221 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed the new Herefordshire Members:

Cllr Bowen, Cllr Hey, Cllr Kenyon and Cllr Stark

and the new Worcestershire Member:

Cllr R Morris

to the Fire Authority and thanked the outgoing Members:

Cllr Bowes, Cllr Greenow, Cllr Guthrie, Cllr Matthews, Cllr Middlebrough and Cllr Williams

for their time on the Authority.

The Chairman informed the Authority of the following:

- Congratulations to Group Commander Martin Lown who had been honoured with the British Empire Medal for his contribution to the Fire Fighters Charity.
- The Judicial Review took place on 5 and 6 June and the Chairman had attended along with representatives from Shropshire Fire Authority, Cambridgeshire Fire Authority, Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. They were still awaiting the outcome from the High Court.
- In April the Deputy Director of the Home Office visited the Authority to attend a meeting with him and officers of the Service.
- Attended meetings with officers.

222 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

223 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority held on 11 February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

224 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

A report was presented to consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, appointments to those Committees and to outside bodies (insofar as is necessary).

RESOLVED that:

i) the appointment of the following Members from Herefordshire Council be noted:

Conservative - Cllr. R. Philips

Green Party - Vacancy to be confirmed

Herefordshire Independents (2) - Cllr. S. Bowen, Cllr J Kenyon

Liberal Democrat - Cllr. L. Stark

It's Our County - Cllr. K. Hey

ii) the number of seats on each Committee and the allocation of those seats to political groups be noted:

Group	Appointments Committee	Audit & Standards Committee	Policy & Resources Committee
Conservative	4	7	7
Labour	1	1	2
Independent	1	2	2
2017	1	1	2
Non-Aligned	0	1	0
(Total)	7	12	13

iii) the following Members be appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the following Committees:

a. Appointments Committee

Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Mr P Tuthill

b. Audit and Standards Committee

Chairman: Mr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos

c. Policy and Resources Committee

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R C Adams

iv) in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders, membership of Committees be as set out in Appendix 1 of the minutes;

v) the non-aligned member be appointed to the Audit & Standards Committee;

vi) Mr B Clayton be appointed to the Health and Safety Committee;

vii) Mr T Baker-Price be appointed as Chairman to the Young Firefighters' Association Executive Committee;

viii) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 be continued;

ix) the place and vote on the Local Government Association Fire Commission continues to be exercised by the Chairman of the Authority; and

x) the Chairman of the Authority continues as the Member representative on the Place Partnership Ltd. Shareholder Group.

225 Provisional Financial Out-turn 2018/19

The Treasurer presented a report with the provisional financial results for 2018/19 and the Treasury Management activities for 2018/19.

Members were reminded that detailed budget monitoring reports had been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis and the out-turn was consistent with this reporting.

Members were made aware that the revenue budget underspend was slightly more than expected due to the increase from the redistribution of business rates.

Members were also informed that the capital budget was on track due to the new build projects running well.

The Treasurer was pleased to announce that the Authority's finances for 2018/19 were well controlled and that, despite the late one-off items, the resultant under spend was part of a planned response to known future budget constraints.

There was a query regarding the use of reserves and following a brief explanation by the Treasurer, a formal response would be provided by email. The Chairman also reminded Members that reserves were essential as there was no guarantee the increased employers contributions for the Firefighters pension would be made by the Treasury.

There was also a query regarding Broadway Fire Station reserve of which Members were informed the Authority had identified the budget earlier in the year and agreed to fund the replacement station.

RESOLVED that:

i) the provisional financial results for 2018/19 be noted;

ii) the transfers between reserves previously approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy as below be noted;

- 1. £0.627m from the Equipment Reserve;**
- 2. £0.124m from the Development Reserve; and**
- 3. £0.097m from the Property Maintenance Reserve.**

iii) the additional transfers to reserves approved by the Policy and Resources Committee as below be noted;

- 1. £0.285m to the Pay Award Reserve;**
- 2. £0.075m to the Pension Reserve (ear-marked for 2019/20).**

iv) the transfer of £0.159m to the Budget Reduction Reserve (ear-marked for Service priorities) be approved;

v) the Treasurer will certify the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts, in accordance with the regulatory time-scale, on 31 May 2019 be noted;

vi) the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP be noted; and

vii) the Prudential Code Indicators for 2018/19 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters required further action.

226

On-Call Retaining Fee

Members were informed of a recommendation by the Senior Management

Board (SMB) to increase the on-call retaining fee.

During a recent survey on-call staff felt undervalued for the commitment they provided to the Service and Members agreed unanimously to increase the on-call retaining fee.

RESOLVED that the annual retaining fee for on-call firefighters be increased, over and above the nationally agreed terms and conditions of service, as follows:

- **Bands A to D attract an additional 20% increase**
- **Bands E to F attract an additional 5% increase**

With the enhancement being reviewed in the event of any future significant increase in nationally agreed rates.

227 Service Values

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report to seek the Fire Authority's endorsement of the Service's renewed organisational values, which were:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Honesty
- Openness
- Respect

These had been reviewed and developed in full consultation with all staff groups via workshops and an online survey.

[Councillor Hart left the meeting at 11.38am and returned at 11.42am]

Following discussion regarding diversity, Members voted and the decision to implement the Service's renewed organisation values was agreed.

The Chief Fire Officer also proposed a meeting with the Members who had concerns to discuss the views over diversity.

RESOLVED that the Fire Authority endorse the Service's renewed set of organisation values.

228 Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20

The Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20 was presented by the Chief Fire Officer for adoption and approval for publication.

[Councillor T Baker-Price left the meeting at 12.00pm]

Members were informed that the report this year also summarises the findings of the independent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, which looked at how effective and efficient the Service is and how it supports its people.

Members were also asked to note that, at the time of writing the Report, updated financial information was not available and would be completed by the Director of Finance & Assets before publication on the Service website, subject to agreement from the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman.

RESOLVED that the Authority adopts the draft Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20 and approves it for publication, subject to any final minor changes as agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman.

229 Strategic Fire Alliance - Projects Update

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the progress in preparing priority projects (Fire Control, IRMP/CRMP and ICT) developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services.

Members were assured that work programmes had been drawn up and were being delivered for the three priority projects identified by the Strategic Alliance Board and good progress was being made. Members would receive further updates as the projects develop.

RESOLVED that Members note progress to date.

230 HMICFRS Improvement Plan - Update

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress in implementing the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

Members were pleased that the Service was improving how it manages performance and develops leaders and noted that further progress updates would be reported each quarter.

RESOLVED that the Authority note progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

231 2018-19 Performance Report: Quarters 1-4

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the Service's annual

performance for 2018/19.

Members were assured that the number of false alarm incidents were good intent rather than malicious and that the majority of staff sickness was due to long term sickness.

There was concern from Members regarding the response times but were reassured that officers were working with the crews to overcome these issues, particularly in regard to booking the appliance in at incidents.

There was discussion regarding the Day Crew Plus system and the Chief Fire Officer explained to Members that the consultation results were being finalised and the recommendations would be put forward to the Fire Authority at a future meeting. He explained that a local agreement was not available at the present time and although staff and the Service wanted to continue with the system, it was not possible due to the threat of legal action.

There was also concern regarding the mobilising of the boat at Hereford due to 2 appliances needed each time. The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that the new boats now only required 1 appliance to mobilise the boat.

Finally, Members requested that a breakdown of road traffic incidents into Counties and also data when appliances attend incidents over the border be included in future reports.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarters 1-4, 2018-19:

i) A total of 7,501 incidents were attended in Q1-Q4, an increase of 8.22% (570 incidents) over the same Quarters of 2017-18, and 11.13% (751 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years. The overall five year trend shows a gradual increase in the total number of incidents.

ii) The majority of the increase in Q1-Q4 is accounted for by a rise in the numbers of Fire and Special Service incidents, while the number of False Alarm incidents was also up but at a lower rate:

a. Fires: an increase of 14.96% was mainly accounted for by a rise in the number of Secondary Fires (28.74%).

b. Special Services: an increase of 9.63% (168 incidents) was mainly accounted for by increases in the number of Other Special Services (111), Assisting other agencies (56) and Lift

release (7) incidents.

c. **False Alarms:** an increase of 3.59% (118 incidents), the most common automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, nursing homes and hospitals.

iii) **Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1-Q4 2018-19** was 8.51 days lost per head and was above the 5-year average of 6.71.

iv) **The Service attended 54.41% (358 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarters 1-4**, compared with 58.73% in the same period in 2017-18. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all Primary Building Fires was 10 minutes and 23 seconds.

v) **The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 84.75%**; however, this has decreased by 4.86% when compared to the same period in 2017-18.

232 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 24 April 2019.

A Member requested further information in relation to the complaints received in the report on Annual Compliments, Complaints, Concerns and Requests for Information 2018/19. This information would be provided after the meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 24 April 2019 be received and noted.

233 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 May 2019.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 May 2019 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 12:41

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Membership of Committees 2019-20

<u>Policy and Resources Committee (13)</u>	<u>Conservatives Group (7)</u>	<u>Labour Group (2)</u>	<u>Independent Group (1)</u>	<u>2017 Group (2)</u>	<u>Non-Aligned (0)</u>
	Mr K Taylor (Chair) Mr R Adams (Vice Chair) Mr T Baker-Price Mr B Clayton Mr R Phillips Mrs J Potter Mr P Tuthill	Mr R Udall Mr A Fry	Dr C Hotham Mr J Kenyon	Mrs F Oborski MBE Prof. J Raine	
<u>Audit & Standards Committee (12)</u> <i>Cannot include: Chair/Vice-chair of Authority; Outgoing Chair of Authority; Chair of Policy & Resources; or Group Leaders</i>	<u>Conservatives (7)</u> Mr M Hart (Chair) Mr A Amos (Vice-Chair) Mrs E Eyre BEM Mr A Hardman Mr I Hardiman Mr R Morris Dr K Pollock	<u>Labour (1)</u> Ms P Agar	<u>Independents (2)</u> Mr S Bowen Mrs K Hey	<u>2017 (1)</u> Mr L Stark	<u>Non-Aligned TBC (1)</u> To be appointed
<u>Appointments Committee (7)</u> <i>Should normally include: Chair of Authority Chair of P & R Chair of A & S</i>	<u>Conservative (4)</u> Mr R Phillips (Chair) Mr P Tuthill (Vice-Chair) Mr M Hart Mr K Taylor	<u>Labour (1)</u> Mr R Udall	<u>Independent (1)</u> Dr C Hotham	<u>2017 (1)</u> Mrs F Oborski MBE	

Member / Officer Working Group Representatives

Health & Safety Committee:

Mr B Clayton

Chairman of the Young Firefighters' Association Executive Committee

Mr T Baker-Price

Report of the Treasurer

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Interim Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide an early update on the Medium Term Financial Plan and the financial context in which any decisions on Day Crewing Plus should be considered.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Authority:

- i) Note the updated MTFP provision; and*
- ii) Note that the 2020/21 data is still unconfirmed and that there is no further information on what will happen from 2021/22 onwards*

Background

2. In February 2019 the Authority agreed a revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which was subsequently updated in June 2019, to take account of the 2018/19 Out-turn and receipt of actual employer contribution rates for the FFPS.
3. This revised MTFP identified a structural budget gap as set out below: *(a structural budget gap is the difference between annual expenditure need and annual income – i.e. excluding the use of reserves)*. After the approved use of the Budget Reduction Reserve and £0.3m of general balances the residual gap was somewhat lower in the earlier part of the period.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Structural Gap	0.754	2.435	1.775	1.429	1.182
Residual Gap	0.000	(0.000)	0.639	1.429	1.182

4. This required the Authority to find savings of £3.25m over the period and to be spending £1.2m (3.2%) less by 2023/24.
5. The funding side of the budget is based on assumptions about key data:
 - (a) Council Tax-bases – from Billing Authorities;
 - (b) Band D Council Tax levels – approved MTFP;
 - (c) Council Tax increase referendum threshold – from government;
 - (d) Collection Fund surpluses - from Billing Authorities;
 - (e) Estimated Retained Business Rates yield - from Billing Authorities and
 - (f) Grant

6. In respect of the Council tax bases and business rate yield, revised information would not be expected until the early part of 2020, but there is some information on grant and government funding.

Government Funding (Grant)

7. Members will recall that 2019/20 was the last year of a 4-year Settlement and that the government was consulting on the funding for 2020/21 onwards, in relation to a number of issues:
 - (a) A potential Comprehensive Spending Review to consider:
 - (i) overall public sector funding levels;
 - (ii) the relative needs within local government e.g. Fire against Police/Social Care etc.;
 - (iii) the distribution of the fire share between individual authorities on 75% Rates Retention from 2020/21;
 - (iv) Business Rate reset;
 - (v) Funding of increased FFPS contributions and that impact of these was unknown and therefore subject to a best estimate for MTFP purposes.
8. In September the Chancellor made a Statement which effectively deferred all these potential changes until at least 2021/22 and instead provided what is in effect a one-year roll-over.
9. The provisional allocations to individual authorities will not be known before the end of the year but is possible to use the national level data to give an indicative position. It should be noted that there may be some data updates which will inevitably have an impact on the actual figures.
10. Broadly the position appears to be:
 - (a) Core funding – real terms flat – i.e. last year plus inflation
 - (b) Pensions Grant – cash flat – i.e. last year's cash
 - (c) Referendum limit to be 2% (as MTFP assumption)
11. There is no information on what is intended beyond 2020/21; in particular the long term funding of the pension costs remains unresolved and as a result the current assumptions have been rolled forward by one year.
12. The resultant budget gaps are somewhat improved, but the overall position is still of concern:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Structural Gap	0.754	0.102	1.789	1.445	1.198
Residual Gap	0.000	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)	0.963

Conclusion

13. Whilst the short-term position appears to have improved (with less savings to find over the MTFP period) the Authority will still need to be spending £1.2m less from 2023/24 as was previously expected.
14. In addition there is still no scope for additional expenditure commitments within the MTFP period.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Yes – whole report - indicative
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Yes – Resourcing for the Future
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	No
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	No
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	No

Supporting Information

none

Background Papers

Fire Authority, 11 February 2019: Budget and Precept 2019/20 and MTFP
Fire Authority, 12 June 2019: Provisional Financial Out-turn 2018/19

Contact Officer

Martin Reohorn, Treasurer
(01905 368205)

Email: mreohorn@hwfire.org.uk

Report of the Head of Corporate Services

Strategic Fire Alliance – Alliance Agreement and projects update

Purpose of report

1. To approve the adoption of a formal Fire Alliance Agreement and to update Members on progress in preparing priority projects developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire and Rescue Services.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i. Officers be authorised to enter into a formal agreement with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority to give effect to the Fire Alliance, on terms approved by the Fire Alliance Strategic Board, and*
- ii. note progress on projects to date.*

Introduction/Background

2. The Policy and Resources Committee on 12th September 2018 gave approval for this Authority to enter into a strategic alliance with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority.
3. At the Fire Authority meeting on 19th December 2018, Members were informed that the Strategic Alliance Board had agreed terms of governance and a joint programme plan. The Board comprises the Chairs/Vice Chairs of both Fire Authorities and both Chief Fire Officers.
4. A draft Agreement prepared by the Head of Legal Services to formalise the Alliance's governance and operating arrangements was agreed by the Fire Alliance Strategic Board on 9th September 2019..
5. The Fire Authority meeting on 19th December 2018 was also informed that three priority projects had been identified, and approval was given for officers to prepare these jointly with officers from Shropshire & Wrekin FRS.
6. The priority projects agreed were as follows:
 - a. Fire Control: scoping the future requirements for ensuring a resilient Command & Control function,
 - b. IRMP/CRMP: reviewing options for aligning integrated risk management planning processes, and

- c. ICT: developing organisational arrangements for the provision of Information & Communications Technology functions.
7. An update report was presented to the Authority on 12th June 2019, and highlighted good progress in developing the projects.
8. This report provides a further progress update on the three projects, and also includes an update on the development of a fourth project looking at options to align procurement strategies.

Fire Alliance Agreement

9. At its meeting on 4th March 2019, the Fire Alliance Strategic Board asked officers to prepare an Agreement to formalise the Alliance and its operating arrangements.
10. A draft Agreement has now been drawn up under the provisions of the Policing and Crime Act 2017. It represents an agreement between the two Fire and Rescue Authorities to *“work in collaboration with each other with the intent and purpose of sustaining and improving the provision of first class, resilient prevention, protection and emergency response services across their respective areas...”*
11. It includes the shared intent to deliver the Fire Alliance Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and any collaboration projects, and outlines the current governance arrangements. This will include:
 - *“sharing resources and expertise to provide long-term capacity and resilience to meet:*
 - (a) *increasing budgetary pressures*
 - (b) *changing demands and development of both established and new risks in the community*
 - *undertaking a systematic review of all areas of activity across both Services with a view to identifying and thereafter implementing opportunities for improved Service outcomes, operational efficiencies and financial economies*
 - *wherever practicable, implementing a common approach to:*
 - (a) *the selection and procurement of equipment;*
 - (b) *operational policies and procedures; and*
 - (c) *provision of support services”*
12. Further legal and financial provisions set out the terms of the agreement in relation to liability & indemnities, confidentiality, data protection, TUPE requirements where appropriate, termination arrangements and dispute resolution.
13. The draft Agreement was approved by the Fire Alliance Strategic Board at their meeting on 9th September 2019.

Update on project progress

14. A summary of progress for each project to date is set out below.

Fire Control

15. The previous update reported on one-to-one meetings with key managers to review risks, issues, constraints, dependencies and options. These meetings have continued with further stakeholders to help firm up delivery outcomes. Officers have also continued to research lessons learnt from other similar projects in the Fire Sector, including meetings with West Midlands, Staffordshire and Nottinghamshire FRSs.
16. An options appraisal workshop with representatives of both Services was held on 4th September 2019 and key baseline data (such as existing staff costs, ICT costs, retirement profiles and call data) has been collated. Following a review of the outcomes of the workshop, a final report will be drafted.

IRMP/CRMP

17. The previous update reported on a series of review workshops with managers of both Services to examine approaches to the Prevention, Protection and Response functions. A further six joint workshops have now been held to examine how risk is identified utilising a 'PESTLE' analysis looking at the potential impact of **P**olitical, **E**conomic, **S**ocial, **T**echnological, **L**egal and **E**nvironmental concerns over the duration of the new CRMP/IRMPs. Future workshops will consider performance indicators and evaluation criteria. The outcomes of the workshops will inform the overall strategies for the three key functions.
18. In terms of engaging consultants to model and analyse data, the tendering exercise is now due to take place in October/November 2019 following further consideration of the data modelling requirements.
19. Finally, a common template for the CRMP/IRMP document has been drafted and agreed by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Shropshire & Wrekin FRS, who is the Senior Responsible Officer for this project.

ICT

20. The FireAuthority, was previously informed that, following the independent review of current ICT provision across both Services, a recruitment process would take place to appoint a Strategic ICT Change Manager on a 3-year fixed term contract.
21. That process has now taken place and an appointment has been made, subject to references and the vetting procedure. Work is now underway to prepare a further report to the next Fire Alliance Strategic Board which will include recommendations for future progress.

Procurement

22. At their meeting on 17th December 2018, the Fire Alliance Programme Delivery Board agreed to incorporate a fourth project into the original programme of works. This project involves reviewing procurement strategies within both Service to examine the potential for alignment.
23. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Hereford & Worcester FRS has been appointed as the Senior Responsible Officer for this project, supported by the Head of Operations Support at Hereford & Worcester FRS as Project Manager.
24. While both Services have aligned contracts and jointly procured items and services in a number of areas, this process has not been formalised. In other areas, individual, national and regional procurement processes have been more appropriate.
25. Officers from both Services have discussed the current arrangements and have highlighted a number of important instances where joint procurement may be a better option; for example, where there are immediate and medium term opportunities by using an agreed joint process. These opportunities are being explored further and the project aims to present a draft joint procurement strategy to the next Fire Alliance Strategic Board on 19th November 2019.

Conclusion/Summary

26. This report asks Members to authorise officers to enter into the formal Fire Alliance Agreement between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authorities. The report also provides an overview of each work programme and outlines the next steps over the coming months. Each project is progressing well and updates are reported regularly to the Strategic Board and Programme Delivery Board.
27. Members are recommended to adopt the Fire Alliance Agreement and to note the overall progress on projects. Further updates will be brought to future Fire Authority meetings.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	There may be financial, legal and human resource implications arising from the implementation of the priority projects. These will be considered within each project as they develop.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The projects are designed to address the Government's Fire Reform agenda as embedded in the Fire and Rescue National Framework . Fire Alliance Strategic Plan

Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Risk Assessments will be undertaken as part of any project management processes recommended.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Not for this progress report. Each project considers consultation requirements.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Each project will complete full equalities impact assessments in due course.

