



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

AGENDA

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

10:30

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

Wyre Forest House Location Map

SAT NAV: DY11 7FB

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

From Stourport:

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

From Kidderminster:

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



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- 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.

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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

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 26 January 2022, 10:30

Agenda

Councillors

Mr R J Phillips (Chairman), Mr C B Taylor (Vice Chairman), Mr D Chambers, Mr A Ditta, Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs K Hey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

No.	Item	Pages
1	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	
2	Named Substitutes To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3	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.	
4	Confirmation of Minutes To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021.	1 - 7
5	Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) To inform Members of the current position on the budget for 2022/23 and implications for the MTFP.	8 - 14
6	Update on progress with the Invest to Improve programme This report is intended to update Members of the Committee on the progress being made following the release of funding from strategic reserves in June 2021 to make long term improvements in some key elements of core service delivery and infrastructure.	15 - 20

7	Fleet Strategy Update	21 - 38
	To provide an update for Members on the current Fleet Strategy.	
8	Property Services Update	39 - 42
	To provide an update for Members on the current property programme.	
9	Update from the Joint Consultative Committee	43 - 46
	To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 2 December 2020.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday, 16 September 2021, 10:30

Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Chambers, Mr A Ditta, Mrs K Hey, Mr R J Phillips, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr T Wells

179 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr K Guthrie, Cllr L Robinson and Cllr R Udall.

180 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

181 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was a member of the NJC for Fire Service, Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), a member of the Fire Commission and a Director of Place Partnership Limited.

182 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

183 Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – Quarter 1

The Treasurer updated Members on the current position of the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22.

Members were informed that since the Fire Authority meeting in June,

further clarity had emerged over the Retained Business Rate estimates which had resulted in a net reduction in the transfer to reserves of £0.121m. The Core Budget was now confirmed as £35.276m, funded by Precept, Grants and Retained Business Rates of £35.065m.

Members were also asked to note the Revenue overspend of £0.266m which related to pay awards and the potential for further capital financing under-spending due to a number of minor building schemes being delayed due to the wind down of Place Partnership Ltd.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the revised Core Revenue Budget at £35.276m and the allocations in Appendix 1 Column 6 be approved;

(ii) the Revenue overspend of £0.266m relating to pay awards be noted; and

(iii) the potential for further capital financing under-spending be noted.

184 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting relating to discussion of Appendix 1 of each of the Agenda Items 6 and 7 on the grounds that it 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).

185 Redevelopment of Hereford Fire Station

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the proposals for the redevelopment of Hereford Fire Station on the existing site in order to seek approval for an increased budget allocation.

Members were reminded that the Authority's Asset Management Plan 2009-2013, adopted in 2009 identified that the design of Hereford Fire Station was no longer fit for purpose, the building's services were approaching the end of their useful life and some elements of the building were deteriorating. In March 2011, the Policy and Resources Committee approved Hereford as one of four stations as priorities for replacement and allocated a budget at that time. Hereford Fire Station is the only scheme yet to be either completed or underway.

Although a number of proposals had been investigated over the years, including sites at Edgar Street Grid redevelopment, Bath Street, Merton Meadow, and more recently Holmer Road, none had been successful.

Members were informed that a high-level feasibility options appraisal of the existing fire station site at St. Owen Street had been prepared. A preferred option had been identified, proposing a new four bay fire station with associated accommodation, improving access and egress from the site and enhancing car parking.

Members were pleased to note the proposals and progress being made and approved the increased budget allocation for the build.

RESOLVED that:

***(i) the budget allocation for the redevelopment of Hereford Fire Station be increased to the amount shown in Appendix 1
[CONFIDENTIAL - Not For Publication];***

(ii) the Authority proceed with proposals for the redevelopment of the Fire Station on the existing site at St. Owen Street, Hereford; and

(iii) Officers be authorised to:

(a) appoint architects to complete detailed design work and seek planning permission for the proposed development;

(b) proceed with the proposed development subject to planning permission being granted and provided the estimated costs, including the costs of any temporary fire station, remain within the approved budget; and

(c) make suitable arrangements for the temporary location of the fire station during the construction period.

186 North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility & Feasibility to Relocate Leominster Fire Station, and Options to Move Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the proposals for the development of a North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility, the potential future relocation of Leominster Fire Station and options to relocate the Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station.

Leominster STF was the only 'hot fire house' training facility approved in 2011 which had not so far been delivered. However, a potential site had now been identified at Leominster Police Station, with a proposal to provide a two-storey training facility, with both domestic and commercial training scenarios and BA facilities.

A long term option to relocate Leominster Fire Station to the Police site has also been identified. The proposal was to further develop and incorporate the fire station redevelopment option into the STF planning permission documents, proposing a two phased approach to the scheme.

The existing Training Centre at Droitwich Fire Station was very constrained. It was therefore proposed to investigate the feasibility of relocating the Training Centre to the Wyre Forest Hub. These proposals would be subject to identifying appropriate funding and could be phased over a four year period.

The budget allocation for the North Herefordshire STF had been previously approved by the Fire Authority and Members agreed to proceed with the feasibility options and planning appraisal for the relocation of the Training Centre.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the budget allocation for the development of the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility (STF) be noted, shown in Appendix 1 [CONFIDENTIAL - Not For Publication];

(ii) the Authority proceed with proposals for the development of a North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility on the Leominster Police Station site at Enterprise Park, Leominster (phase 1) subject to the agreement of the Police & Crime Commissioner;

(iii) Officers be authorised to:

- 1. appoint architects to complete detailed design work and seek planning permission for the proposed STF development utilising the previously approved capital programme, shown in appendix 1;***
- 2. submit additional detail in the STF planning application as part of a proposed two phase development approach for the future relocation of Leominster Fire Station to the Police Station site;***

(c) proceed with the proposed STF development subject to planning

permission being granted and provided the estimated costs remain within the approved budget;

(d) make suitable arrangements to enter into an agreement with the Police & Crime Commissioner to locate the STF at Enterprise Park (phase 1), and the potential future relocation of Leominster Fire Station if planning permission is approved and capital funding is identified (phase 2); and

(e) appoint architects to complete a feasibility options appraisal, including planning feasibility to relocate Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station, financed from within the reserve approved in June 2021, also shown in Appendix 1.