Supporting Information

None

Background papers

None

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Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Employee Relations Update

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the recent progress that has been made in respect to employee relations issues currently faced by the Service.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (1) following the recent local agreement (in respect to a 12-Hour Day Duty System), between the Service, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the Fire Officers Association (FOA) - the previous Fire Authority mandate to the Chief Fire Officer to progress with any dismissal / re-engagement process aimed at implementing a suitable day duty system into the contracts of firefighters and uniformed supervisory managers, be withdrawn;***
- (2) the previous 10-Hour Day Duty System that is within some existing employment contracts be withdrawn and the 12-Hour Day Duty System be incorporated into all relevant operational contracts of employment; and***
- (3) the Fire Authority extends its gratitude to both FOA and the FBU for their constructive engagement with the Service on this issue over the last few months, which has helped to facilitate viable options being presented to the Fire Authority today.***

Introduction and Background

2. Following a protracted period (many months) of extensive consultation and negotiation, the Service had not been able to reach agreement on a number of issues with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), where those changes have affected their members. These negotiations were aimed at moving forward with a series of necessary changes designed to deal with a range of efficiency and effectiveness requirements arising from:
 - the Service's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) saving needs
 - the 2014-2020 CRMP
 - the desire of the Fire Authority to make on-going improvements

- the requirement to increase resilience and efficiency
3. As a consequence, although the Service continued to remain open to reaching agreement in these matters - where it was appropriate, lawful and practical to do so - it was also given the mandate from the Fire Authority to progress with a number of these changes without FBU agreement, but only after it had become apparent that the current round of consultation and negotiation had been fully exhausted.
 4. In response, on 12th July 2019, the FBU instigated a trade dispute with the Service, primarily focussed on the implementation of the 10-Hour Day Duty system, but also including changes to the Service structure around supervisory management on fire stations. It also became apparent that a significant underlying issue (linked to the 10-Hour Day Duty system) was the potential use of any dismissal / re-engagement process used to affect such change.
 5. As a consequence, both sides have now taken the opportunity to re-assess their respective positions on a number of outstanding issues, which has resulted in renewed local engagement between the parties and a commitment to explore alternative options to resolve the matters highlighted in the trade dispute correspondence, within the confines of the financial, organisational and legal restrictions facing the Service.
 6. Most notably, a significant step forward was made earlier this month, with the acceptance by the local FBU Brigade Committee of a negotiated 12-Hour Day Duty System, which has since been considered by the FBU national duty system committee. The system has also been accepted by the Fire Officers Association (FOA) locally. This means that HWFRS now as an agreed alternative to the 10-Hour Day Duty System which can now be implemented as the suitable day duty system highlighted in previous Fire Authority papers linked to on-going issues around both the Day Crewing (DC) and Day Crewing Plus (DCP) duty systems.
 7. Furthermore, implementing the 12-Hour Day Duty System means that the implementation of the 10-Hour Day Duty can now be halted, which itself also removes the major staff concern around any dismissal / re-engagement process being taken forward.
 8. Finally, a joint commitment has been made by the Service and the FBU to continue to constructively explore options around resolving the other issues cited in their trade dispute correspondence, although it is recognised by all parties that this may take some time and require compromises, as the on-going financial and wider operating environment facing the Service needs to be fully considered and taken into account.

Conclusion/Summary

9. In summary, following many months of a challenging employee relations environment between the Service and the FBU, a renewed commitment from both parties to seek reasonable resolutions to a number of issues has resulted in a breakthrough in respect to an agreed day duty system that is suitable for the Service needs.
10. This 12-Hour Day Duty System allows a number of areas of contention (i.e. Day Crewing Plus and Day Crewing, as well as dismissal/re-engagement) to be progressed positively towards resolution.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The changes suggested within this report will require the implementation of a new 12 hour day duty system and also amendments to employment contracts.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The changes brought about by this paper will align the Service fully to the CRMP 2014 – 2020
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation regarding the 12 Hour Day Duty policy needed to support the change has been negotiated with Representative bodies and been carried in accordance with Service procedures.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	The CRMP 2014-2020 was approved with a full EIA and therefore remains in place to support the proposed change.

Supporting Information

N/A

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Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Day Crewing Plus Consultation and Options

Purpose of report

1. To agree and mandate the implementation of appropriate duty system(s) for the three fire appliances currently operating the Day Crewing Plus (DCP) system at Hereford, Worcester and Bromsgrove Fire Stations, in light of the recent legal challenge brought against South Yorkshire Fire Authority (linked to the Working Time Regulations (WTR)) by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the limitations of the Service's medium and longer-term financial position.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (1) ***Based on the assessment of the financial, legal and organisational risks involved, the continued use of the DCP duty system within the Service be ruled out;***
- (2) ***Bromsgrove Fire Station moves from DCP to a 2-2-4 shift crewing pattern to maintain an immediate 24/7 response capability, as soon as practicable on a date to be determined by the Chief Fire Officer;***
- (3) ***The second appliances at Worcester and Hereford Fire Stations (currently DCP) in future be crewed:***
 - (i) ***utilising the agreed 12-Hour Day Duty system during the daytime and***
 - (ii) ***on the Retained Duty System at night,***

these changes to be implemented as soon as practicable on such date(s) as may be determined by the Chief Fire Officer.

Introduction and Background

2. At the Fire Authority meeting in December 2018, it was reported that a High Court challenge brought by the FBU against South Yorkshire Fire Authority had determined that South Yorkshire's 'close proximity crewing' arrangements, which were broadly similar to our DCP, were in breach of the Working Time Regulations 2015 (WTR) including insofar as night-time working was concerned. The current DCP arrangements in HWFRS were therefore likely to be unlawful unless the Service secured a collective agreement with the unions

to modify the impact of the WTR. Without such an agreement, the Authority would potentially be criminally liable and this was therefore not a sustainable position for the Authority to maintain. Consequently it was resolved (minute 198) among other things, that:

‘a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Fire Authority, if no local agreement has been reached by that time, with a view to:

- (i) Implementing a suitable duty system for the second full-time fire appliances at Hereford and Worcester stations. The duty system would need to be economically viable in respect to the Service’s Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), as well as meeting the existing CRMP analysis from 2014 (which itself was subject to full public and staff consultation at the time); and*
 - (ii) undertaking an immediate CRMP analysis in respect to Bromsgrove Station to determine a duty system that is the most suitable and economically viable to replace the current DCP system, whilst also taking into account the Service’s MTFP’*
3. At the subsequent Fire Authority meeting on 11 February 2019, it was resolved (minute 209) that:

‘Because of the inability to reach a local agreement with the FBU in respect to the existing DCP duty system, standard crewing arrangements on the full-time appliance at Bromsgrove and the second full-time fire appliances at both Hereford and Worcester stations be changed at the earliest opportunity’.

‘Proportionate public and staff consultation be undertaken in respect to future emergency cover arrangements at Hereford, Worcester and Bromsgrove, including the option to move the existing DCP appliances to a Day-Duty type system in line with the Fire Authority’s original 2014-2020 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) recommendation and/or the latest CRMP analysis.’

Previous Rationale for Using DCP

4. DCP was originally introduced into the Service back in 2013 at Bromsgrove Fire Station as a more cost-effective and affordable way of maintaining 24/7 immediate response resources for lower activity fire appliances. This was subsequently extended to the two second wholetime appliances at Worcester and Hereford Fire Stations in response to the consultation feedback on the (then) draft 2014-2020 CRMP. Initially, the draft CRMP had actually recommended the removal of these two appliances based at Worcester and Hereford Stations (along with a further eight On-Call fire appliances from across the Service).

5. This original recommendation was based primarily on the low operational activity levels of these fire appliances and their respective operational risk exposure. However, following public and staff consultation, when published, the final CRMP recommended instead for an enhanced position, using DCP for the two highlighted Wholetime fire appliances (in addition to Bromsgrove) and maintaining all but two of the earmarked On-Call fire appliances. In order to sustainably fund this position going forward, however, the Service also needed to reduce crewing on all other Wholetime fire appliances across the Service from five to four.
6. The changes to crewing levels were delayed for a further two years by the use of £800k of unallocated reserves and a combination of 'excess' wholetime firefighter establishment levels (as the retirement profile, secondments and voluntary redundancies allowed for their phased and managed reduction to the new establishment level) - as well as paying overtime to firefighters to cover remaining crewing shortfalls, as and when required.
7. To meet its on-going efficiency requirements, since 2017, all wholetime fire appliances have successfully moved to riding with crews of four and DCP was continued to be effectively maintained on the three fire appliances at Bromsgrove, Worcester and Hereford. Despite this, in December 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) criticised the previous use of reserves to temporarily maintain 'crews of five' between 2014-2016, which it saw as unsustainable and, in turn, contributed to the Service being judged as 'requiring improvement' in respect to the Efficiency pillar of the inspection.

Collective Agreement for DCP with FOA

8. As part of the national issues that were generated in light of the South Yorkshire legal challenge, the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) received correspondence from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), who are the enforcing authority for the purposes of the WTR, on 6 June 2019 requesting an update on the Service's DCP arrangements, making it clear that:

"HSE now expects non-compliant Services to achieve compliance with Regulation 6 of the Working Time Regulations and if Fire and Rescue Services do not have such arrangements in place then the HSE may take enforcement action"

9. The FBU has made it clear they will not enter into a collective agreement in respect of DCP. Consequently, in an effort to explore all options that might have enabled the Authority to retain DCP, which is well liked by the staff involved and is a cost-effective means of providing immediate 24/7 fire cover, Officers entered into formal negotiation with the Fire Officers' Association (FOA) to seek to achieve a local collective agreement for DCP¹.

¹ FOA (along with the FBU) is recognised locally by the Fire Authority to provide individual and collective representation to their members from Firefighter to Area Commander. At the National Joint Council (NJC), FOA represent FRS uniformed Middle Manager roles through membership of the Middle Manager's Negotiating Body.

10. On 5 July 2019, the Service signed a local collective agreement with FOA and responded to the HSE formally on 12 July 2019 with copies of the following documents:
 - Collective agreement
 - DCP revised Service Policy
 - DCP risk assessment
 - Human Resources - Health monitoring report
 - Health and Safety monitoring report
11. The HSE has since indicated that it does not intend to make specific assessments of the arrangements for individual Fire and Rescue Services who have confirmed that they have either discontinued DCP or have reached a collective agreement. Officers therefore do not anticipate that the HSE will look to progress with any proceedings against HWFRS but the HSE has stopped short of expressing a view on the adequacy of the collective agreement with FOA.
12. The Authority has received correspondence from the FBU, including copy correspondence between the FBU and the HSE, making it clear that the FBU does not accept the legitimacy of the collective agreement with FOA and strongly dispute that an agreement reached only with FOA is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the WTR. Furthermore, it is clear from the correspondence that the FBU would be likely to bring a legal challenge against any Authority that relied upon an agreement with FOA as a basis for continuing with DCP.
13. Therefore, the opportunity to maintain DCP at the three locations within HWFRS' area would carry a significant risk of legal challenge. The Head of Legal Services advises that there is very real doubt that a collective agreement signed only with FOA would be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the WTR and the Authority therefore cannot be recommended to continue with DCP.

Alternatives to DCP – Considerations

Crewing Systems

14. Appendix 1 to this report reproduces a comparison of the possible alternative duty systems that could be considered for the three existing DCP appliances and which is an updated version of the one originally presented at the meeting on 11th February (latest financial estimates and 12-Hour Day Duty agreement).

Call Volumes

15. Similarly, Appendix 2 to this report reproduces the information around call volumes that was presented to the Authority in February. This demonstrates that during the periods currently covered by the existing 12-hour stand-down period on DCP (i.e. 8pm-8am – where DCP appliances remain immediately available but the crews stand-down from all other duties) operational activity is very low. These activity levels are very similar to the current operational activity levels at Evesham, Droitwich and Malvern stations during the evening and

night-time periods, all of which are successfully covered by utilising the on-call duty system at night.

Finance

16. Members will be aware of the significant financial challenges facing the Authority, as shown in the medium term financial plan. The Treasurer therefore advises that:
- it is important that any replacement for the current DCP arrangements remain within the existing overall cost envelope;
 - the MTFP is already reliant upon the use of reserves in order to bridge the structural budget deficit. Even with the impact of the one year settlement for 2020/21, the uncertainty around funding means that reserves are fully used before a balanced budget is achieved, leaving a gap of £1.3m by 2023/24. Any attempt to use reserves to increase resources for a replacement of DCP, for example, by moving all three current DCP appliances to a wholetime shift system would be unaffordable and would result in a the budget gap being £1.0m bigger and occurring a year sooner in 2022/23. This would need to be funded by further significant reductions in expenditure elsewhere in the organisation, on top of the savings already needed.
17. The comparative costs of the present DCP arrangements and the two options consulted upon (see below) are as follows:

Current DCP arrangements	£2.040m
Option 1 – day duties on all three appliances	£1.510m
Option 2 - wholetime shift (2-2-4) at Bromsgrove / day duties on second appliances at Worcester & Hereford	£2.010m

Consultation Process

18. Between May - June 2019, the Service entered a six-week period of proportionate public consultation on the alternatives to DCP. A consultation document outlining the issues and proposals under consideration was produced by HWFRS (see [Appendix 3](#)).
19. The proposals were designed to ensure that any changes in emergency cover should not only align to the most recent CRMP analysis (or at the very least the 2014 - 2020 CRMP) but also be financially sustainable going forward. Taking these factors into account, therefore, the only viable option for the two fire appliances at Worcester and Hereford (based on their very low operational night-time activity levels of only two incidents per week each, on average) was to move them to a suitable day duty system. In contrast, the CRMP analysis and the remaining level of revenue funding allowed for a two options to be put forward regarding Bromsgrove Station (i.e. day duty or 2-2-4 shift, based on the 5-7 night-time incidents per week the station responds to, which is comparable

to the operational activity levels at the existing day crewing stations of Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham).

20. Accordingly, the two options put forward for consultation were as follows:

Option 1 – all three DCP fire appliances changed to a day duty system (with any financial savings invested in prevention and protection).

Overall for the Worcester and Hereford Stations, this meant that the current three-appliance combination at the station changed to:

- **Daytime:** two fire engines immediately available, one being crewed by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and the other day-staffed for 12 hrs - plus one On-call fire engine; and
- **Night-time:** one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and two fire engines On-call.

For Bromsgrove, as well, the current two-appliance combination on that station changed to:

- **Daytime:** one fire engine immediately available (Day Duty) and one fire engine On-call; and
- **Night-time:** two fire engines On-call.

Option 2 – Worcester & Hereford Day Duty and Bromsgrove to Shift (with no financial savings)

For this option, the changes at Worcester and Hereford were exactly the same as for 'Option 1'. However, for Bromsgrove the first fire appliance is able to be kept as being immediate availability, but this is achieved by using the cost reductions at Worcester and Hereford to fund to the more expensive 2-2-4 Shift system at Bromsgrove. In other words, for Bromsgrove:

- **24 hours per day:** one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and one fire engine On-call.

21. With that foundation information and proposals, Opinion Research Services (ORS) and HWFRS designed a questionnaire inviting respondents to express a preference for one of the two options, or to specify an alternative proposal. The questionnaire was available for anyone - either via the dedicated consultation page on HWFRS's website or through requested paper versions. In total, 512 responses were received (respondent profiles can be found in Appendix 2).
22. In total, just over two thirds (68%) of questionnaire respondents preferred 'Option 2', whilst only 6% preferred 'Option 1', and the remaining 26% felt an alternative should be sought.

23. In addition, during the formal consultation process, three organisations and individuals also provided written submissions. ORS has considered all the written submissions carefully and summarised them in the full report (Appendix 4). The contributors were:
- Fire Brigades Union (FBU)
 - Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats
 - A local resident
 - Online petition from retired Watch Commanders
24. Finally, ORS was commissioned to host, analyse and report the responses not only to the online consultation questionnaire but also a number of focus groups with residents of the three affected areas (one group was held in each, Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester).
25. The focus groups were designed to inform and engage the participants both with the issues and with HWFRS - by encouraging them to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing important issues in detail.
26. The focus groups in Hereford and Bromsgrove both favoured Option 2 whereas the Worcester focus group unanimously favoured Option 1, as follows:

Option 1	Option 2	Don't Know
Hereford = 3	Hereford = 6	Hereford = 1
Bromsgrove = 0	Bromsgrove = all (9)	Bromsgrove = 0
Worcester = all (10)	Worcester = 0	Worcester = 0

27. As part of the background briefing, the focus groups were provided with a good understanding of the Service's financial position, as well as the fact it had been unable to reach a collective agreement with the FBU in relation to the continuation of DCP. As a consequence, they were able to fully consider the two different options put forward within the context of the Service's limited operating environment.

Suitable day duties system

28. Members will see elsewhere on this agenda that agreement has been reached with the FBU and FOA on the introduction of a new 12-Hour Day Duty system. This is compliant with the WTR and it is envisaged that this would in due course be utilised for all Day Duty fire appliances across the Service, including the two second appliances at Worcester and Hereford.

Conclusion/Summary

29. In summary, Officers were tasked by the Fire Authority to carry out proportionate public consultation regarding the use of DCP and to find an alternative way of crewing its assets to meet the risk profile identified by recent and extant CRMP analysis. In addition, such duty systems needed to employ staff in a lawful manner and meet the Working Time Regulations (either in total or by lawful modification, via collective agreement).
30. The overwhelming majority of respondents to the public questionnaire (68%) were in favour of 'Option Two' of the consultation. If instigated, this would result in the 2nd fire appliances at Hereford and Worcester Stations becoming day duties appliances and on-call at night, with the 1st appliance at Bromsgrove maintaining its current immediate availability status, but through the more expensive transition to a 24hr shift station.
31. The opportunity to maintain DCP in its current form has been fully explored with the HSE but, due to the position adopted by the FBU nationally, now presents a significant risk of legal challenge and cannot be recommended.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The changes suggested within this report will require the implementation of a new 12 hour day duty system and also amendments to employment contracts.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The changes brought about by this paper will align the Service fully to the CRMP 2014 – 2020
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation regarding the 12 Hour Day Duty policy needed to support the change has been negotiated with Representative bodies and been carried in accordance with Service procedures.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	The CRMP 2014-2020 was approved with a full EIA and therefore remains in place to support the proposed change.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Duty Systems matrix

Appendix 2 – Comparative operational activity levels

Appendix 3 – Background document for DCP consultation

Appendix 4 – Opinion Research Report

FRA paper – 11th February 2019

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Duty Systems Matrix:

Duty System	Advantages	Disadvantages / Barriers
Shift (2-2-4 watch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local agreement in place 24/7 immediate availability (same as DCP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant additional cost – circa +£300k extra per year, per appliance (circa up to £1m extra overall) Need to employ, train & equip circa 30 extra full-time Firefighters Enhanced level of emergency cover, compared to latest CRMP analysis of what is most effective and efficient Enhanced level of emergency cover compared to current DC stations with similar activity levels
Day Crewing Plus (DCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change to current provision or costs 24/7 immediate availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No local agreement Unlawful due to inability to get local agreement with FBU Voluntary (subject to WTR 48-hour opt-out) Threat of legal challenge
Day Crewing (DC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-hour immediate availability in line with CRMP analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 second increase (average) in response time (if implemented at Worcs, Hereford and Bromsgrove in place of DCP) Inefficient use of full-time resources (2 hours per day shift on-call and not immediately available) Rostered on-call night cover no longer enforceable – same level of resilience as Retained Duty System
7-Day Flexible Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Agreement in place Maximises 42-hour duty Additional shifts (resilience) compared to DC system Can cover both 10 and 12-Hour options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires individual flexibility to align to 10-hour or 12-Hour duty pattern
12-hour Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable & Sustainable In line with CRMP analysis Smaller increase in average response times (four seconds) Locally agreed systems already in neighbouring Services More incidents covered in day by immediately available appliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not as efficient as 10-Hour system

10-Hour Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable & Sustainable • In line with CRMP analysis • Already TAP outcome – Grey Book & WTR compliant • More efficient compared to 12-Hour system • Provides more resilience (31 extra shifts per person) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require some level of imposition if no local agreement in place • 10 second increase (average) in response time
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APPENDIX 2

Table 1: Average Number of Mobilisations to False Alarm Incidents per week (at night) - Bromsgrove versus Day Crewing Stations:

	Apr15/Mar16	Apr16/Mar17	Apr17/Mar18	Apr18/Dec18	Overall Average
Bromsgrove DCP appliance 6pm-8am	2.67	3.17	3.42	4.10	3.34
Bromsgrove DCP Appliance 8pm-8am	2.00	2.40	2.63	3.28	2.58
Malvern DC appliance 6pm-8am	2.29	2.08	2.06	2.41	2.21
Evesham DC appliance 6pm-8am	1.56	1.52	1.46	2.10	1.66
Droitwich DC appliance 6pm-8am	1.35	1.35	1.15	1.28	1.28

Table 2: Average Number of Mobilisations to Fire and other Emergency Incidents (excluding False Alarms) per week (at night) – Bromsgrove versus Day Crewing Stations:

	Apr15/Mar16	Apr16/Mar17	Apr17/Mar18	Apr18/Dec18	Overall Average
Bromsgrove DCP appliance 6pm-8am	3.63	3.65	3.33	4.31	3.73
Bromsgrove DCP Appliance 8pm-8am	2.65	2.60	2.48	3.10	2.71
Malvern DC appliance 6pm-8am	2.04	1.96	2.06	2.41	2.12
Evesham DC appliance 6pm-8am	2.06	1.63	2.00	3.08	2.19
Droitwich DC appliance 6pm-8am	2.25	2.19	2.40	3.18	2.50

Table 3: Average of Mobilisations to All Types of Incidents (including False Alarms) per week for DCP appliances at Hereford & Worcester Stations (at night) only:

	Apr15/Mar16	Apr16/Mar17	Apr17/Mar18	Apr18/Dec18	Overall Average
Hereford DCP appliance 6pm-8am	2.23	3.38	2.08	2.49	2.55
Hereford DCP Appliance 8pm-8am	1.40	2.44	1.33	1.62	1.70
Worcester DC appliance 6pm-8am	3.17	2.83	3.57	3.28	3.21
Worcester DC appliance 8pm-8am	2.08	1.75	2.54	1.69	2.02



Hereford & Worcester
Fire Authority

Consultation

Options to replace the Day Crewing Plus duty system



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction – Why do we need to change?



Roger Phillips
Chairman of the
Fire Authority



Hereford & Worcester
Fire Authority



Nathan Travis
Chief Fire Officer/
Chief Executive



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWRFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

We are seeking views on a number of options to replace one of our current station-based duty systems, known as Day Crewing Plus (DCP), because of a recent court ruling that has the potential to make it open to legal challenge.

DCP is an innovative duty system that has operated successfully in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service ('the Service') since 2014 and has been used to staff three full-time fire engines that have a lower frequency of response activity, particularly during the night. It is a more cost-effective way of providing a 24/7, immediately available fire engine than the more traditional full-time shift system, as it only requires about half the number of firefighters to provide the same level of response.

To make it work, however, the system requires staff to volunteer to stay in accommodation attached to the station on close standby at night, after working during the day, but this extra commitment is compensated for with a salary enhancement for those firefighters and other improvements in terms of more flexible working to support their work/life balance.

A DCP crewed fire engine costs about £600k a year to run, providing a 24/7 immediate response, compared to £1.1m per fire engine per year for one crewed by the full-time shift system.

Using DCP has allowed the Service to maintain 24/7 immediate response capability for the first fire engine based

at Bromsgrove station and the second fire engines based at Worcester and Hereford stations.

However, a recent High Court ruling, brought about by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), found a similar duty system operating elsewhere in the country to be unlawful – but this was specifically because of the absence of a local collective agreement with the relevant trade unions. In contrast, if such an agreement had been in place, it would have meant the system would have been lawful, as it would not have breached certain aspects of the Working Time Regulations.

To remedy this locally, the Service has made concerted efforts over a number of months to try and reach agreement with all of the relevant trade unions. Unfortunately, the FBU has made it clear that it is not willing to enter into such an agreement.

Therefore, in order to avoid a legal challenge, the Service has no option other than to cease operation of the duty system for the three DCP fire engines, and replace it with an alternative system(s) that is legally compliant, affordable and proportionate to manage the local community risks.

The alternative options are presented in this consultation document, which also explains the background to the current position.










































BACKGROUND





Background

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service ('the Service') provides prevention, protection and response services across the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The Service currently has 27 fire stations and 41 fire engines strategically located throughout the two counties. The fire stations are staffed by a mix of full-time (known as 'Wholetime') and part-time (known as 'On-Call') firefighters who are able to respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Service receives nearly 10,000 emergency calls each year requesting assistance at a wide variety of incidents, including property and countryside fires, road traffic collisions, collapsed structures, water rescues, hazardous materials and animal rescues. Of these, the Service needs to attend between 6,500 and 7,000 incidents a year.

The table below shows the current disposition of all frontline fire engines across the two counties:

Fire stations with three fire engines		Fire stations with two fire engines		Fire stations with one fire engine			
Hereford	  	Bromsgrove	 	Bewdley		Leintwardine	
Redditch	  	Bromyard	 	Broadway		Pebworth	
Worcester	  	Droitwich Spa	  *	Eardisley		Pershore	
		Evesham	  *	Ewyas Harold		Peterchurch	
		Kidderminster	 	Fownhope		Stourport	
		Leominster	 	Kingsland		Tenbury Wells	
		Malvern	  *	Kington		Upton	
		Ross-on-Wye	 	Ledbury		Whitchurch	

Key:  = Wholetime Shift  = Day Duty/Day Crewing  = Day Crew Plus  = On-Call

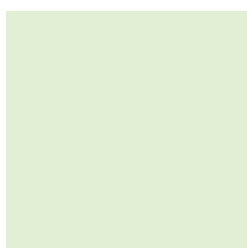
* Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern fire stations are 1 Day Crewed Fire engine and 1 On-Call Fire engine during the day and become 2 On-Call Fire engines at night.





Fire and emergency cover

Fire and rescue services regularly review everything they do to ensure their services remain appropriate to the needs of communities and are clearly focussed on reducing risk. The reviews include looking at the provision of fire and emergency cover. This refers to the provision of resources (fire engines, specialist vehicles and equipment and firefighting crews) so they are able to attend incidents that involve fire or other emergency situations promptly and safely.



The analysis of fire and emergency cover helps to determine where fire engines and specialist vehicles should be located for best effect within the available budget, the appropriate arrangements for tackling incidents on or over the border with neighbouring fire and rescue services, and how to make provision for managing resources in times of high demand, such as widespread flooding incidents.

The review includes looking at the speed of response, the types of resources sent to incidents and how fire engines and specialist vehicles are crewed. For example, in areas where most people live, such as the larger towns, the likelihood of incidents occurring tends to be higher, so we have immediately available crews providing 24/7 cover or we have crews working at the fire station during the day (Day Crewed), with On-Call crews responding at night. In more rural areas where risks are generally lower (and there are usually fewer incidents) most of our fire stations are mainly crewed solely by On-Call firefighters.

The Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020

In 2014, Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority ('the FRA') approved the Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020 ('the CRMP'). The CRMP sets out how the Service intends to make the counties safer with the funding and resources it expects to have available to it over the six-year period, as well as its plans to reduce the number of emergency incidents, and how it will work in communities to keep people safe.

The CRMP explains what the Service does to manage risk across the two counties, keep communities and firefighters safe, as well as ensuring effective and efficient services. It also follows national government guidance, which sets out what is expected of fire and rescue authorities in making their communities safer.

The CRMP included a Fire and Emergency Cover Review. The Review was carried out against a backdrop of financial pressures and funding uncertainties, with a potential need to find £2.7 million of savings, of which up to £1.7 million would be needed through the Review.

The focus of the Review was on activity and risk: where to place and how to crew fire engines in order to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of response services, keeping within the funds and resources available.

Before the CRMP was approved, Hereford and Worcester fire stations each had three fire engines, two of which were crewed on the full-time Shift system and one by On-Call staff. However, the CRMP analysis identified that due to the very low operational activity levels at night in the two

cities, the second fire engines at both fire stations should be changed to the Day Duty system so that they would be immediately available during the day and crewed by On-Call staff at night.

In fact, the latest night-time incident analysis (covering the last four years) shows that, on average, the second fire engines at both Worcester and Hereford stations are only being mobilised to incidents twice a week.

The picture is slightly different for Bromsgrove, however, where the night-time incident analysis over the same period shows the first fire engine being mobilised to incidents between 5-7 incidents per week – although this is on par with the activity levels at existing our Day Crewed stations at Droitwich, Malvern and Evesham, which range between 3-4 incidents per week over the same night-time periods.

However, in 2014, following further discussion with staff and trade unions, the FRA agreed to implement the DCP system for the second fire engines at both Hereford and Worcester, as well as at Bromsgrove fire station. While this kept two extra fire engines immediately available 24/7, it was considered an overprovision in terms of fire and emergency cover.

As highlighted above, this overprovision is borne out by analysis of fire engine workload in the years since 2014, which shows extremely low operational activity levels for these two fire engines during the night-time period. Effectively this reduces the argument to maintain immediate availability of the two fire engines, especially when compared to operational activity levels of the Service's existing Day Crewed fire stations.

Implications of the High Court ruling against South Yorkshire FRA

In 2018, the FBU brought a successful High Court case against South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority challenging the 'Close Proximity Crewing' (CPC) shift system, which had been in operation at four fire stations since 2012. The judge in the case ruled that CPC was unlawful in relation to the Working Time Regulations, as the system required firefighters to work longer hours without legally compliant daily break periods. However, the judge also acknowledged that the system could be made lawful through a local collective agreement with a recognised representative body (trade union).

DCP is a similar duty system – and, as with CPC, this system is voluntary and requires firefighters to opt out of normal working hours as specified in the Working Time Regulations. To make it successful, DCP also uses self-rostering and measures to manage any potential firefighter fatigue, both of which help to ensure crewing levels are maintained, but at the same time, enabling an appropriate work/life balance.



Funding issues

It is important to understand the financial context in which the change of duty system needs to be made.

DCP is an affordable way of providing 24/7 immediate cover on three lower activity full-time fire engines at Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester fire stations. It currently costs around £600,000 per fire engine per year. For the additional stand-by commitment required, firefighters receive



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an additional 25 per cent pensionable pay enhancement (which is included within the overall cost).

In comparison, the traditional Shift system (the only other system to provide immediately available cover 24/7) costs circa £1.1 million per fire engine per year to run, as it requires almost twice as many firefighters to operate than DCP.

If the three DCP crewed fire engines were changed to the Shift system, around £1.5 million would need to be taken from elsewhere in the Service.



Putting this sum into context, £1.5 million per year funds the Service's entire Prevention and Protection function and associated teams. Reducing or removing this function to pay for the change in duty system would seriously increase the risk of fires and other emergencies happening across the two counties. In addition, both the FRA and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) have indicated that they would want to see more of the Service's resources invested into the Prevention and Protection function.

In addition, the Service's support functions and teams (such as finance, payroll, pensions, fleet, property, ICT and administration) cost less than £1.5m per year to run and, despite that, provide essential services to maintain the effective delivery of frontline operational services. These services are already very lean, so any reduction would have a detrimental impact on the level of support it currently gives to frontline teams.

Another consideration could be to remove a number of other fire engines that are staffed solely by On-Call firefighters in order to pay for the changes to DCP staffed fire engines. However, these On-Call fire engines provide essential emergency cover for the majority of the two counties at a very low cost (circa £50k - £100k per fire engine per year).

To put this into context, changing one DCP crewed fire engine to full-time Shift would cost circa £500k per year – the equivalent of running 5-10 On-Call fire engines over the same period.

And even though some of On-Call fire engines are required to respond to emergencies on an infrequent basis – because of the long travel distances between the rural communities where most of them are stationed and the wider resilience they provide to the Service when large scale or protracted incidents occur – their overall value to their local communities and the Service outweighs the reallocation of their funding elsewhere for this purpose.

Finally, using one-off reserves to fund the additional ongoing revenue requirements that would be needed would also be unsustainable. It would only be a temporary measure that would also eventually require the Service to make redundancies when the reserves run out (at an additional cost) – as it could no longer afford to pay for the extra full-time firefighters need to move from DCP to full-time Shift.

Therefore, with no additional revenue resources available, the change of duty system will need to be funded from the existing resources allocated to the DCP system.

Options

The proposals are designed to ensure the changes in emergency cover delivered by the three fire engines currently crewed under the DCP duty system should align to either the 2014 CRMP or the updated risk analysis referred to earlier in this document.

The final choice of the most appropriate changes will follow a proportionate public consultation period to ensure continuing confidence in future fire and emergency cover arrangements and to enable further consultation with staff.

Two Options

In examining the options available to replace the DCP duty system, two options have been identified for consideration. The table below shows the current DCP crewing arrangement. This is followed by both options along with a short assessment of pros and cons and an overall view.

Current Fire and Emergency Cover

Fire Station	Duty System	Description	
Bromsgrove	DCP	24hr per day	One fire engine immediately available
			One fire engine On-Call
Hereford, Worcester	Shift and DCP	24hr per day	Two fire engines immediately available (one 2-2-4 and one DCP)
			One fire engine On-Call



OPTION 1

Option 1: Day Duty System introduced on each Station

Fire Station	Duty System	Description	
Bromsgrove	Day Duty	Daytime	One fire engine immediately available (Day Duty) and one fire engine On-Call
		Nighttime	Two fire engines On-Call
Hereford, Worcester (for each station)	Shift and Day Duty	Daytime	Two fire engines immediately available (2-2-4 and Day Duty) and one fire engine On-Call
		Nighttime	One fire engine immediately available (2-2-4) and two fire engines On-Call

Option 1: Day Duty System introduced on each Station – Pros and Cons

Fire Station	Duty System	Pros	Cons
Bromsgrove	Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for additional shift resilience (depending on system adopted) – more prevention, protection and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in cover arrangements More demand on On-Call (average additional 5-7 calls per week during evenings and night)
Hereford, Worcester	Shift and Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with the agreed CRMP 2014 Maintains two fire engines immediate cover resilience during the day at each station Potential for additional shift resilience (depending on system adopted) – more prevention, protection and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of 2 immediate fire engines at night
Overall view		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to release some resources to reallocate into Prevention and Protection activities Day Duty system will be compliant with National Conditions of Service and Working Time Regulations 	

OPTION 2

Option 2: Day Duty System and Shift System mix

Fire Station	Duty System	Description	
Bromsgrove	Shift	24hr per day	One fire engine immediately available (2-2-4) and one fire engine On-Call
Hereford, Worcester (for each station)	Shift and Day Duty	Daytime	Two fire engines immediately available (2-2-4 and Day Duty) and one fire engine On-Call
		Nighttime	One fire engine immediately available (2-2-4) and two fire engines On-Call

Option 2: Day Duty System and Shift System mix – Pros and Cons

Fire Station	Duty System	Pros	Cons
Bromsgrove	Shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same cover as now by transferring resources from other DCP locations 	
Hereford, Worcester	Shift and Day Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with the agreed CRMP 2014 Maintains two fire engines immediate cover resilience during the day at each station Potential for additional shift resilience (depending on system adopted) – more prevention, protection and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of 2 immediate fire engines at night
Overall view		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to release some resources to reallocate into Prevention and Protection activities Day Duty system will be compliant with National Conditions of Service and Working Time Regulations 	

CONSULTATION

Consultation process

What happens next?

The consultation runs for six weeks, from 7 May to 14 June. The process will be facilitated by an independent organisation, which will analyse all responses and feedback. Their report will then be considered by the Fire Authority on 15 October 2019 to inform a decision on the most appropriate alternative duty system.

The independent report will be available on the Service website after the Fire Authority has considered it.

How can I take part?

You can find out more and tell us what you think by completing a questionnaire or by sending us comments or questions in several ways:

- Complete the questionnaire either online at www.opinionresearch.co.uk/hwfrs or request a paper copy
- Call us on: **0345 122 4454**
- Email us at: consultation@hwfire.org.uk
- Write to us at:
Hereford & Worcester
Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters
Hindlip Park
Worcester
WR3 8SP
- Visit our website: www.hwfire.org.uk
-  @HWFire
-  facebook.com/HWFire

Public Focus Groups

As part of the consultation process, the independent organisation will also randomly select and recruit participants from the general public to attend focus groups in Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester. Responses from each focus group will inform the overall findings in the consultation report.

To request a paper copy of the questionnaire or a copy in another language, large print, audio or Braille format, please contact 0345 122 4454

Confidentiality

All completed questionnaires will be processed by Opinion Research Services (ORS), a specialist social research organisation appointed to undertake this work. Your views are confidential and no one except ORS will see your questionnaire. **No individuals will be identified in the ORS report of findings, but organisations may be identified.**

Other written responses (emails, letters and other submissions) will be summarised by ORS and may be quoted in their report and on our website. Again, no individuals will be identified, but organisations may be identified.



Consultation

Options to replace the Day Crewing Plus duty system

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Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

Day Crewing Plus Consultation 2019

Report of findings



Opinion Research Services
August 2019



Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service



Day Crewing Plus Consultation 2019

Report by Opinion Research Services

Opinion Research Services

The Strand • Swansea • SA1 1AF

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As with all our studies, findings from this report are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this report requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

This study was conducted in accordance with ISO 20252:2012 and ISO 9001:2008.

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1. Executive Summary

Summary of main findings

Background and commission

- 1.1 Day Crewing Plus (DCP) is a duty system that has operated in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) since 2014. It has been used to staff three full-time fire engines that have a lower frequency of response activity, particularly during the night.
- 1.2 Based on a recent High Court ruling that found a similar DCP system operating elsewhere to be unlawful, and following unsuccessful talks with the Fire Brigades Union, HWFRS believes it needs to replace the DCP system currently used for the three DCP fire engines with an alternative that is legally compliant, affordable and proportionate to manage the current level of risk in the community. HWFRS believes the change of duty system will need to be funded from the existing resources allocated to the DCP system as no sustainable additional revenue is available, and are now considering options for its replacement.
- 1.3 Opinion Research Services (ORS) is a spin-out company from Swansea University with a UK-wide reputation for social research and major statutory consultations. ORS was appointed by HWFRS to advise on and independently manage and report a formal consultation programme, as outlined below.

The consultation

- 1.4 The formal consultation period of six weeks began on 7th May 2019 and ended on 14th June 2019. During this period, residents and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through the following:
 - A consultation questionnaire available for any interested party to complete, which attracted 521 responses;
 - Three deliberative focus groups (one in Bromsgrove, one in Hereford and one in Worcester) with 29 local residents;
 - Written submissions: these were received from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats and a local resident (retired staff member); and
 - Petitions: 3,401 people signed an online petition organised by a group of retired watch commanders from HWFRS entitled 'stop dangerous cuts of 60% to fulltime fire cover in Herefordshire and Worcestershire'.

The report

- 1.5 ORS does not endorse any opinions reported here but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly. While offering guidance on the consultation methodology and its interpretation, we seek to profile the opinions and arguments of those who have responded; but we make no recommendations on the decisions to be taken by the Fire Authority.

Key Findings

The proposed options

The current situation

Hereford and Worcester Fire Stations house three fire engines each; these use a number of different duty systems to ensure they are available to the public 24-hours a day. The current duty systems are: traditional Shift Duty (also known as 2,2,4); Day Crewing Plus (DCP); and On-call. The difference between the duty systems is as follows:

Shift and DCP duty systems enable fire engines to mobilise in 90 seconds, 24-hrs a day; and

The On-call duty system enables the fire engine to mobilise in approximately six minutes, 24-hours a day.

Bromsgrove currently operates 24-hours per day with one fire engine immediately available (DCP), and one On-call.

Future proposal

With the removal of the DCP system, HWFRS believes it is no longer possible to provide fire engines that are immediately available 24-hours a day at all three fire stations, and instead are proposing two different options.

Under both options, HWFRS proposes that **Hereford and Worcester** would operate a combination of Shift and Day Duty system, meaning each station would have the following:

Daytime: two fire engines immediately available, one being crewed by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and the other day-staffed for 12 hrs - plus one On-call fire engine; and

Night-time: one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and two fire engines On-call.

For **Bromsgrove**, there are two options - Day Duty or Shift Duty system:

Option 1 (Day Duty)

Daytime: one fire engine immediately available (Day Duty) and one fire engine On-call; and

Night-time: two fire engines On-call.

Option 2 (Shift)

24 hours per day: one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and one fire engine On-call.

Open Questionnaire

- ^{1.6} Just over two thirds (68%) of questionnaire respondents preferred option two, while only 6% preferred option one. Around a quarter (26%) felt that an alternative option would be better.
- ^{1.7} Those resident in Bromsgrove were significantly more likely to say they preferred option two (91%). Only 5% of Bromsgrove residents preferred option 1.

- 1.8 Those resident in the County of Herefordshire, Malvern Hills or Worcester were significantly more likely to say they preferred an 'alternative option' (71%, 81% and 59% respectively). The most commonly suggested 'alternatives' were: 24/7 appliances - one each at Hereford, Worcester and Bromsgrove - with staff working a 2-2-4 Shift pattern; and having more services available in surrounding areas to provide better coverage (i.e. Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham).