187 Property Update

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the current property programme.

Members were informed that the Fire Authority had entered into an agreement for the OPCC to deliver the Service's property management functions as part of a joint property team. The new service became operational on 1st April 2021 and continues to transition and develop well.

It was noted that there were currently four new build schemes being planned/developed including; Broadway Fire Station, Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station, and a Strategic Training Facility in North Herefordshire.. Site disposal of the former fire station sites at Windsor Street Bromsgrove, Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport continued to be progressed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

188 Pensions Board Update (Fire Pension Schemes)

The Treasurer updated Members on the activities of the Pension Board for the Firefighter Pension Schemes (FPS). The aim of the Board was to assist the Scheme Manager in accordance with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

The Head of Legal Services explained to Members that "McCloud/Sargeant", which the the report referred to, was a legal case regarding the protections and transition arrangements for older members of the 2015 scheme. This was common across all public sector schemes,

however the scheme was found to be unlawful as it discriminated against younger members of the schemes. The Government intended to remedy this situation but the administrative consequences in doing so were significant.

RESOLVED that the following areas of progress are noted:

(i) The Pensions Board continues to be compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

(ii) Following the last report to the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2020, after advice from The Pensions Regulator, it was decided that the Pensions Board would move to four meetings per year. These were held on 22 October 2020, 18 January 2021, 14 April 2021 and 21 July 2021.

189 Firefighters Pension Schemes – Voluntary Scheme Pays (VSP)

The Treasurer presented Members with a variation to the current approval for the implementation of a Voluntary Scheme Pays (VSP) to delegate authority to the Treasurer to agree appropriate arrangements.

Members agreed to delegate authority to the Treasurer to use the Voluntary Scheme Pays (VSP) arrangement.

RESOLVED that the Treasurer be given delegated authority to use the Voluntary Scheme Pays (VSP) arrangement, in relation to the Firefighters Pension Schemes.

190 Quarterly Performance Reporting

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with proposals to redesign the Performance Quarterly Report based on key performance areas identified in the new core and enabling Strategies.

The adoption of these key strategic performance indicators would ensure that:

(i) The needs of the Fire Authority Members were met and that they had sufficient information and assurance on the Service's performance.

Additional information and statistics could be provided upon request or by exception;

(ii) The process of management against the performance indicators was efficient, appropriate and aligned to the HMIFRS data requirements; and

(iii) The proposed new performance indicators were appropriate, relevant

and aligned to the Service mission and strategies.

RESOLVED that:

(i) future quarterly performance reporting be aligned to the new Service core and enabling strategies and key performance indicators; and

(ii) the format of the report presented to Members be refreshed accordingly.

191 Q1 2021-22 Performance Report

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 1 2021-22.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that they would receive a report at the next Fire Authority meeting detailing the Cause of Concern from the HMICFRS.

Members were pleased to note the Service's performance.

RESOLVED that Members note the Q1 2021-22 performance headlines set out in the report, with further details available in the Appendix to the report.

The Meeting ended at: 12:04

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Report of the Treasurer

Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of the current position on the budget for 2022/23 and implications for the MTFP.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee:

- i. Approves the changes to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) expenditure projection;*
- ii. Recommends that the Authority increase the Band D Precept by £1.72 (1.96%);*
- iii. Notes that the MTFP funding projection awaits detailed information on Business Rates; and*
- iv. Notes that the indications are that the final MTFP will be within previously approved parameters.*

Introduction and Background

2. In February 2021 the Authority approved a budget for 2021/22 and an MTFP for the period up to 2024/25, which was updated in June 2021; this was based on very uncertain information for years beyond 2021/22.
3. The most recent report to the Authority was made in December 2021 immediately prior to the local government grant settlement announcement and prior to council tax-base information and business rate yield information from Billing Authorities and was essentially a holding report.
4. More (but not yet full) information is now available to give a more informed view on the possible final position for the Authority to consider in February.
5. Whilst there has been a three-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), the deferred changes to local government grant distribution (*the impact for fire is minimal as explained below*) are that there is again only a one-year grant settlement, with no specific information on later years of the CSR or any indication of direction beyond. As a consequence, the MTFP has been limited to the CSR period.

Expenditure Projection

6. In June 2021 the Fire Authority approved a revised expenditure forecast as set out below (and there are a number of revisions to this).

	£m	£m	£m
June MTFP Projection	36.618	37.372	38.739
Wyre Forest Hub - delayed disposals	0.050		
Additional Road fuel inflation to 20%	0.055	0.055	0.055
Additional electricity/gas inflation to 50%	0.130	0.130	0.130
Revised MTFP Projection	36.853	37.557	38.924

7. The MTFP anticipates savings from the sale of surplus buildings following the opening of the Wyre Forest Hub. However, continued delays to the physical disposal of these assets may mean the achievement of the costs savings are deferred. The increases in inflation provision are self-explanatory.

Funding Resources Projection

8. As Members will be aware, funding comes from three sources: government, council tax-payers and business rate-payers, yet there are interconnections between all three, especially as government has supported the impact of Covid on the council tax-payers and other macro-policy decisions around business rates.
9. In an attempt to make this simpler and to allow more realistic year on year comparisons the analysis is split into three broad