Focus Groups

- 1.9 The balance of opinion in the three focus groups was as follows:

Option 1	Option 2	Don't Know
Hereford = 3	Hereford = 6	Hereford = 1
Bromsgrove = 0	Bromsgrove = all (9)	Bromsgrove = 0
Worcester = all (10)	Worcester = 0	Worcester = 0

- 1.10 Those who chose to endorse option 1 (three of the ten participants at Hereford and all nine at Worcester) did so primarily as it releases the most amount of savings to be reinvested into the Service's prevention and protection functions - though Worcester participants in particular sought reassurances that any money released would be used appropriately and in the right areas. Moreover, though there was recognition that night-time turn-out times would be lengthier - and that this would have more of an impact in Bromsgrove given the current DCP engine is the first responding appliance there - those preferring option 1 argued that this would make little difference to response times in practice given the traffic delays faced by crews during the daytime. Indeed, this was also recognised by some Bromsgrove participants.
- 1.11 Those who chose option 2 (six of the ten participants at Hereford and all at Bromsgrove) did so largely on the basis of the greater number of night-time incidents in Bromsgrove, the town's current and proposed housing growth and its proximity to the motorway network. Furthermore, there was recognition that Option 2 also releases some money (albeit a smaller amount) for reinvestment into prevention and protection, while at the same time satisfying Bromsgrove's fire cover requirements.

2. The Consultation Process

Overview of the Consultation

Background

- 2.1 Day Crewing Plus (DCP) is a duty system that has operated in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) since 2014. HWFRS considers it a more cost-effective way of providing a 24/7, immediately available fire engine than the more traditional full-time Shift system, as it only requires about half the number of firefighters to provide the same level of response. DCP has been used to staff three full-time fire engines that have a lower frequency of response activity, particularly during the night.
- 2.2 However, based on a recent High Court ruling that found a similar DCP system operating elsewhere to be unlawful, and following unsuccessful talks with the Fire Brigades Union, HWFRS believes it needs to replace the DCP system currently used for the three DCP fire engines with an alternative that is legally compliant, affordable and proportionate to manage the current level of risk in the community. HWFRS believes the change of duty system will need to be funded from the existing resources allocated to the DCP system as no sustainable additional revenue is available, and are now considering options as follows.

The current situation

Hereford and Worcester Fire Stations house three fire engines each; these use a number of different duty systems to ensure they are available to the public 24-hours a day. The current duty systems are: traditional Shift Duty (also known as 2,2,4); Day Crewing Plus (DCP); and On-call. The difference between the duty systems is as follows:

Shift and DCP duty systems enable fire engines to mobilise in 90 seconds, 24-hrs a day; and

The On-call duty system enables the fire engine to mobilise in approximately six minutes, 24-hours a day.

Bromsgrove currently operates 24-hours per day with one fire engine immediately available (DCP), and one On-call.

Future proposal

With the removal of the DCP system, HWFRS believes it is no longer possible to provide fire engines that are immediately available 24-hours a day at all three fire stations, and instead are proposing two different options.

*Under both options, HWFRS proposes that **Hereford and Worcester** would operate a combination of Shift and Day Duty system, meaning each station would have the following:*

Daytime: two fire engines immediately available, one being crewed by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and the other day-staffed for 12 hrs - plus one On-call fire engine; and

Night-time: one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and two fire engines On-call.

*For **Bromsgrove**, there are two options - Day Duty or Shift Duty system:*

Option 1 (Day Duty)

Daytime: one fire engine immediately available (Day Duty) and one fire engine On-call; and

Night-time: two fire engines On-call.

Option 2 (Shift)

24 hours per day: one fire engine immediately available by staff working the traditional Shift Duty system (2-2-4) and one fire engine On-call.

The commission

- 2.3 Opinion Research Service (ORS) was commissioned to host, analyse and report the responses to an open online consultation questionnaire and focus groups with residents of the three affected areas (one group was held in each of Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester). ORS has also summarised the written submissions and petition received by HWFRS at the end of this report.

Quantitative engagement: open questionnaire

- 2.4 A consultation document outlining the issues and proposals under consideration was produced by HWFRS. With that foundation, ORS and HWFRS then designed a questionnaire inviting respondents to express a preference for one of the two options, or to specify an alternative proposal. The questionnaire was, in principle, available for anyone to complete between 7th May and 14th June 2019 - either via the dedicated consultation page on HWFRS's website or through requested paper versions. In total, 512 responses were received (respondent profiles can be found in the following chapter).
- 2.5 Open questionnaires are not random sample surveys of a given population - so they cannot normally be expected to be representative of the general balance of opinion. For example, the more motivated groups are typically over-represented compared with others. However, they are extremely important forms of engagement in being inclusive and in giving people an opportunity to express their views.

Deliberative engagement: resident focus groups

- 2.6 ORS undertook three focus groups with members of the public: one in Bromsgrove, one in Hereford and one in Worcester. Taken together these meetings are best understood as 'deliberative' meetings in which HWFRS's proposals to replace the DCP system were 'tested' against residents' opinions - in order to see the extent to which they are acceptable or otherwise.

- 2.7 In this context, ORS' role was to design, recruit and facilitate the focus groups in May 2018. We worked in collaboration with HWFRS to prepare informative stimulus material for the meetings before facilitating the discussions with support from FRS officers who were on hand to answer participants' 'technical questions' about the Service and its proposals.

Attendance and representativeness

- 2.8 The focus groups were designed to inform and 'engage' the participants both with the issues and with HWFRS - by encouraging them to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing important issues in detail. The meetings lasted for two hours.
- 2.9 In total, there were 29 diverse participants at the focus groups. The dates of the meetings and attendance levels were as below:

AREA	TIME AND DATE	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Hereford	6:30pm – 8:30pm Monday 20th May 2019	10
Bromsgrove	6:30pm – 8:30pm Tuesday 21st May 2019	9
Worcester	6:30pm – 8:30pm Wednesday 22nd May 2019	10

- 2.10 The attendance target for the focus groups was around eight to 10 people, so the recruitment programme was successful. Participants were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from ORS' Social Research Call Centre. Such recruitment by telephone is an effective way of ensuring that the participants are independent and broadly representative of the wider community. As standard good practice, people were recompensed for their time and efforts in travelling and taking part.
- 2.11 Overall, participants were a broad cross-section of residents from the local areas: for example, across the three groups there were:
- 16 males and 13 females;
 - Fairly evenly split age ranges (8 x 16-34; 10 x 35-54 and 11 x 55+);
 - 10 people in the AB social grade bracket, nine in C1, four in C2 and 6 in DE;
 - Four people whose daily activities are limited by a disability or limiting illness; and
 - Two people from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.
- 2.12 In recruitment, care was taken to ensure that no potential participants were disqualified or disadvantaged by disabilities or any other factors, and the venues at which the focus groups met were readily accessible.
- 2.13 Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, focus groups cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the meetings reported here gave diverse groups of people in

the three affected areas the opportunity to participate. Because the recruitment was inclusive and participants were diverse, we are satisfied that the outcomes of the meeting (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.

Discussion agenda

- 2.14 ORS worked in collaboration with HWFRS to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meeting, which covered the following topics:
- HWFRS's activity and resource levels;
 - The workings of the DCP duty systems;
 - HWFRS's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and Fire Cover Review;
 - Reasons for needing to discontinue DCP;
 - HWFRS's financial constraints; and
 - The proposals for change.
- 2.15 The presentation was designed to inform and stimulate discussion of the issues - and participants were encouraged to ask any questions they wished throughout.

Written submissions and a petition

- 2.16 During the formal consultation process, three organisations and individuals provided written submissions. ORS has read all the written submissions carefully and summarised them in the full report. The contributors were:
- Fire Brigades Union (FBU);
 - Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats; and
 - A local resident (retired staff member).
- 2.17 Moreover, 3,401 people signed an online petition organised by a group of retired watch commanders from HWFRS entitled 'stop dangerous cuts of 60% to fulltime fire cover in Herefordshire and Worcestershire'.

Nature of consultation

- 2.18 Accountability means that public authorities should give an account of their plans and take into account public views: they should conduct fair and accessible engagement while reporting the outcomes openly and considering them fully. This does not mean that the majority views should automatically decide public policy; and the popularity or unpopularity of draft proposals should not displace professional and political judgement about what is the right or best decision in the circumstances. The levels of, and reasons for, public support or opposition are very important, but as considerations to be taken into account, not as factors that necessarily determine authorities' decisions.
- 2.19 Above all, public bodies have to consider the relevance and cogency of the arguments put forward during public engagement processes, not just count heads. In this context, it was helpful that the consultation programme included both 'open' and deliberative elements, to allow many people to take part via the open questionnaire while promoting informed engagement via the deliberative focus groups.

Interpreting the outcomes

- 2.20 Importantly, the different consultation methods cannot just be combined to yield a single point of view that reconciles everyone's differences and is acceptable to all stakeholders involved. There are two main reasons why this is not possible. First, the engagement methods differ in type: they are qualitatively different and their outcomes cannot be just aggregated into a single result. Second, different areas and sub-groups will inevitably have different perspectives on the proposals and there is no formula in the consultation process that can reconcile everyone's differences in a single way forward.
- 2.21 It is also important to recognise that the outcomes of the consultation process will need to be considered alongside other information available to HWFRS. Whilst the process highlights aspects of this information that stakeholders consider to be important, appropriate emphasis should be placed on each element. In this sense there can be no single 'right' interpretation of all the consultation elements and other information in the decision-making process.

The report

- 2.22 This report reviews the sentiments and judgements of open questionnaire respondents and focus group participants on HWFRS's proposals to replace the DCP duty system. Verbatim quotations are used, in indented italics, not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of view. ORS does not endorse the opinions in question, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly.
- 2.23 ORS is clear that its role is to analyse and explain the opinions and arguments of the many different interests participating in the consultation, but not to 'make a case' for any proposal. In this report, we seek to profile the opinions and arguments of those who have responded to the consultation, but not to make any recommendations as to how the reported results should be used. Whilst this report brings together a wide range of evidence for the Fire Authority to consider, decisions must be taken based on all the evidence available.

3. Consultation Questionnaire

Introduction

- 3.1 A consultation document outlining the issues under consideration was produced by HWFRS, who also worked with ORS to develop a consultation questionnaire with questions intended to capture the reasons for choosing a particular option. Additional questions allowed respondents to make any further comments, and captured information about the type of response being submitted and (where relevant) respondents' demographic information.
- 3.2 The consultation documents and open questionnaire were available online on the dedicated consultation page on HWFRS's website between 7th May and 14th June 2019, and respondents could also request a paper copy by contacting ORS. In total 512 responses were received, all coming via the online questionnaire.

Respondent profile

- 3.3 Respondents were asked to state whether they were responding personally or on behalf of an organisation. Only one response was identified as being on behalf of an organisation, with the remainder of those who answered this question stating that it was a personal response.
- 3.4 All individuals were asked to provide some basic demographic information. The tables that appear without commentary on the following pages show the unweighted profiles of the responses to the survey (please note that the figures may not always sum to 100% due to rounding).
- 3.5 It is important to note here that open questionnaires are not random sample surveys of a given population - so they cannot normally be expected to be representative of the general balance of opinion. For example, the more motivated groups are typically over-represented compared with others. However, they are extremely important forms of engagement in being inclusive and in giving people an opportunity to express their views.

All Respondents

Please note that * denotes a percentage which is less than 1% after rounding.

Figure 1: Gender - All Respondents

Gender	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
Male	200	48
Female	214	52
Not Known	98	-
Total	512	100

Figure 2: Age - All Respondents

Age	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
16 to 24	16	4
25 to 34	98	22
35 to 44	118	27
45 to 54	83	19
55 to 64	66	15
65 +	55	13
Not known	76	-
Total	512	100

Figure 3: Disability - All Respondents

Disability	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
Yes	56	14
No	332	86
Not Known	124	-
Total	512	100

Figure 4: Sexual Orientation - All Respondents

Sexual Orientation	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
Heterosexual or Straight	334	94
Gay or Lesbian	12	3
Bisexual	10	3
Not Known	156	-
Total	512	100

Figure 5: Ethnicity - All Respondents

Ethnicity	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
White British	355	95
BME	20	5
Not Known	137	-
Total	512	100

Figure 6: Work for Hereford & Worcester FRS - All Respondents

Work for HWFRS	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
Yes	27	7
No	383	93
Not Known	102	-
Total	512	100

Figure 7: Local Authority - All Respondents

Local Authority	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %
Birmingham	12	3
Bromsgrove	209	58
County of Herefordshire	51	14
Malvern Hills	28	8
Redditch	10	3
Rushmoor	1	*
Stratford-on-Avon	1	*
Worcester	22	6
Wychavon	15	4
Wyre Forest	9	3
Not Known	154	-
Total	512	100

Organisations in the consultation questionnaire

- 3.6 Organisations were asked to explain who their organisation represents, what area the organisation covers and how views of members were gathered. The following organisations (including businesses) identified themselves as part of a response to the questionnaire:
- Rubery Neighbourhood Watch – covering Rubery Area (Bromsgrove), with 450+ members (no further information given)

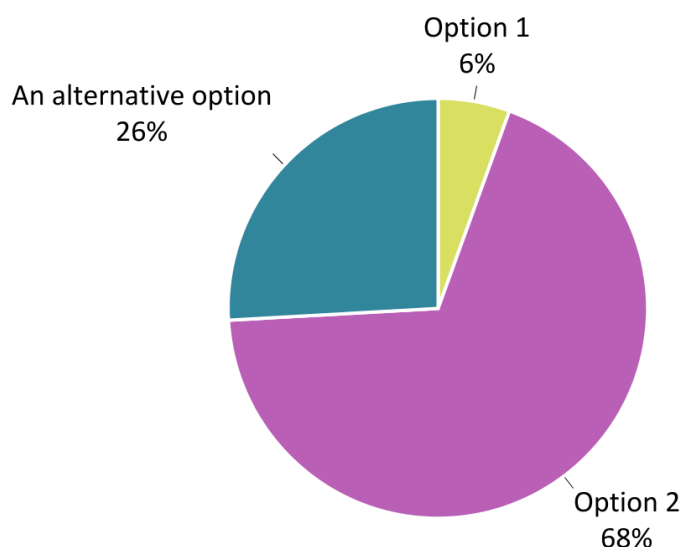
Interpretation of the data

- 3.7 Results are presented in a largely graphical format. The numbers on pie charts and bar charts are percentages indicating the proportions of residents or respondents who agree/disagree on a particular question.
- 3.8 The number of valid responses recorded for each question (base size) are reported throughout. As not all respondents answered every question the valid responses vary between question ('don't know' responses have been treated as invalid).

The proposed options

- 3.9 In relation to the proposed options (detailed in chapter 2), just over two thirds (68%) of respondents would prefer option two, while only 6% would prefer option one. Around a quarter (26%) feel that an alternative option would be better (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Which option would you prefer?
Base: All Respondents (501)

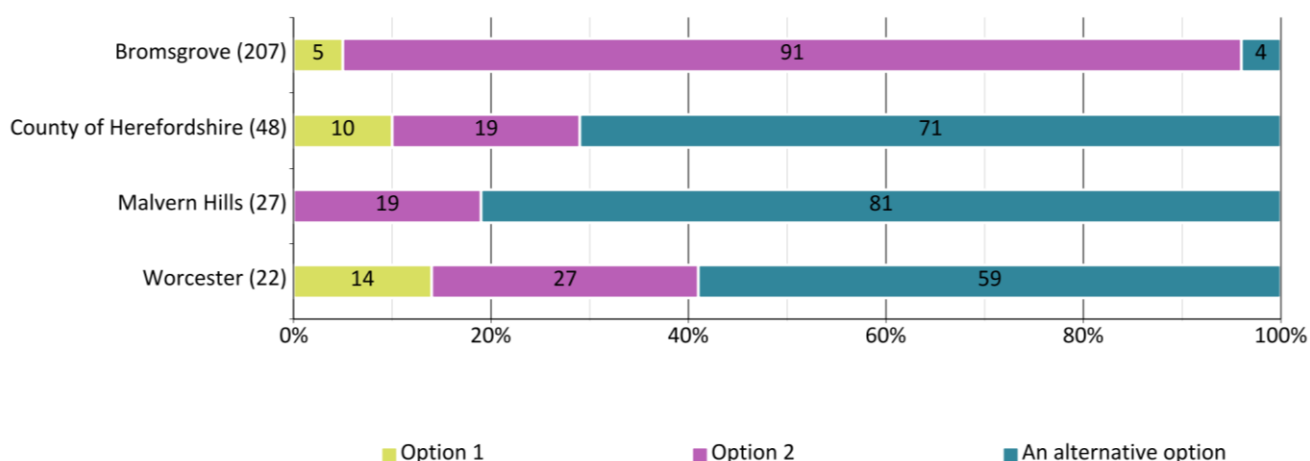


- 3.10 Figure 9 below shows how responses to this question differ by the local authority the respondent lives in. Those who are resident in **Bromsgrove** are significantly more likely to say they **prefer option two** (91%), which would mean that no changes were made to the current system at Bromsgrove fire station (one fire engine immediately available and one fire engine On-call 24 hours a day). Only 5% of those who are resident in Bromsgrove prefer option 1 whereby at night both fire engines would be On-call only at Bromsgrove fire station.
- 3.11 Those who are resident in the **County of Herefordshire, Malvern Hills** or **Worcester**, who would be affected by the changes made at Hereford and Worcester fire stations, are significantly more likely to say they **prefer an alternative option** (71%, 81% and 59% respectively) indicating that the proposed change to Hereford and Worcester fire stations (which is the same for option one and option two) is not popular with the majority of respondents in these areas or that they would like to be given a choice of options.

Figure 9: Which option would you prefer?

Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

Sub-group results: By Local Authority



- 3.12 It is also interesting to note that, while not all respondents gave a postcode, of those identified their location around three fifths (59%) are resident in Bromsgrove, suggesting that the proposed changes at Bromsgrove fire station are more contentious or perhaps that there is more of a feeling that their response could influence the final decision.
- 3.13 The charts below show which sub-groups are significantly¹ more or less likely to prefer option two, or an alternative option (note: owing to a small sample size there are no significant differences evident between sub-groups for option one).

Figure 10: Which option do you prefer? Option two - sub-group breakdown. Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets). Note: Only sub-group results which are significantly different to the overall result are shown in the chart. Green shading indicates a result that is significantly higher than the overall result, red shading indicates a result that is significantly lower than the overall result.

¹ Results which are said to be significantly different are significant at a 95% confidence level.

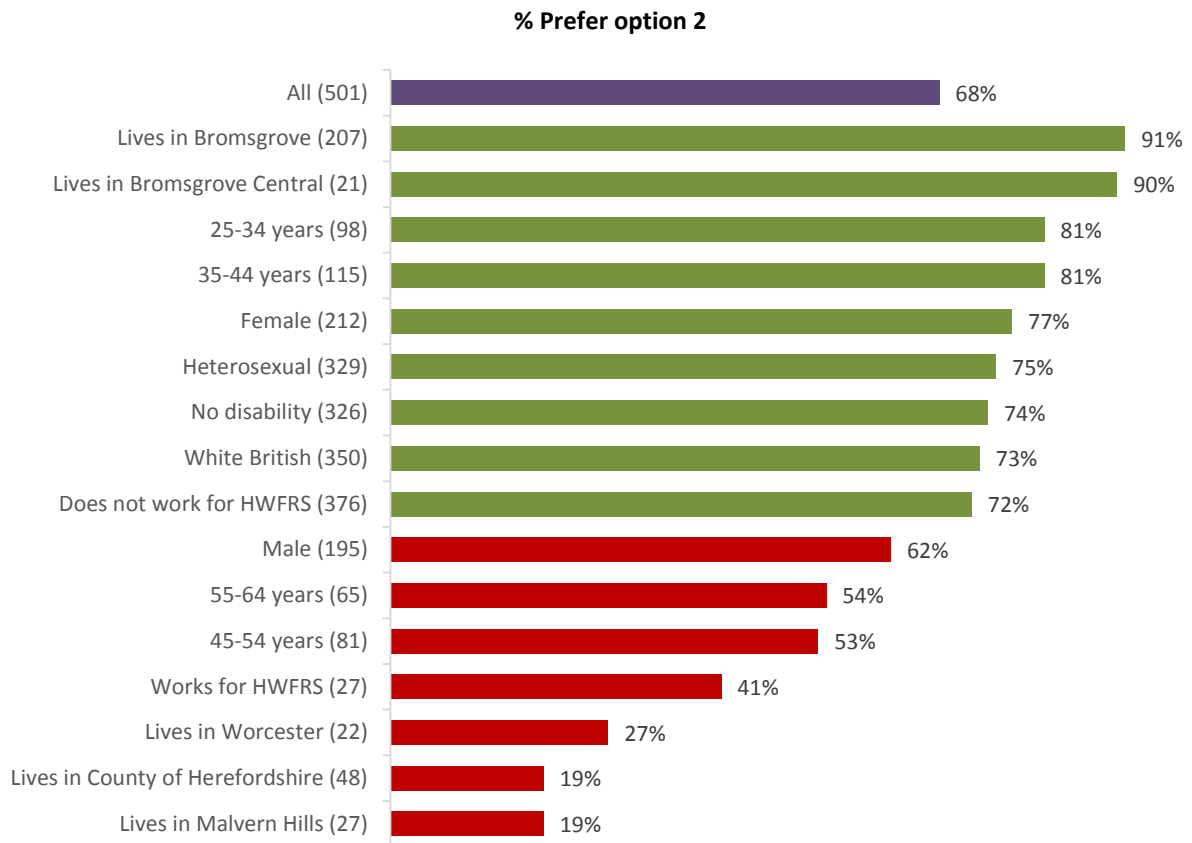
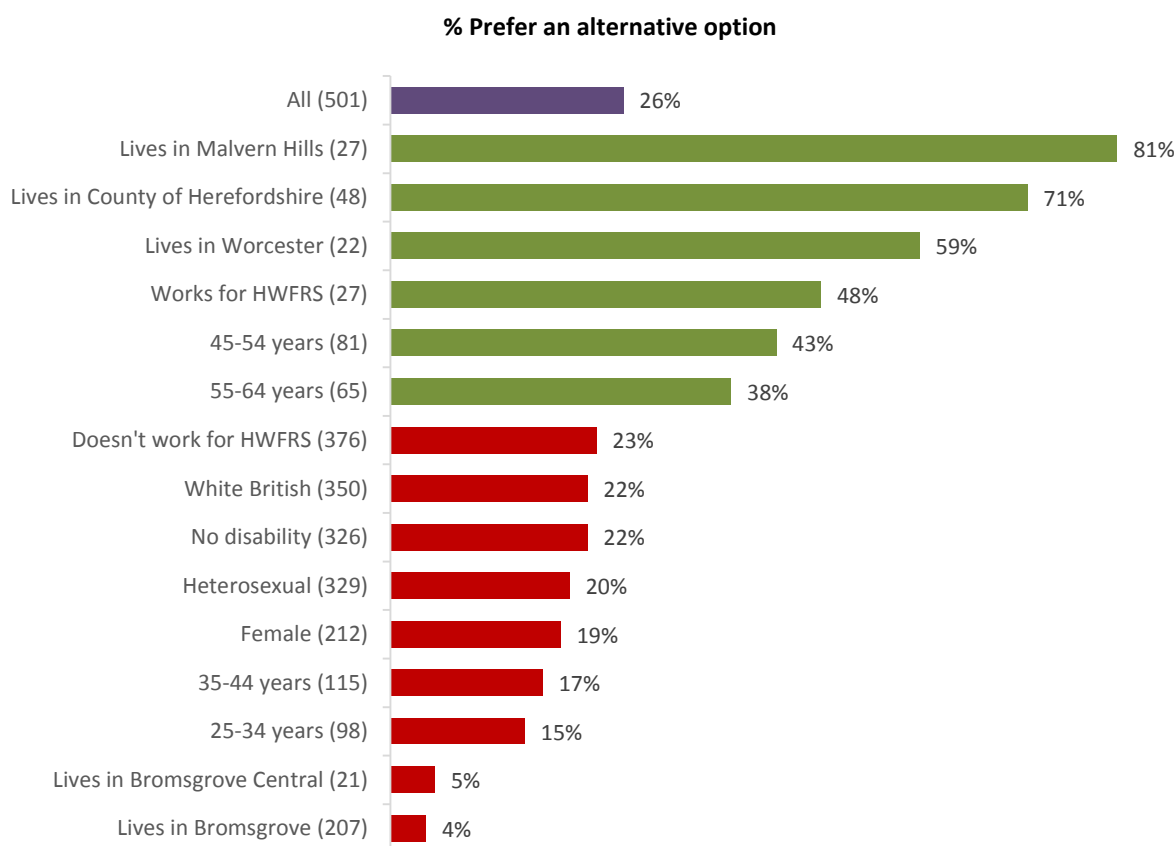


Figure 11: Which option do you prefer? An alternative option - sub-group breakdown. Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets). Note: Only sub-group results which are significantly different to the overall result are shown in the chart. Green shading indicates a result that is significantly higher than the overall result, red shading indicates a result that is significantly lower than the overall result.



Open-ended comments

- 3.14 The questionnaire provided respondents with three opportunities to comment on the proposals in their own words, specifically:

Q2. To outline their reasons for their answer to which option they would prefer, and to explain any alternative option they prefer.

Q3. Whether there were any further comments they would like to make.

Q4. Whether there were any positive or negative impacts (in relation to human rights and protected characteristics) that HWFRS should take into account.

- 3.15 Questions 2 and 3 were themed (question 4 was not as the majority of responses were not relevant to the question asked) and it can be seen that, in practice, there was a lot of commonality in the themes raised across the two questions. For example, a number of respondents used the open-ended responses to express their general disagreement with the proposals arguing that a fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 (generally and specifically in relation to all three fire stations) and that the proposals will lead to slower response times generally.

- 3.16 Other specific key arguments against the proposals in general (and mentioned specifically with regard to all three fire stations) relate to safety concerns and that the proposals 'should not be about money':

Reducing the FRS's capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population, housing and traffic density etc. is reckless and dangerous;

A reduction in crewing will result in increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and the general public;

It will make people more vulnerable at night as fires remain undiscovered for longer and have more time to spread;

Proposals should not be about money/the emergency services are there to save lives, not money/money should not be put before people's safety.

- 3.17 On the contrary, there was a general agreement with the proposals from some respondents, and more specifically, an agreement that savings do need to be made and the proposals are the best way to save money. However, while some felt that services should remain the same as they are still paying the same amount of council tax, others said they would be happy to pay more to retain the current level of service.
- 3.18 Reasons given for choosing **option 1** were varied, with negative comments relating to safety concerns/against a change in service and positive comments agreeing with the proposals/saving money. Some comments appear to contradict a preference for option 1 though, suggesting perhaps some confusion when responding to the questions.
- 3.19 With regard to **option 2** the main reasons given for selecting this option were a need to maintain a 24/7 service at Bromsgrove (and generally), and concerns around response times and crewing leading to an increased risk to firefighters and the general public. It was also felt to be the safest option presented. The themes most frequently mentioned are similar regardless of whether the respondent is resident in Bromsgrove or elsewhere.
- 3.20 While **option 2** was the preferred option for two thirds of respondents, and over 9 in 10 respondents who are resident in Bromsgrove, it is clear that there is still a general disagreement with any proposed changes to the current service. There is a sense of a need to be reassured that longer response times will not compromise safety and firefighters' ability to deal with incidents. Further explanation of costs and budgets would also help members of the public understand the reasons for the proposed changes, with some feeling that they are seemingly getting a reduced service for the same cost, and that the changes are just to save money overall.
- 3.21 Proposals suggested by those selecting '**an alternative option**' were: 24/7 appliances, one each at Hereford, Worcester and Bromsgrove with staff working a 2-2-4 Shift pattern; and having more services available in surrounding areas to provide better coverage (i.e. Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham). Those selecting an alternative option also argued strongly that generally a fully equipped and fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7. It should be noted, though, that the majority of those selecting an alternative option live outside of Bromsgrove.
- 3.22 A full summary of the themes raised for Q2 and Q3 is provided in the following tables. Responses have been filtered by which option was preferred and then broken down by area (Bromsgrove, elsewhere, or unknown).

Figure 12: Q2. Please outline your reasons for your answer and explain any alternative option you prefer. Those who chose option 1

Reasons for choosing <u>option 1</u> - Comment	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	7	7	0
It is the safest option presented	14.3	14.3	-
Disagree generally with proposals/keep things as they are	14.3	-	-
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Bromsgrove	14.3	-	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. is reckless and dangerous	14.3	-	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Bromsgrove is reckless and dangerous	14.3	-	-
Need more information/not enough information available	14.3	-	-
Agree generally with Option 2	14.3	-	-
Agree that savings need to be made generally/proposals are the best way to save money	-	14.3	-
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 generally	-	14.3	-
Alternative proposal: 24/7 appliances, one each at Hereford, Worcester, Bromsgrove ; staff should work 2-2-4 Shift pattern	-	14.3	-
Other	42.9	42.9	-

Figure 13: Q2. Please outline your reasons for your answer and explain any alternative option you prefer. Those who chose option 2

Reasons for choosing <u>option 2</u> - Comment	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	127	32	31
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 generally	32.3	31.3	22.6
Proposals will lead to slower response times generally	22.8	6.3	22.6
Reduction of crewing will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	21.3	21.9	6.5
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Bromsgrove	18.9	18.8	25.8
It is the safest option presented	15.7	15.6	9.7
Agree generally with Option 2	8.7	3.1	22.6
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Bromsgrove is reckless and dangerous	7.9	3.1	6.5
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Hereford and Worcester	-	6.3	6.5
It will make people more vulnerable at night/fires have more time to spread and/or remain undiscovered for longer	6.3	-	3.2

Reasons for choosing <u>option 2</u> - Comment	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	127	32	31
Already pay high council tax/services should still be provided as we pay the same tax	6.3	6.3	-
Reduction of crewing in Bromsgrove will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	5.5	-	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. is reckless and dangerous	4.7	3.1	6.5
Agree generally with proposals	3.9	6.3	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times in Bromsgrove	3.9	-	3.2
Proposals should not be about money/the emergency services are there to save lives, not money/money should not be put before people's safety	3.9	12.5	3.2
Disagree generally with proposals/keep things as they are	3.1	6.3	-
Happy to pay higher council tax/increased council tax to maintain service levels	2.4	-	-
Savings should be made in alternative ways	1.6	3.1	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times in Hereford and Worcester	0.8	-	-
Need more information/not enough information available	0.8	-	3.2
In will make people in Hereford and Worcester more vulnerable at night/fires have more time to spread and/or remain undiscovered for longer	0.8	-	-
It will make people in Bromsgrove more vulnerable at night/fires have more time to spread and/or remain undiscovered for longer	0.8	-	-
Reduction of crewing in Hereford and Worcester will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	0.8	-	-
The FRS is already underfunded/under resourced/don't need a further reduction in service	0.8	-	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Hereford and Worcester is reckless and dangerous	-	3.1	-
Alternative proposal: 24/7 appliances, one each at Hereford, Worcester Bromsgrove ; staff should work 2-2-4 Shift pattern	0.8	3.1	-
Criticism of questionnaire/consultation i.e. minds already made up/paper exercise etc.	-	-	-
Other	4.7	9.4	9.7

Figure 14: Q2. Please outline your reasons for your answer and explain any alternative option you prefer. Those who chose an alternative option

Reasons for choosing an alternative option - Comment	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	8	79	37
Alternative proposal: 24/7 appliances, one each at Hereford, Worcester, Bromsgrove ; staff should work 2-2-4 Shift pattern	-	43.0	40.5
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Hereford and Worcester	-	19.0	16.2
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 generally	25.0	17.7	18.9
Reduction of crewing will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	25.0	16.5	5.4
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Bromsgrove	-	15.2	16.2
Criticism of questionnaire/consultation i.e. minds already made up/paper exercise etc.	-	7.6	10.8
Disagree generally with proposals/keep things as they are	12.5	6.3	10.8
It will make people more vulnerable at night/fires have more time to spread and/or remain undiscovered for longer	12.5	6.3	8.1
Proposals should not be about money/the emergency services are there to save lives, not money/money should not be put before people's safety	-	6.3	-
Need more information/not enough information available	12.5	5.1	-
Alternative proposal: Have more services available at surrounding areas to provide better coverage i.e. like previous services at Malvern, Droitwich, Evesham etc.	-	5.1	2.7
Agree generally with Option 2	-	2.5	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. is reckless and dangerous	12.5	2.5	-
Reduction of crewing in Hereford and Worcester will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	-	2.5	-
Savings should be made in alternative ways	12.5	2.5	-
It is the safest option presented	12.5	1.3	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times generally	12.5	-	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times in Hereford and Worcester	-	1.3	-
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Hereford and Worcester is reckless and dangerous	-	1.3	-
Already pay high council tax/services should still be provided as we pay the same tax	-	1.3	-
Agree generally with proposals	-	-	2.7
Reduction of crewing in Bromsgrove will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	-	-	2.7
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an	-	-	2.7

Reasons for choosing an alternative option - Comment	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	8	79	37
increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Bromsgrove is reckless and dangerous			
Other	62.5	17.7	21.6

3.23 The quotes presented below highlight some of the suggested alternative options.

As a minimum, 24-hour immediate guaranteed fire cover at Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester.

Full time fire engines available day and night immediately. 1 on call for Worcester. Gives options for specialist appliances option 2 for Bromsgrove.

All stations to have 24-hour cover with 2 fire (engines) at Worcester and 1 at Bromsgrove

Based on the Fire Rescue Service advice I suggest: two 24-hour crewed fire appliances at both Hereford and Worcester with crews of 5. Bromsgrove to have one 24-hour crewed fire appliance with a crew of 5. Staff at all three locations to work the nationally agreed 2-2-4 shift duty system.

For Worcester and Bromsgrove option 1, Hereford 1 fire engine immediately available 2-2-4 and 1 fire engine on call all day and night. No need for 3rd fire engine in Hereford, use surrounding fire stations, more cost effective.

For Bromsgrove and Worcester option 1 but Hereford why not follow the Redditch model and have 2 retained pumps in the day/night if it works in a bigger city. This would free up some £550,000 which could be spent on fire safety.

Continue the same as currently running the HWFRS DCP system has not been challenged in a UK court so it is not illegal.

Maintain the current system until fuller information on response times under the new proposals is available.

Figure 15: Q3. Are there any further comments you would like to make? All respondents

Further comments	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	60	69	24
Reduction of crewing will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	23.3	18.8	12.5
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 generally	18.3	11.6	12.5
Proposals should not be about money/the emergency services are there to save lives, not money/money should not be put before people's safety	16.7	11.6	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times generally	11.7	-	8.3

Further comments	%		
	Bromsgrove	Elsewhere	Unknown
Base (Number of respondents making comments in each group):	60	69	24
Disagree generally with proposals/keep things as they are	11.7	5.8	-
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Bromsgrove	8.3	4.3	-
The FRS is already underfunded/under resourced/don't need a further reduction in service	6.7	4.3	4.2
Already pay high council tax/services should still be provided as we pay the same tax	5.5	2.9	12.5
Reduction of crewing in Hereford and Worcester will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	-	5.8	8.3
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Hereford and Worcester is reckless and dangerous	-	5.8	4.2
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. like Bromsgrove is reckless and dangerous	3.3	1.4	-
A fully equipped/fully staffed station needs to be operational 24/7 in Hereford and Worcester	-	4.3	12.5
It will make people more vulnerable at night/fires have more time to spread and/or remain undiscovered for longer	3.3	1.4	-
Reduction of crewing in Bromsgrove will result in an increased danger/risk of injury or death to both firefighters and general public	3.3	2.9	-
Savings should be made in alternative ways	3.3	5.8	-
Criticism of questionnaire/consultation i.e. minds already made up/paper exercise etc.	1.7	7.2	8.3
Reducing FRS capability to respond to incidents in an area with an increasing population/housing/traffic density etc. is reckless and dangerous	1.7	2.9	4.2
Need more information/not enough information available	3.3	4.3	-
Proposals will lead to slower response times in Bromsgrove	3.3	-	-
Happy to pay higher council tax/increased council tax to maintain service levels	3.3	-	-
Alternative proposal: 24/7 appliances, one each at Hereford, Worcester Bromsgrove ; staff should work 2-2-4 Shift pattern	-	1.4	4.2
Other	23.3	34.8	37.5

- 3.24 As a public body, Hereford and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service has a duty to take into account the impact of its decisions on human rights, under the Human Rights Act 1998, and also on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).
- 3.25 Respondents were asked if they felt there was any positive or negative impacts in relation to this that should be taken into account (Q4.). Only a few responses were received that were in relation to impacts on people with protected characteristics with the majority of comments relating to general impacts and reiterating comments made on previous questions.

- 3.26 Those whose comments did relate to impacts on protected characteristics generally felt that cutting response times would negatively impact vulnerable residents, i.e. the elderly and disabled, as they are less likely to be able to escape fires themselves, which will lead to an increase in the number of deaths.

Article 2 of the HRA (Human Rights Act) provides for a right to life – the reduction of immediate cover impacts on that right, delaying response times will lead to more deaths. In relation to those people with disabilities, again any delay in rescuing them will cost lives – if there is any chance of escape/self rescue, people with disability are less likely to be able to do so. A longer response time makes them more vulnerable.

If fire engines take longer to respond, it will have a negative impact on disabled and elderly people who are unable to physically escape buildings.

4. Focus Groups

Introduction

- 4.1 The focus group sessions considered in-depth the consultation issues as reported fully below. The views of the three meetings have been merged to give an overall report of findings, rather than three separate and rather repetitive mini-reports – but significant differences in views have been drawn out where appropriate.

Issues raised

- 4.2 During the initial presentation, participants were invited to ask questions and make comments on the information given.
- 4.3 One of the most common questions asked was why the FBU is unwilling to enter into a collective agreement with HWFRS to enable the retention of the DCP system locally. While understanding that the union is a national body that is fighting for what it considers to be the best interests of its members, participants generally felt it should recognise the constraints within which the service is working, and demonstrate some flexibility - particularly given the firefighters working the system wish to continue doing so.

My concern is the union position. I understand their worries around how it's run and the hours the firefighters are doing but do they not understand the financial position and that there's no money to fund a different system. Have they come up with any ideas on how to solve the issue? (Hereford)

If the team is willing and happy to do it, why change it? I appreciate that the Unions are looking at it from a national perspective, but they should look at it regionally as it's a different situation here (Hereford)

Is the trade union not there to represent its workers? If the firefighters want to keep working it why has an agreement not been able to be reached? (Bromsgrove)

- 4.4 A few participants acknowledged at least some of the FBU's concerns though, especially in relation to firefighter strain and the impact of 80 hours spent technically 'on station' and away from home and family.

But playing devil's advocate, the Union will be made up of people who know what it's like to do the job and what firefighters are capable of (Hereford)

There must be much more strain on the 12 firefighters doing DCP than the 22 doing wholetime Shift (Bromsgrove)

80 hours and having to deal with some of the incidents they have to face...it's got to have an impact. And it's a long time to be in one place (Bromsgrove)

- 4.5 Another concern for participants across all three groups was the loss of the 25% salary enhancement for the DCP firefighters. This, it was felt, will have a significant impact on these individuals and their families - even if it will also mean a better work-life balance.

So the firefighters will lose their 25% extra money? (Hereford)

I feel sorry for the individuals working the DCP. It's going to have a big impact on their lives as we all live within our means and they are losing a lot of money (Worcester)

The firefighters will have a better work-life balance but 25% of their salary is a hell of a lot to lose (Bromsgrove)

- 4.6 The issue of firefighter fatigue was raised at each group, with participants seeking reassurances around how HWFRS manages this - especially in relation to On-call firefighters working full-time jobs elsewhere.

With the On-call, they could be working 40 hours a week and then On-call for any number of hours...don't you have the same issues with working hours regulations and health and safety? (Bromsgrove)

How do you work the firefighter fatigue thing with the On-call if they've been working all day in their other jobs? It is concerning if they've been doing a 12-hour Shift with one company and then are On-call with the fire service and could be called out to some long incidents (Hereford)

- 4.7 Other questions and comments were around: the potential impacts of longer response times; the standard to which On-call firefighters are trained (relative to full-time firefighters); the comparative seriousness of daytime and night-time incidents; and the feasibility of sending smaller fire engines to certain incidents.

What are the consequences of getting out in 90 seconds and getting out in 6 minutes? (Worcester)

How crucial is the extra 3½ minutes response time? (Hereford)

Are the On-call firefighters trained to the same standard as full-time firefighters? (Bromsgrove)

Are the standards required of the wholtime and On-call exactly the same? (Worcester)

Although the incident numbers are far lower at night, are the incidents themselves much worse? (Bromsgrove)

Does it always need a fire engine to go out to every incident? Would it be worth looking at smaller vehicles with essential equipment to go to certain incidents? (Bromsgrove)

The proposed options

- 4.8 In considering the two proposed options, the balance of opinion in the three groups was as follows:

Option 1	Option 2	Don't Know
Hereford = 3	Hereford = 6	Hereford = 1
Bromsgrove = 0	Bromsgrove = all (9)	Bromsgrove = 0
Worcester = all (10)	Worcester = 0	Worcester = 0

- 4.9 It should be noted that, of course, the proposals for Hereford and Worcester fire stations are the same under both options, which was accepted by participants in those areas because:

We have essentially got two full-time engines; it's just that night-time coverage that changes. But there's not enough incidents overnight to warrant two full-time engines (Hereford)

- 4.10 As such, people tended to make their decisions on which option they preferred largely on the basis of two factors: the impact of the proposed changes in Bromsgrove; and the amount of money available to be re-invested into prevention and protection (approximately £400,000 for option 1 and £90,000 for option 2).

Option 1

- 4.11 Those who chose to endorse option 1 (three of the ten participants at Hereford and all nine at Worcester) did so primarily as it releases the most amount of savings to be reinvested into the Service's prevention and protection functions - though Worcester participants in particular sought reassurances that any money released would be used appropriately and in the right areas.

They should go for the option that allows the biggest amount of money for reinvestment into prevention and protection (Hereford)

It seems like there's more of a package in terms of releasing more money for prevention and protection...it's like you're getting more for your money (Worcester)

The money would be better spent on the preventative work (Worcester)

The preventative money...it would have to go to where it's really needed. Sprinkler systems and things like that, especially in the areas where response will be longer (Worcester)

- 4.12 Moreover, though there was recognition that night-time turn-out times would be lengthier - and that this would have more of an impact in Bromsgrove given the current DCP engine is the first responding appliance there - those preferring option 1 argued that this would make little difference to response times in practice given the traffic delays faced by crews during the daytime. Indeed, this was also recognised by some Bromsgrove participants.

I'd go for Option 1 purely because of the preventative spending. And the response times in Bromsgrove would likely be very similar to the daytime anyway because of the traffic (Worcester)

At night-time you're not going to have the traffic hold-ups you get during the day. So it's swings and roundabouts really (Worcester)

I'm sure if there was an incident on the other side of Bromsgrove in the middle of the night the On-call engine would be able to get there as quickly as the full-time one during the day because of the congestion (Bromsgrove)

Option 2

- 4.13 Those who chose option 2 (six of the ten participants at Hereford and all at Bromsgrove) did so largely on the basis of the greater number of night-time incidents in Bromsgrove, the town's current and proposed housing growth and its proximity to the motorway network. Some typical comments were:

Living in Bromsgrove it would be better to have a manned engine 24/7. Slightly greedy perhaps but the stats that there are more incidents overnight here support it (Bromsgrove)

The motorway network here is a significant issue around here and with the new build will come more cars (Bromsgrove)

Option 2 is fairest from Bromsgrove's perspective and it delivers on what's required. It also gives us that safety at night (Bromsgrove)

The biggest decision is whether the Service gets an extra £400,000 a year or maybe risk a few lives. It's five to seven night-time incidents per week in Bromsgrove so nearly 500 per year...how many of those are going to die because the vehicle took a few extra minutes to get there? (Hereford)

The growth of Bromsgrove has been significant, but we've had minimal schools, loss of hospitals and reduced fire services. And going forward there are proposals for hundreds of new houses in various areas (Bromsgrove)

Bromsgrove have more incidents and I think having a full-time Shift vehicle there would be good, especially as it's so near the motorway (Hereford)

- 4.14 Furthermore, there was recognition that Option 2 also releases some money (albeit a smaller amount) for reinvestment into prevention and protection, while at the same time satisfying Bromsgrove's fire cover requirements.

Option 2 has the minimum impact county-wide and satisfies the legal requirements that need to be addressed. It also supports some freeing up of resources for prevention and protection which is important (Bromsgrove)

It delivers on the legalities as well as offering some savings (Bromsgrove)

Overall views

Arguments rather than numbers

- 4.15 In deliberative meetings it is not appropriate to 'count heads' in an apparent numbers game - because the results cannot be certified as statistically significant because of the numerically small samples. However, such meetings are effective and important in revealing issues, arguments, considerations, implications, assumptions and experiences that deserve to be taken into account by those making decisions.

Overall summary of findings

- 4.16 Focus group participants understood that HWFRS's hands are somewhat tied as a result of its inability to reach a collective agreement with the FBU in relation to the continuation of Day Crewing Plus and so were prepared to fully consider the two different options on the table to replace it.
- 4.17 In relation to the two options, opinion was split. Understandably, option 2 was wholly favoured at Bromsgrove whereas the converse was true at Worcester: all participants there endorsed option 1 on the grounds that it would release more money to be invested into prevention and protection activity. At Hereford, around two-thirds favoured option two and a third preferred option 1. Taking all this into consideration, there was marginally more support for option 2 than option 1.

5. Written Submissions/Petition

Written submissions: introduction

- 5.1 During the formal consultation process, three organisations and individuals provided written submissions. The contributors were:

Fire Brigades Union (FBU);

Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats; and

A local resident (retired staff member).

- 5.2 ORS has read all the written submissions and summarised them in this chapter; none have been disregarded even if they are not expressed in a 'formal' way. It is important to note the following section **is a report of the views expressed by submission contributors**. In some cases, these views may not be supported by the available evidence - and while ORS has not sought to highlight or correct those that make incorrect statements or assumptions, this should be borne in mind when considering the submissions.

Written submissions: summaries

Fire Brigades Union (FBU)

- 5.3 The FBU has submitted a detailed 26-page document of which HWFRS will take full account. The executive summary, conclusions and recommendations are summarised here.
- 5.4 The main points made by the FBU are that:

HWFRS's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) timespan is far too long and any such mid-cycle consultation should revisit the tenets of the IRMP so that the action plan consultation can be put into context. Otherwise, this consultation is likely to seem abstract to the general public;

HWFRS's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) cuts from 2014 have already left the Service vastly under resourced. The removal of fire engines and loss of firefighters from communities means its counties would be less safe should further cuts be implemented;

Numbers of staff in Emergency Fire Control, Training and Fire Safety departments are too low. The aim of HWFRS should be to refill these departments in order that they are able to deliver a coherent service for the public of Herefordshire and Worcestershire;

Investment in personnel numbers is required to provide a fire service for the future in response to increasing incident numbers received by HWFRS and in readiness for the extra activities firefighters will undertake as a result of national negotiations to broaden their work;

The increase in emergency calls in Hereford and Worcester has been substantial and potential growth to firefighter's work activities is 'juxtaposed to these proposals'. Increases in attendance

times to homes on fire, road traffic collisions and incidents involving flood water mean an increase in a threat to life - to both the person(s) involved and the firefighters sent to intervene;

There are two specific options provided in the consultation questionnaire (with an option to submit an alternative), both of which fail to provide necessary fire cover, and to provide adequate details on what the 'Day Duty' system will look like. There is no agreement between the FBU and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority on any Day Duty system, and therefore it is inappropriately presumptuous to include this as part of a public consultation; and

Residents deserve a fire and rescue service which is fit for purpose, not one that is continually slashed. Fewer firefighters on fewer fire appliances, put firefighters and the public they serve at greater risk from fire and rescue incidents.

5.5 The FBU's conclusions are that:

HWFRS is already under-resourced due to central government funding cuts;

HWFRS's intervention service delivery model is over-estimated, where the reality identifies significant gaps in fire cover; and

The further cuts proposed by this consultation will leave HWFRS further under resourced - which will lead to: longer first attendance times and delays to subsequent fire engines' arrival; fewer resources available for large scale or protracted incidents; greater potential for firefighter injury/fatality; and greater losses/injuries/fatalities for the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

5.6 The FBU's recommendations are that:

HWFRS need to carry out a full IRMP to identify the current risks and trends in conjunction with changing forecasts of future risk. It needs to address the shortfall in its emergency intervention response and make plans to invest in the service;

HWFRS should address the issue of on-call availability as 'this will need a large increase in resources to ensure recruitment and retention are significantly improved, in order to bridge the deficiency in the intervention service delivery model';

HWFRS should desist from attempts to pressure local officials to enter a collective agreement on DCP and unsettling members currently working DCP through misinformation regarding its legitimacy;

The Fire Authority should set HWFRS a much-improved response standard and embark on a strategy to achieve it. This should include, in conjunction with the national employers, lobbying of the Home Office and central government to increase funding to HWFRS;

For the safety of firefighters and for an effective response to all incidents, all fire engines should be staffed at five with a well-trained and competent crew; and

In buoying the numbers on watches as described in the previous recommendation, HWFRS need to reinstate Watch Commanders to the watch establishment.

Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats

- 5.7 The Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats say that residents in Bromsgrove and the surrounding area expect to see a highly responsive service maintained in Bromsgrove 24 hours a day, which must be the priority for any reforms to the crewing system.
- 5.8 The other key points are that the Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats:
- Regret that the DCP system (which was 'working well' in Bromsgrove) has had to be abandoned because of legal action by the Fire Brigade Union at a national level;
 - Recognise the advantages of DCP in terms of ensuring 24-hour a day immediate response - and would like to see this approach emulated as far as possible in any new arrangements (especially the continued presence of a 24/7 fire engine at Bromsgrove); and
 - Support Option 2 as it 'offers the best protection for Bromsgrove'.

Local resident (retired staff member)

- 5.9 The respondent understands the financial environment in which H&WFRA finds itself and the industrial relations constraints with which it is presented. However, they feel that the consultation document missed a real opportunity to present the true impacts of the proposals in such a way as to help respondents advise the Service of their preferences.
- 5.10 The respondent says that when it comes to discussing operational cover with the public, issues of budget and industrial unrest tend to be of little or no interest to them - and that it is these that come over clearly in this document rather changes to emergency cover.
- 5.11 The respondent suggests that HWFRS should have focused on the impact of proposed changes for consultees by demonstrating the 'pro's and cons' of each option which 'has been done in such a way as not even to mention key facts'. In this context they noted:
- The effect on response times of first and second appliances in a range of situations;
 - The effect of staff availability in the cities (retained);
 - Projections of increased property damage/loss;
 - Effect on local business and employment of increased fire loss;
 - Projections of likely effects on casualty numbers and severity; and
 - Projections of likely effects on fatality numbers.

- 5.12 Without this basic information, the respondent suggests that it's almost impossible for a member of the public to provide an informed response.

Petition summary

- 5.13 3,401 people signed an online petition organised by a group of retired watch commanders from HWFRS entitled 'stop dangerous cuts of 60% to fulltime fire cover in Herefordshire and Worcestershire'. The petition statement was as follows.

On the advice of the Chief Fire Officer, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority are proposing to cut the number of full time firefighters on duty at night, across the 2 counties, from 40 to just 16 - a reduction of 60%. These proposals will leave the cities of Hereford and Worcester with just 4 full time firefighters on duty at night instead of the current 8, and Bromsgrove will lose their full time guaranteed and immediate night time cover completely.

Again on the advice of the Chief Fire Officer, without public consultation, the Fire Authority are currently changing duty systems at Malvern, Evesham and Droitwich. These changes remove 12 full time and guaranteed available firefighters On-call at night, significantly worsening the fire cover available for the residents of these 3 large and ever growing towns.

We are a group of retired Fire Service Watch Commanders who fully understand the impact of these dangerous cuts, and are deeply concerned by the reduction of full time fire cover at night in our 2 counties.

We believe the lives of our firefighters, and the people they serve, will be put at risk if the Fire Authority push on with these drastic cuts, which will mean relying too heavily on the already overstretched retained staff.

For the sake of public and firefighter safety we urge the Fire authority to:

Increase the number of full time firefighters on duty at night in both Hereford and Worcester to 10, to maintain the immediate availability of 2 fire appliances in each city;

Keep immediate and guaranteed full time night time fire cover at Bromsgrove;

Reinstate the Day Crewing duty system at Malvern, Evesham and Droitwich to provide full time, guaranteed firefighters On-call at night.

Note on petitions

- 5.14 This petition is clearly important in indicating public anxiety about important aspects of the DCP proposals and HWFRS must treat it seriously. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that petitions can exaggerate general public sentiments if organised by motivated opponents – for example, the statement ‘we believe the lives of our firefighters, and the people they serve, will be put at risk if the Fire Authority push on with these drastic cuts, which will mean relying too heavily on the already overstretched retained staff’ is a highly emotive one.
- 5.15 Moreover, there is no reference within the petition statement to the FBU legal challenge that is necessitating change, the financial constraints within which the Service is operating or the relatively low number of night-time calls in Hereford and Worcester especially. The inclusion of proposed changes at Malvern, Evesham and Droitwich - which are outside the scope of this consultation - also makes it difficult to unpick exactly what those signing the petition are protesting against. Furthermore, as with all online petitions of this nature, it is very difficult to verify that those signing are resident within the two counties and thus directly affected by the proposals.
- 5.16 Petitions should never be disregarded for they show local feelings. However, while these observations do not discredit the petition submitted in any way, they do provide a context within which it should be interpreted.

Report of the Head of Corporate Services

HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Update Quarter 1, 2019-20

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on progress in implementing HMICFRS Improvement Plan.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Authority note progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

Introduction and Background

2. At the Fire Authority meeting on 12 June 2019, Members received a copy of the Service's Improvement Plan drawn up to address the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspection report.
3. The Improvement Plan has now been updated to outline progress made during Quarter 1 (April-June) 2019-20. The report covers the 12 'areas for improvement' highlighted in the HMICFRS inspection report and also notes progress on a number of other locally identified areas for attention drawn from observations throughout the HMICFRS report, an additional 24 items.

HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Progress Update, Quarter 1 2019-20

4. The delivery of the Improvement Plan is overseen by members of the Performance and Information team (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 first update, covering Quarter 1 (April-June) 2019-20, is enclosed with this report (see Appendix 1).
5. The update shows that good progress is being made in addressing all areas identified within the three themes covered in the HMICFRS report; effectiveness, efficiency and people.
6. Key points to note during Quarter 1 are highlighted below:
 - a. Effectiveness: The delivery of an agreed risk management system is in progress with significant work being delivered by providing crews with further guidance around the INTEL 8 process. This has been communicated through the Service Bulletin. The draft report is awaiting sign off from SMB. Work is taking place towards reducing the number of false alarm activations and preliminary work towards the review of the false alarm Policy is taking place. An options report is

being drafted and operational crews have been issued guidance on AFA's.

- b. Efficiency: The Implementation of Community Risk strategies is in progress and additional budget has been allocated to fund additional posts in Community Risk. The Business Continuity HMICFRS area for improvement is now closed as the new policy has been developed and signed off. This has been published with a robust system in place to manage version control and schedules for reviewing plans across the service. This is managed by the Emergency Planning and Resilience Officer (EPRO) and updated and recorded on the staff SharePoint site.
- c. People: Significant work has been completed in this area. The new Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values posters have been rolled out across the service and communicated via the service bulletin, SharePoint and the FRA Plan. Promotion process toolkits have been developed and used in both the recent Crew and Watch Commander promotion processes.

Conclusion/Summary

- 7. The first update of the HMICFRS Improvement Plan shows that good progress has been made during Quarter 1, 2019-20.
- 8. Members are recommended to note the progress made in delivering the HMICFRS Improvement Plan. Further progress updates will be reported each quarter.
- 9. Subject to any matters arising following your consideration, the update will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	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.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Actions proposed in the Improvement Plan are likely to have an impact on both the CRMP and the MTFP. All proposals will be assessed to ensure they meet the Service's overall Core Purpose and Vision.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation)	Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through the Improvement Plan.

scores).	
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	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.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An EIA is not required for this report. EIAs will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2018-19 – Update: Quarter 1, 2019-20

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Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2018/19

Updated: Q1 2019-20



In March 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) announced their intention to inspect all 45 fire and rescue services in England over the next 18 months. The Service was selected as one of the first 14 services to be inspected.

Over summer 2018, 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 2018, and this is [the link to the report](#).

Report findings

The inspection considered three main questions:

- How **effective** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- How **efficient** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- How well does the fire and rescue service look after its **people**?

The Service was found to be 'good' within the effectiveness area but 'requiring improvement' when considering efficiency and people. The inspection report highlighted a number of areas for improvement and recommended that action be taken to address them. Therefore, the Service has prepared an Improvement Plan which not only focuses on the areas for improvement highlighted in the inspection report, but also adds a number of other areas, where further improvements can be made. The Improvement Plan is owned by senior managers and is regularly updated and published as progress is made.

The last update was presented to the Fire Authority on 12 June 2019 and the [Improvement Plan](#) was published on the Service website.

This report provides an update of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan during Quarter 1 (April-June), 2019-20. Areas for Improvement noted in the HMICFRS report are highlighted in bold and blue shading.

HMICFRS Inspection – Improvement Plan 2018-19 Update: Quarter 1, 2019-20

Effectiveness				
Source: HMICFRS Inspection 2018	Summary finding	Areas for improvement	Desired Outcome (What is aimed to be delivered?)	Update Q1 2019/20
ES1.1 Page 8, 9, 11,12	The Service is good at understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies. Its plan to manage risk is based on a range of information. However, mobile computer systems are not updated fast enough with this risk information. The Service recognises this and has plans in place to address this.	The Service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.	<p>Delivery of an agreed Risk Management System providing relevant, up-to-date risk data and intelligence available to firefighters on mobile data terminals (MDTs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tendering and procurement of Risk Management System user training review and audit 	<p>Draft report awaiting sign off from Senior Management Board (SMB). Scheduled submission for this paper in August 2019. Dates have been revised due to delays in the roll out of the MDT hardware; work is progressing Q3/Q4 2019/20.</p> <p>A meeting between Service Delivery and Service Support took place on 15th July 2019 to discuss issues with current quality of Intel gathering and the support being provided to Operational crews. New Intel system has also been discussed.</p> <p>A Service Bulletin item has been submitted providing crews with further guidance around the INTEL 8 process.</p>
ES1.2 Page 8, 9	Community engagement could also be better, to help understand local risk.	Observation	<p>Continue with current activity and enhance engagement by having a formalised process for recording interactions with the public to ascertain their understanding of the fire service, local risk and wider public concerns.</p> <p>Develop a data capture form to be used at various Service events, including; Station open Days, Charity Car Washes, local events etc. which will assist in determining the public's perception of various fire service themes. These could change on an</p>	<p>We are continuing with current activity and enhancing engagement by having a formalised process for recording interactions with the public to ascertain their understanding of the fire service, local risk and wider public concerns.</p> <p>Public consultation will take place in early 2020 as part of the CRMP process, prior to the Service publishing its CRMP 2021-25 document. This consultation, run as focus groups, will enable HWFRS to determine the community's perception of risk, and any specific areas of concern.</p> <p>A review of the existing community risk engagement form (CE1) will be carried out in Q2 2019 to</p>

			<p>annual basis depending on strategic guidance.</p> <p>Use Survey Monkey to gather an understanding of public perception of the Fire Service and the role of a female firefighter. This will be used to inform any positive action initiatives.</p>	<p>determine whether additional questions would provide richer information. This should include the type of event attended and the rationale behind its purpose, so that a more detailed evaluation can be carried out.</p>
<p>ES1.3 Page 8, 11, 12</p>	<p>The Service needs to improve how it prevents fires and other risk. Its prevention plan does not explain how or when things will be done.</p>	<p>Observation</p>	<p>We are working with partners including working towards co-location of harm hubs and community safety teams in Worcester and Wyre Forest to complement the existing co-location in Hereford. We want to continue our work with the Rural and Business Crime Officers within West Mercia Police, the Harm Hub and Vulnerability Team as part of the GETSAFE agenda and MATES, HWFRS and WMP and we strive to intelligently focus activity on the highest harm premises, based not on only on the statutory requirements, but also licensing vulnerabilities, crime patterns and trends and vulnerability.</p> <p>We will measure and evaluate the work we do and target our work appropriately. We will evaluate our Community Risk activities, inspections and enforcements and report to SMB on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>We want to be smarter with our data so that we can identify areas of risk more clearly and analyse trends so that we can continue to set our priorities based on risk and forecast future risks. We can then target our</p>	<p>An Audit Strategy document has been drafted and is being used to inform activity within the protection elements of Community Risk. The Home Fire Safety, Water, Young Persons and Health & Wellbeing Strategies are drafted and awaiting SMB sign off.</p> <p>The PCC bid for road safety scheme involving the YSS charity was successful, and we have appointed a Technician and await the results from the Watch Commander meeting on 29 July 2019 for a Watch Commander posting in the CR department.</p> <p>The Dying to Drive evaluation tender was awarded to the University of Worcester and we are awaiting their report.</p> <p>West District staff are now embedded in Hereford Police Station within the Harm Hub. The co-location of Harm Hub Teams within Worcester and Wyre Forest Hub has not yet happened.</p> <p>A review of all Community Risk Department strategies will commence on a quarterly basis once they have gone live.</p>

			<p>resources more effectively.</p> <p>We want to continue our work with other departments within HWFRS such as HR and Performance & Information, partner organisations and other Fire and Rescue Services by joining up data to get a better picture of risk. We can then measure through targeted Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) how successful our protection and prevention work is.</p>	
<p>ES1.4 Page 8, 12, 13</p>	<p>The Service has extended its home fire safety checks to include questions about vulnerable people. Further training is needed to give staff more confidence in this process.</p>	<p>The Service should ensure staff understand how to identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people.</p>	<p>We want all staff to have completed the existing Safeguarding e-learning by Q2 2019 and then to look at specific training around safeguarding children. This will ensure a comprehensive understanding amongst all staff in relation to safeguarding, including what to look for, what information is required and what to do with that information. Discussions around safeguarding should form part of every station management meeting and for all middle managers to understand their responsibility. Human Resources staff should be trained in safer recruiting. This will be underpinned by a robust system in place for the monitoring and recording of safeguarding referrals.</p>	<p>All Wholetime Watch Commanders have received Safe and Well Check training and this will be cascaded to crews. All staff have access to the online E-learning package, which must be completed by end September 2019. As of the end of Q1 2019/20, 319 members of staff have completed the online training package.</p>
<p>ES1.5 Page 8, 13</p>	<p>The Service should also ensure it evaluates all its prevention work.</p>	<p>The Service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better.</p>	<p>We would like to be in a position where all of our preventative work is measured not just in quantity but qualitatively, so we know that the interventions we undertake have been effective. To do this, we need to establish exactly what the objectives we wish to achieve from our</p>	<p>An evaluation of the Safe and Well pilot has taken place and funding has been secured for the evaluation of Dying to Drive.</p>

			<p>interventions are, and we need to factor evaluation in at the start of any work we do. We want to use effective tools such as Outcomes Star to enable the successful and effective evaluation of our work.</p> <p>We want to be able to demonstrate that all of our Community Risk work (Safe & Well Checks, BFSCs, Fire Safety Audits, Road Safety & any other intervention work) has an evaluation that sits alongside it with clear objectives, and which measures not only numbers. The evaluation should show how effective they have been. This should be in the form of both internal and external evaluation.</p>	
ES1.6 Page 8, 14, 15	The Service is good in how it protects the public through fire regulation. It needs to get the right balance between inspections based on risk and those based on intelligence.	The Service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.	<p>We want to use the RBAP and ILAP along with BFSC referrals to inform what local risks we have in our communities. Using this way of working, we can identify targeted areas of risk and take relevant action. We can then apply a proportionate level of activity to reduce risk.</p> <p>RBAP = Risk Based Audit Programme ILAP = Intelligence-Led Audit Programme BFSC = Business Fire Safety Check</p>	<p>The Audit Strategy (fire safety inspections, as defined by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) has been implemented. A programme of activity for RBAP and ILAP has been created as reflected in the Audit Strategy document. This programme is currently in operation within the Business Fire Safety Team. An interim report will be created to reflect work carried out to measure success. This will be delivered in the Q2 update.</p> <p>Full data sets required for the year-end Home Office report is generated by the CFRMIS Systems Manager which will inform the Q4 review 2019/20.</p>
ES1.7 Page 8, 16	However, the work of the Multi Agency Targeted Enforcement team has the potential to be notable practice.	Observation	Members of the SOCJAG operate over varying footprints from district to national level. A series of outcomes are being developed and will be reported upon at each Strategic SOCJAG under a MATE standing agenda item. An overarching MATE partnership document is being	The MATE presentations have been delivered and the overarching MATE partnership document was presented at the MATE AGM on 11 June 2019. Following the MATE AGM and Serious & Organised Crime Joint Action Group (SOCJAG), a Multi-Agency Targeted Enforcement (MATE) Terms Of Reference has been agreed in draft by the main contributing parties. This will form part of the Tactical options for

			<p>formalised between HWFRS, West Mercia Police and the Local Authority and will be presented at the MATE AGM on 11th June 2019.</p> <p>SOCJAG = Serious & Organised Crime Joint Action Group</p>	<p>Herefordshire's SOCJAG strategy. This includes each agency being able to demonstrate the successes of the MATE strategy. This will signed off at the next Herefordshire SOCJAG meeting. The annual report following the strategic SOCJAG will be reported in Q4 2020.</p>
ES1.8 Page 8, 16	The Service supports local businesses in understanding fire regulations. It should also work more closely with them to reduce the number of false alarms.	Observation	<p>Our aim is to reduce the number of False Alarm activations and unwanted fire signals. We want to be able to use the AFA reduction procedure to reduce the number of activations and to educate communities, housing providers, local authority and businesses to target reductions. We want to reduce the impact which False Alarms have on our operational crews and the resource implications these have on us as a Service. We also want to continue to share data with partner organisations and work with them to target areas of concern.</p> <p>AFA = Automatic False Alarm</p>	<p>Preliminary work is taking place towards reviewing the False Alarm Policy. A report for options is being drafted. An AFA report is produced and generated monthly by the Business Fire Safety Admin team. This is forwarded to Community Risk District Managers, who review and identify trends. Any intervention required will be forward to the Community Risk Team and recorded on CFRMIS. AFA guidance has been issued to operational staff.</p>
ES1.9 Page 18	The Service recognises that the availability of on-call firefighters is a current and future challenge. At several locations, staff (both wholetime and on-call,) expressed their concerns about the availability of the on-call fire engine, as this often led to delays in additional crews attending an incident. The Service is working on addressing this concern and is implementing an on-call charter. We look forward to reviewing this charter.	Observation	<p>In an ideal world the Service would enjoy 100% availability of On-Call staff at all locations, but this is unlikely. However, we will aim for 90+% availability as a realistic target.</p>	<p>A monthly availability report is produced, along with a monthly return. The On-Call Working Group meets regularly to look at a wide range of issues. A meeting with HR has taken place to discuss proposals, these include; an improved recruitment process, changes to on call recruit training and improved employer engagement.</p> <p>The national On-Call branding has been adopted and new promotional material produced in line with this.</p> <p>The first new recruit course has run. A formal debrief has taken place with a positive outcome. Some changes have been made to further enhance the course. The second recruit course is now underway using the new structure.</p>

				<p>The Employer Handbook is currently being designed with the Corporate Communications team.</p> <p>A presentation has been delivered to a major retailer, and this engagement has identified potential candidates.</p> <p>We have also had two banners commissioned to support the On-Call advertising promoting the role to a wider range of people. We also have a number of new social media pages, which allow us to get in to the heart of our communities and opened up recruitment through education.</p> <p>Most stations have Facebook and Twitter accounts overseen by the Corporate Communications team and District teams. A detailed report has also been created for each Station to aid Commanders with Performance Management. A section of this is dedicated to missed fire calls.</p>
ES1.10 Page 8, 19	The Service is good at responding to fires and other emergencies. It has good equipment and training. It is flexible in how it responds to incidents and follows national guidance. However, it should use hot debriefs more often.	Observation	<p>Debriefs are recognised as an important tool to promote personal and organisational learning. For example debriefs directly support the development of a learning culture, which is a key aspect of HWFRS's People Strategy.</p> <p>Whilst the Incident/Exercise Debrief SPI details a clear requirement to conduct hot debriefs, the HMICFRS Inspection identified an inconsistent approach to at different stations. HWFRS want to get to a position where hot debriefs are consistently completed throughout the Service to the same high standard that supports learning not only in the operational</p>	<p>The Incident and Exercise Debrief SPI is up to date and current with the next review due 01 September 2019. A supplementary debrief question has been added to the list of questions asked following conclusion of an IC Health Check.</p> <p>The Handbook file has now been drafted and includes hot, electronic and formal debrief overviews. This has now been added to the Handbook file.</p> <p>No changes to the IRS can be made until the C&C system is updated/stable. A Service Bulletin item will be prepared once the work has been fully completed.</p>

			<p>arena but also as part of training and assessment.</p> <p>Stations that are not carrying out hot debriefs need to be identified, and training and development should be implemented at these stations to ensure hot debriefing is understood and more widely used to facilitate electronic debriefs and future organisational learning.</p>	
ES1.11 Page 8, 18, 19	Also, when it evaluates incident commanders, it should share the learning more widely.	Observation	<p>More robust system of Active Incident Monitoring (AIM) and its method of recording to improve the continuous professional development to existing incident commanders. We aim to review the AIM policy to confirm objectives. Work with Incident Command department and confirm knowledge and understanding of Operational Discretion and its criteria, recording system and national use for levels of command.</p>	<p>An initial meeting between Operational Assurance and Service Delivery has taken place. The AIM policy is being reviewed and this will be updated once the review is complete, programmed for November 2019. When complete, Operational Assurance will meet again with Service Delivery and the Area Commander will relaunch guidance documents, to include the expectations of staff.</p>

Efficiency				
Source: HMICFRS Inspection 2018	Summary finding	Areas improvement	for	Desired Outcomes (What is aimed to be delivered?)
EY1.1 Page 22, 23	An efficient Fire and Rescue Service will manage its budget and spend money properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to its risk. It should try to keep costs down without compromising public safety. Future budgets should be based on robust and realistic assumptions. Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency requires improvement.	Observation		<p>On 1st November 2018, the temporary crewing structure was made permanent following consultation with the representative bodies. This maintained appliance crewing at 4 and maintained a WC(B) available to carry out the WC role, including riding the appliance where appropriate. The benefit to the organisation in this change was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased effective and efficient use of the WC role • Increased resilience across the Service to all appliances • Ability to effectively coach and mentor new Crew Commanders • Improve standardisation across the watches • Improve the development opportunities for WC, CC and FF • Improve the flexibility in deployment of WC • Improved personal flexibility for individuals • All WCs across the Service are now working the same duty system (interchangeability and resilience) • No contractual changes required <p>On 19th December 2018, the FRA confirmed the decision for Wholetime</p>

			appliances to be crewed with crews of 4.	
EY1.2 Pages 22, 23, 25, 26	The Service made ambitious plans in 2014 that it has not achieved. These were based on saving money by improving efficiency and making changes to the workforce. The financial plan is good, and is based on sensible assumptions. But delays in bringing in the planned changes are costing the Service money. This presents a risk.	Observation	<p>HWFRS will move SHQ to the new location at Police HQ Hindlip and lease or dispose of the King's Court site.</p> <p>HWFRS will implement crews of 4 on WT appliances as was agreed in the 2014 CRMP.</p> <p>The temporary SD Ops Structure will be substantiated.</p> <p>Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport stations will be combined into the new Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub.</p> <p>Changes to the workforce.</p>	<p>SHQ Staff have successfully relocated to Hindlip Park. The end project report provides a summary of the project along with benefits and lessons learned.</p> <p>The FRA agreement for Wholetime appliances to be crewed with 4 was agreed on 19 December 2018, and this is now standard across the Service. (Item closed).</p> <p>The Wyre Forest Hub build is progressing well and on track for practical completion November 2019. The Wyre Forest Hub SharePoint page has been set up to update staff regularly and the project remains part of the overall 2020 Vision change programme for the Service. The CIPFA report has been produced and demonstrates the financial benefits of collaboration.</p> <p>The Service is continuing to review the use of reserves to temporarily maintain unsustainable duty systems.</p>
EY1.3 Page 22, 24	We found that staff do not fully understand the proposed changes to the role of watch managers. The Service needs to address this situation.	The Service should assure itself that its workforce is productive. It needs to clarify the role of watch manager.	(As EY1.1 above)	<p>The new crewing system is now in place (closed action.)</p> <p>Two Standard Setting days for Station, Watch and Crew Commanders have taken place. An attendee list confirms those who have attended along with a copy of the presentation delivered.</p> <p>The Crew Commander promotion process has now concluded. The Watch Commander process has also been delivered to enable decisions taken at Workforce Planning. The newly promoted Crew Commanders were presented in the Service Bulletin in Q1 2019/20.</p>

EY1.4 Page 22, 24	Progress made in the Service's prevention work is likely to increase workloads in other areas. We found that specialist prevention officers already have a lot of work to do. This is a risk. The Service should review the situation and consider how to deal with this problem.	The Service should assure itself that its workforce is productive.	<p>Given current staffing, SMB accept that the Audit Strategy for 2019-20 will have its limitations. It is probable that enforcement is likely to increase; therefore, all TFS staff have completed relevant training in case file preparation. At the end of Q1 the Audit Strategy will be taken to SMB.</p> <p>We want to clear the backlog we have for the specialist prevention officers and allocate sufficient resources to both prevention and protection to allow successful enforcement and follow up activity.</p>	<p>The implementation of the Community Risk Strategies is in progress - the strategies are currently in draft. There is a monthly review of outstanding jobs for the Community Risk Technicians.</p> <p>As a result of the SMB paper (18.12.18), additional budget has been allocated to fund additional posts in Community Risk. Interviews for these posts are scheduled for Q2.</p>
EY1.5 Page 22, 24	In particular, it may be able to introduce a better system for replacing faulty smoke alarms.	The Service should assure itself that its workforce is productive. It needs to consider alternative ways to manage the replacement of faulty smoke alarms.	<p>We want to see a reduction in defective alarms and see the need for us to replace faulty alarms decrease. In turn we want to see a reduction in false alarm calls due to faulty alarms. Our priority is those at risk groups to ensure they have working smoke alarms in their homes and premises to ensure they are protected in this way.</p> <p>Crews will continue with Safe and Well Checks, along with Community Risk Technicians. These checks will identify those who require smoke alarms and those at risk in the community, providing an opportunity for HWFRS to signpost to the relevant organisations if required.</p>	A Smoke Alarm update was issued in the Service Bulletin on 07 June 2019.
EY1.6 Page 24	The Service's fire protection programme of work is risk-based and is increasingly targeted at sites where the risk to community and firefighter safety is greatest. However, this better	The Service should assure itself that its workforce is productive.	Given current staffing, SMB accept that the Audit Strategy for 2019-20 will have its limitations. It is probable that enforcement is likely to increase; therefore all TFS staff have completed relevant training in case file	The Audit Strategy for 2019/2020 is in the process of being implemented. This allows capacity to pick up historical RBAP and BFSC referrals, which was not in place under previous strategies. With current resources, this will allow for a small percentage of the historical premises to be addressed. Sufficient

	targeting of protection activity means that inspections are leading to more enforcement and follow-up activity. This affects the workloads of other staff and could soon lead to current resourcing levels becoming stretched.		<p>preparation. At the end of Q1 the Audit Strategy will be taken to SMB.</p> <p>We want to clear the backlog we have for the specialist prevention officers and allocate sufficient resources to both prevention and protection to allow successful enforcement and follow up activity.</p>	resources have now been allocated to prevention and protection. As a result of an SMB paper (18.12.18), additional budget has allocated to fund additional posts in Community Risk. This includes a number of posts in Community Fire Safety and Business Fire Safety.
EY1.7 Page 22, 24, 26		The Service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.	<p>Every project prior to commencing will have a Business Case document which will include the expected benefits involved with delivering the project. In addition, key metrics to enable evaluation for each project will clearly identified at the outset and documented in a benefits realisation exercise post project. A close down meeting will take place with an end project report being produced fully evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a project.</p> <p>We want to use the new programme and project management process to enable closer monitoring and evaluation of projects and to be able to evidence progress clearly and accurately both during and post project. Each project will not be signed off until a closedown meeting has occurred and an end project report produced.</p> <p>We want to be able to set out KPIs prior to a project beginning to enable us to monitor how successful a project has been after completion. We want to</p>	<p>2020 Vision Programme and Project templates have been amended and revised to align with Shropshire FRS. A paper was submitted and approved by SMB to reflect the changes to the 2020 Programme and Project Management process. The revised process will provide better management of projects and better document what projects aim to achieve in terms of benefits and outcomes.</p> <p>A benefits realisation process has been introduced into departmental planning.</p> <p>The Collaboration brochure will be updated annually.</p>

			<p>utilise a robust programme and project management process whereby we are continually reviewing the on-going viability of projects and how better we can work collaboratively with other partners and organisations.</p> <p>We want to explore more collaborative opportunities and ensure we review all collaborative initiatives and projects through measurable outputs and outcomes.</p>	
EY1.8 Page 22, 25	There are good arrangements in place to make sure the Service can continue to function in all circumstances.	Observation	<p>Now that we have a Business Continuity Officer in post, we are looking to regularly review plans we have in place and review them on an annual basis. The EPRO, supported by Operational Policy, will support department heads and station commanders to ensure these plans are updated.</p> <p>We want to ensure all Business Continuity plans adhere to version control and are stored in a directory on SharePoint.</p> <p>EPRO = Emergency Planning and Resilience Officer</p>	<p>Business Continuity Policy has been developed, signed off and published. As part of HWFRS's support for Business Continuity week, a newsletter was developed and published for service wide circulation. This was communicated in the Service Bulletin.</p> <p>A review of Business Continuity plans has taken place and consistent version control has been applied to all plans. Guidance has been added to the Business Continuity plan template and an archive system is now in place managed by the Emergency Planning Office on the SharePoint Site.</p>

People				
Source: HMICFRS Inspection 2018	Summary finding	Areas for improvement	Desired Outcomes (What is aimed to be delivered?)	Update Q1 2019/20
P1.1 Page 29, 30, 36	A Fire and Rescue Service that looks after its people should be able to provide an effective service to its community. It should offer a range of services to make its communities safer. This will include developing and maintaining a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The Service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of the workforce. Overall, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.	The Service should put in place a regular and effective system to measure and monitor staff engagement (across the whole service). It needs to improve its two-way communication channels with staff, and its face-to-face communication by and with senior leaders.	Schedule of staff workshops and online surveys to be put in place to encourage and monitor staff engagement. Two-way communications channels between management and staff to be put in place, including SMB visits across the Service.	All staff workshops to determine Service Values were completed by end April 2019 and the results from the workshops and online survey were submitted to SMB in a report. SMB have signed off new Values and this was communicated in the Service Bulletin on 10 May 2019. A proposal and timeline for drafting HR&D policies and procedures is to be drafted in Q2 2019/20.
P1.2 Page 29, 31, 32	The Service needs to improve how it promotes the right values and culture. It particularly needs to improve how senior leaders communicate with the workforce. It is making changes to make the workforce more adaptable and take on different work. Staff do not fully understand the reasons for these changes. The Service should address this, so that it can improve trust and move forward with its plans.	The service should put in place a regular and effective system to measure and monitor staff engagement (across the whole service). It needs to improve its two-way communication channels with staff, and its face-to-face communication by and with senior	Following the staff values consultation exercise, a refreshed values statement showing how the values fit with the service core purpose, vision and mission will be created and included in the Fire Authority Annual Report 2019/20. SMB to explore ways of increasing visibility across the Service, including annual SMB visits across the Service to engage with all operational and non-operational departments, teams and watches.	SMB Away Days to review Service Values were completed November 2018. Staff have participated in workshops and an online survey to communicate the values which are important to them. SMB have taken these into account and the new, refreshed values are available on the Service Website. SMB visits have been scheduled, to increase visibility and engagement with the workforce. SMB visits started in July 2018.

		leaders.		
P1.3 Page 29, 30	The Service is good at making sure staff wellbeing is a priority. Staff can access a range of support services. The service could consider the benefits of letting staff from all roles work more flexibly.	Observation	<p>We want to provide sufficient flexibility to attract a wide range of applicants from a variety of backgrounds and remove as many barriers to recruitment and retention as possible.</p> <p>We want to ensure that as many staff as practicably possible can benefit from increased working flexibility. We want to accommodate staff and promote a diverse and fair Service, which recognises the needs of staff.</p> <p>The People Strategy Year 2 is in progress and will be published once completed and will follow on from Year 1.</p>	The On-Call Working Group has made recommendations to contracts with alterations to core hours. The current bandings will also be reviewed for suitability as part of this action. Guidance for the new contracts has been issued.
P1.4 Page 32	We were told of several occasions when engines had relatively new Crew Managers in charge. While this is not unusual across fire and rescue services, the Service will need to ensure that these new managers are supported during their operational development, especially at incidents.	Observation	<p>We will ensure that all new operational managers will continue to be supported throughout their development. This will include standard setting events and training days to provide Incident Commanders with experience of managing incidents.</p> <p>Regular informal training sessions are being run to encourage potential incident commanders to “have a go” in a risk free environment where they are coached and mentored with no pressure to take on the role permanently. This is paying dividends with many staff who have a go realising that it isn’t something to be scared of and that you don’t have to be a CC to ride in charge of an appliance. Once this hurdle has been overcome</p>	Standard Setting events and further training days have taken place this Quarter. These will continue to be run on a Quarterly basis, but will be flexible to meet the needs of the candidates.

			staff are encouraged to look at the CC role however and are shown the “real” job and the levels of support available.	
P1.5 Page 29, 32, 33	The Service is good at getting the right people with the right skills and makes sure they are well trained. It is working on a charter for on-call firefighters to improve their experience and increase numbers. The Service would also benefit from finding out about the wider skills and experience of on-call staff.	Observation	Publish the On-Call Charter and conduct a survey among On-Call staff to audit their wider skills, using the IPDR process. Conduct further training days for Crew Commanders and open up promotion processes for On-Call staff .	<p>Training days have taken place for Crew Commanders and work has begun within the On-Call Charter to produce a survey to gather evidence of the wider skills of the On-Call staff.</p> <p>The Crew Commander promotion process has run this year and was opened up to On-Call staff. This has been met with much positivity from candidates. The Watch Commander promotion process has also been run and postings for WCs will be decided 29th July 2019.</p>
P1.6 Page 29, 34	The Service needs to improve how it ensures fairness and promotes diversity. We found that some staff do not understand the importance of diversity. The Service should focus on developing this understanding, so that the workforce can build trust and confidence with its community	<p>The Service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms.</p> <p>The Service should ensure any change processes it proposes are visible to all staff.</p>	We want to ensure effective communication across the Service of the key principles of fairness, inclusion and diversity within our overall culture and values.	<p>Service Bulletins have been issued covering key subjects: diversity, equality, inclusions, LGBT issues.</p> <p>The Head of HR attended the Asian Fire Service Association and a summary of key learning will be shared with the Organisational Development and Cultural Challenge Group.</p> <p>An SMB questionnaire on measuring diversity and inclusion was circulated in May 2019 and has now been completed.</p> <p>A Positive Action Plan for On-Call recruitment has been drafted.</p>
P1.7 Page 34	In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the Service recorded a low number of grievances. We reviewed these and found that the majority did not meet the timescales laid down in the policy. In some cases, an explanation was given for the delay. However, support was not	Observation	We are aiming for a clear Grievance Policy, regularly reviewed, cases tracked and monitored and appropriate support given in a timely way. Feedback will be sought from staff and their representatives and responses and changes made as a result will be clearly communicated to all staff (Wholetime, On-Call and Support).	<p>The Grievance Policy has been reviewed and a new draft is underway. A column has been added to workforce planning documents to monitor timeframes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welfare Support SPI has been drafted with amendments being made. • Watch Commander and above and support line

	offered to the staff members, despite the potential of these delays to cause stress. This was the case even when a grievance was subsequently upheld.			<p>managers training has been completed, with 'mop up' sessions to be arranged. Station Commander and Group Commander training to be mandatory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of policies has been completed with timeframes set out for reviewing each. • A manager checklist for dealing with grievances has been established to be included in the toolkit once the Grievance Policy is in place. • Review and support is offered for those raising a grievance or involved in investigations. • Workforce planning takes place every six weeks to consider staff movements, retirements and turnover. • Sickness, fitness, medical and asbestos records are reported on quarterly plus regular health and safety meetings.
P1.8 Page 30, 34	The Service should improve how it manages performance and develops leaders.	The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	<p>We want to ensure all IPDRs are consistent and all staff have regular review with clear goals and objectives. IPDRs need to capture specific development actions. IPDRs will be tracked and action to address delays will be prioritised.</p> <p>Succession planning for all teams will be supported by the HR&D team.</p> <p>The IPDR process will help to ensure future leaders are identified, with support and development provided.</p>	<p>The toolkit for future Promotion processes is in draft. The Capability and Performance Policy is also in progress.</p> <p>Workforce Planning meetings have been scheduled every six weeks and Terms of Reference have been drafted.</p>
P1.9 Page 30, 35	Managers with specialist skills should continue to be included in leadership team meetings, to support decision making.	Observation	We will ensure that using Subject Matter Experts at Senior Management Board meetings to inform decision making becomes 'business as usual.'	<p>The Terms of Reference for attendees at SMB meetings has been revised to enable subject matter experts to attend and aid decision making.</p> <p>The attendance of subject matter experts at SMB meetings will continue to be monitored and reviewed as appropriate.</p>

				This item can now be closed.
P1.10 Page 30, 35	All staff need to understand and use the appraisal system, to assist workforce development.	Observation	<p>We want to ensure that all IPDRs are carried out face-to-face with key objectives set (continuing the 'golden thread' from Service priorities). IPDRs will be prioritised and completed within set timeframes.</p> <p>New managers will be trained in undertaking the IPDR process.</p> <p>All leavers will have an opportunity to provide feedback as part of an exit interview or exit survey. All responses will be monitored and results reported to SMB.</p>	A review of the Exit Interview process and Leavers checklist is underway. An online exit questionnaire is being developed as part of this work.
P1.11 Page 35	We were informed that the Service manages any failure of on-call staff to respond to incidents. This will usually involve an investigation into the reasons for the failure, such as traffic conditions or a pager not working. The Service's policy states that when six failures to respond occur within six months, Management intervention is required. During our inspection, the lack of evidence meant that no conclusion could be drawn about whether this happens uniformly across the Service.	Observation	We want to ensure there is a consistent approach to managing failure to respond across the Service Districts in line with Service policy, with accurate reporting mechanisms. The Retained Duty System (RDS or On-Call) policy will be reviewed.	<p>An On-Call Support SharePoint area site is currently under build.</p> <p>The first round of Standard setting days are now complete with more planned throughout the year.</p> <p>Training for all Station Commanders to give standardised input to all Station Commanders at On-Call stations is being provided. This will be an annual event to include a refresher on other systems to support management.</p> <p>A reference document is being prepared to support the RDS policy.</p>
P1.12 Page 30, 36	The Service should do more to make sure staff are confident in the promotion process. It is not as open as it could be.	The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	We want to have a Promotion Policy in place with clear, open and transparent processes communicated to all. A best practice toolkit will be used for future promotion processes, building on the success of the first, with regular reviews and feedback.	<p>The Organisational Development and Cultural Challenge Group have scheduled regular meetings.</p> <p>Post process debriefs are now conducted after every promotion process. The toolkit of best practice is in draft.</p>

			The new Organisational Development and Cultural Challenge Group is well established.	
P1.13 Page 36	The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	Observation	There will be a clear process for supporting and developing staff in long-term temporary posts.	<p>Regular workforce planning meetings are in place.</p> <p>The Promotions SPI is in review and will cover all work groups.</p> <p>A Training and Development framework is being worked on in conjunction with the Training Centre.</p>



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 01 May 2019,10:30

Chairman: Cllr K Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Cllr R Adams

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mrs J Potter, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall

143 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Clayton and Cllr Fry.

144 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes for this meeting.

145 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr Phillips declared that he was a member of the Scheme Advisory Board in relation to agenda item 7 (Minute 149).

146 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 29 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

147 Budget Monitoring 2018/19 – Quarter 4

The Treasurer informed Members of the latest position on budgets and expenditure for 2018/19 and provided an update on the 2019/20 budget.

Members were asked to note the small revenue underspend of £0.129m,

of which £0.075m was earmarked to fund additional pension costs in 2019/20.

The Treasurer was pleased to announce that the Authority had not borrowed any funds this year, however this may change for the following year.

The Treasurer confirmed that there was no specific budget for the Judicial Review costs but there would be sufficient in reserves to cover the cost which was agreed by the Authority.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes the forecast revenue underspend of £0.129m (0.4%) and earmarks £0.075m of this to fund additional pension costs in 2019/20.

148 Place Partnership Limited - Shareholding

The Head of Legal Services requested Members to delegate authority to approve changes to the share structure of Place Partnership Ltd (PPL) as a result of Worcester City Council and Redditch Borough Council both having withdrawn from PPL.

Members expressed concern that the Fire Authority should review its own options in relation to PPL in view of the withdrawal of Worcester City and Redditch Borough Councils. It was noted that the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny panel were also due to undertake a review of PPL and that the Fire Authority could also take part in this.

It was agreed by Members that a report be presented to a future Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the Chief Fire Officer be given delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority to approve any changes to the share capital, repurchase or cancelation of shares in Place Partnership Ltd consequent upon the withdrawal of Worcester City and Redditch Borough Councils.

(ii) a review of the Fire Authority's involvement in PPL be brought back to this Committee at a future date and following completion of the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny panel's own review.

149 Fire Pensions Board Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an update on the

establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Members were advised that although the Scheme Advisory Board suggests four meetings per year is best practice, the Pensions Board believes it should only meet when there is business to conduct and finds two meetings per year is sufficient at present.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that he had attended one training session since taking the position of Chair and had two further training sessions scheduled in the future.

Members were pleased that the contract with West Yorkshire Pension Fund was progressing well.

RESOLVED that the Committee confirms that the Pensions Board continues to be compliant with the Public Service Pensions Act 2013.

150 2018-19 Performance Report: Quarters 1-3

Members were provided with a summary of the Service's Quarters 1-3 performance against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board.

A Member expressed her concern from her recent canvassing visits that residents had covered their smoke alarms. Members were advised to ask if residents would like a safe and well check from the Fire Service.

There was concern in relation to the increased number of incidents attended by the Service. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer assured Members that this was mainly due to greater partnership working and the more assisting of other services at incidents.

With regard to the monitoring of attendance times, Members were assured that this was being considered with a scientific approach.

In relation to on-call availability, Members requested comparable data. The Chief Fire Officer agreed to investigate neighbouring services and report back at a future meeting.

Members thanked the on-call staff for their excellent availability and service they provide to the communities. Members were assured that the Senior Management Board visit each station yearly to thank the staff personally.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarters 1-3, 2018-19:

i) A total of 5,780 incidents were attended in Q1-Q3, an increase of 9.45% (499 incidents) over the same Quarters of 2017-18, and 11.30% (587 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years. The overall five year trend shows a gradual increase in the total number of incidents.

ii) The majority of the increase in Q1-Q3 is accounted for by a rise in the numbers of Fire and Special Service incidents, while the number of False Alarm incidents was also up but at a lower rate:

a. Fires: an increase of 15.91% was mainly accounted for by a rise in the number of Secondary Fires (24.00%).

b. Special Services: an increase of 14.10% (176 incidents) was mainly accounted for by increases in the number of Flooding (43), Assisting other agencies (27) and Other Special Services (85) incidents.

c. False Alarms: an increase of 3.26% (82 incidents), the most common automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, nursing homes and hospitals.

iii) Overall Staff Sickness level for Q3 2018-19 was 2.50 days lost per head and was slightly above the 5-year average of 1.99.

iv) The Service attended 54.67% (281 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarters 1-3, compared with 59.82% in the same period in 2017-18. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all Primary Building Fires was 10 minutes and 26 seconds.

v) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 85.21%; however, this has decreased by 3.14% when compared to the same period in 2017-18.

151 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) – Annual Review

The Head of Legal Services was pleased to announce that there had been no use of covert investigatory techniques during the past year.

Members were also informed that this may be the last report they receive

as the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism, with the agreement of the NFCC, were proposing to introduce amendments to legislation to remove Fire and Rescue Services from the list of authorised bodies for the purposes of RIPA, therefore taking away the need to report to Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee note there has been no use of covert investigatory techniques during the past year.

152 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since September 2018.

Members were assured that in relation to the DCP, officers were still in consultation with representative bodies to continue with a wider agreement.

There was concern with the lack of exit interviews. Members were assured that there was a system in place, however employees choose not to undertake them.

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

i) Change of Contracts

ii) Internal Staff and Pay Protection SPI (Service Policy Instruction)

iii) DCP

iv) Service Core Values

v) Night Time Cover

The Meeting ended at: 11:55

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday, 19 September 2019, 13:30

Chairman: Cllr K Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Cllr R Adams

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr A Fry, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mrs J Potter, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill

153 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Clayton, Professor Raine and Cllr Udall.

154 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes for this meeting.

155 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

156 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 1 May 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

157 Budget Monitoring 2019/20 – Quarter 1

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2019/20.

Members were made aware of a number of budget reallocations:

- Release of the pay award provision
- Allocation of inflation provision and other SMB re-alignment
- Grossing up of capitalised PPL costs to make monitoring clearer
- Conversion of budget income from service charges at Kings Court.

With reference to the out-turn projection, Members were informed of two items:

- £0.500m underspending on capital financing charges
- £0.285m provision for the back-dating of the still unresolved July 2017 Grey Book pay award.

The Treasurer confirmed to Members that the future building schemes included Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station, Broadway Fire Station and the fourth strategic training facility.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- i) approved the transfer of £0.250m capital financing underspend to Prevention and Protection initiatives to be confirmed by the Chief Fire Officer;**
- ii) approved the transfer of £0.250m capital financing underspend to support the Fire Station replacement programme; and**
- iii) noted the potential transfer to the pay award reserve and the continuing budget risk regarding the pay award.**

158 2019-20 Performance Report: Quarter 1

Members were provided with a summary of the Service's Quarter 1 performance against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board.

With reference to the Wyre Forest Hub, Members were informed that 11 new recruits were based at the current station in readiness to move to the new Hub.

A Member requested a further breakdown on special services data in future reports and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that this would be available in the future.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarter 1, 2019-20:

i) total of 1,803 incidents were attended in Q1, a decrease of 5.95% (114 incidents) over the same Quarter of 2018-19, and 3.20% (56 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years. The overall five year trend shows a gradual increase in the total number of incidents.

ii) The majority of the decrease in Q1 is accounted for by a drop in the numbers of Fire and False Alarm incidents, while the number of Special Service incidents was up:

a. Fires: a decrease of 22.70% was mainly accounted for by a drop in the number of Secondary Fires (-31.74%).

b. Special Services: an increase of 19.24% (91 incidents) was mainly accounted for by increases in the number of Assisting other agencies (71) and Other Special Services (61) incidents.

c. False Alarms: a decrease of 8.17% (69 incidents), the most frequent automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, nursing homes and hospitals.

iii) Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1 2019-20 was 3.03 days lost per head and was above the 5-year average of 1.81.

iv) The Service attended 47.89% (68 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarter 1, compared with 60.64% in the same period in 2018-19. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all Primary Building Fires was 10 minutes and 41 seconds.

v) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 84.33%; however, this has decreased by 4.75% when compared to the same period in 2018-19.

159 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Authority were asked to exclude members of the public and press from Agenda Item 7.

It was RESOLVED to exclude the public and press on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

160 2 Kings Court, Worcester – Sale of Freehold Reversion

The Head of Legal Services presented a report to consider disposing of the Authority's freehold interest in the former Headquarters building at 2 Kings Court, Worcester.

Members were reminded that at the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 28 March 2018 Members approved the lease of 2 Kings Court to Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust and authorised officers to market the property with a view to the potential sale of the freehold reversion in due course, as advised.

Members were informed that the Authority had now received an offer from a prospective purchaser interested in acquiring 2 Kings Court as an investment property.

[Councillor Adams entered the meeting at 2:01pm].

Members were asked to consider whether to retain the rental income from the property or generate a capital receipt from the sale of the freehold and if the decision is to sell, whether to accept the current offer.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the Authority accepts the current offer for the purchase of the freehold reversion to 2 Kings Court

(ii) Head of Legal Services be authorised to proceed with the sale on the terms proposed, subject to contract

The Meeting ended at: 14:02

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Tuesday, 30 July 2019, 14:00

Chairman: Cllr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Cllr A Amos

Minutes

Members Present: Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mr R J Morris, Dr K Pollock, Mr L Stark

135 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs K Hey and Mrs D Toynbee.

136 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

137 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

138 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 24 April 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

139 Statement of Accounts 2018/19

The Treasurer presented the Statement of Accounts to Members for approval.

Members were made aware of two issues that had arisen since the date the draft Accounts had been issued and which required amendment

to the Statements before approval:

- the audit had identified one special capital invoice for over £0.5m (managed through Place Partnership Ltd) which was received a couple of days after the cut-off date. Given the significant size of the invoice it had been decided to adjust the Statements accordingly.
- On 27 May the Supreme Court refused the government permission to appeal the Court of Appeal ruling in relation to the discriminatory nature of the transition arrangements for the 2015 Firefighters Pension scheme. As a consequence this matter was now being referred back to the Employment Tribunal for remedy, however an additional £15m had been adjusted in the Accounts for this potential impact.

Members also noted that the final contribution of £0.4m from Wychavon District Council for the new Evesham Fire Station was still outstanding and the Treasurer and Head of Legal Services were in detailed negotiations with Wychavon District Council.

Following consideration of the External Audit Findings Report (below) it was **RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts 2018/19 be approved.**

140 External Audit Findings Report 2018/19

The External Auditor presented Members with the External Audit Findings Report 2018/19 which set out any issues that the Committee needed to consider before approving the Accounts.

The External Auditor also presented the Letter of Representation for approval by the Committee which would then formally conclude the Audit.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the External Audit Findings Report 2018/19 including an unqualified opinion on the 2018/19 accounts be noted; and**
- ii) the Letter of Representation be approved on behalf of the Authority.**

141 External Audit Fee 2019/20

The External Auditor updated Members on the fee for the Audit of the 2019/20 Accounts which will largely be undertaken in 2020/21.

Members were informed that the Authority's scale fee for 2019/20

remained at the same level as 2018/19 (£25,311) and that the fees would be reviewed and updated as necessary as the audit work progressed.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the External Audit Fee 2019/20 from Grant Thornton UK LLP.

142 Internal Audit Annual Report 2018/19

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented a report detailing the achievement of the Internal Audit objectives as set out in the Internal Audit Plan 2018/19. The audit opinion and commentary on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment concluded that arrangements for 2018/19 had managed the principle risks effectively and could be relied upon to meet corporate objectives.

With regard to Risk Management, Members were reminded that the Service had robust and embedded risk management processes in place with regular updates brought before the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the Internal Audit Charter and that the audit plan delivered in 2018/19 has provided an assurance level of “full” for three core financial areas and that no limited or below assurance areas have been reported.

143 Internal Audit Progress Report 2018/19 and 2019/20

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with a progress update on the residual 2018/19 audit plan delivery and progress to date on 2019/20.

Members were assured that any recommendations that had been made were being addressed through robust management action plans and in a timely manner.

With regard to controls being strengthened, Members were advised that these were low level house keeping issues and management had put a plan in place to address them. It was suggested by a Member that examples be provided in next year's report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

144 Internal Audit External Assessment

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with an update to the implementation progress made against the Internal Audit

External Assessment that took place during the 2017/18 financial year.

Members were advised that actions had been taken by the Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service and all points had now been satisfactorily actioned.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

145 National Fraud Initiative 2018/19

The Treasurer provided assurance to Members that the Authority's approach to the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) 2018/19 had been thorough and that no fraud had been detected.

Members were advised that this was the second report on National Fraud Initiative 2018/19 due to not all matches being completed in April.

The Treasurer was pleased to announce that the NFI outputs had now been fully and comprehensively examined and no fraud had been identified.

RESOLVED that the Committee note that all NFI matches had been reviewed and that no fraud had been detected.

146 Strategic Risk Register Review

The Head of Operational Support presented Members with the annual update on the Strategic Risk Register.

Members were informed that new processes and framework had been embedded in the management of the Strategic Risk Register and in the departmental level Risk Registers. Members were reassured that there was continual monitoring and reviewing taking place at quarterly Senior Management Board performance meetings and Middle Management Board meetings to ensure risks were being used to drive business.

[Councillor Morris left the room at 14:57 and returned at 14:58].

There was a query from a Member regarding the lack of any mention of climate change as a potential risk to the organisation. Officers confirmed this would be reviewed following the update of the National Risk Register later this year. They were also advised that following a Senior Management Board meeting earlier that day the risk of industrial action had been raised to medium due to the current threat of strike action.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

147 Organisational Development and Challenge Group Update and People Strategy 2017 – 2020 - Progress Update

The Head of Human Resources and Development presented Members with an update on the Organisational Development and Challenge Group, including People Strategy progress in relation to equality and diversity.

Members were advised that the purpose of the Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG) was to act as a critical friend in challenging plans and processes in order to improve equality, diversity, consistency, transparency and outcomes.

Members were pleased to note that the Service continues to make good progress in embedding its equality, diversity and inclusion agenda and will continue to provide updates to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the following areas of progress be noted:

i) The Organisational Development Working Group now incorporates a critical friend role with regards to cultural change and has been re-named the Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG);

ii) Following the appointment of the Head of HR and Development, year three People Strategy actions to be undertaken by the HR&D team have been mapped into a People Delivery Plan;

iii) The People Delivery Plan also encompasses actions in relation to the HMICFRS feedback; and

iv) The People Strategy 2020 – 2023 will be drafted during the Autumn of 2019.

Health and Safety Committee Update

The Head of Operational Support updated Members on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

Members were informed that although there had been a slight increase in accidents, injuries and damage reported in comparison to Quarter 4, 2017-18 and the previous quarter, this was not seen as significant.

There was concern by Members that 25% from the staff survey results felt negative about Health and Safety and were assured that Managers would

explore why this was.

RESOLVED that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

i) Health and Safety performance information recorded during January to March 2019 (Quarter 4);

ii) The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives.

The Meeting ended at: 15:30

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman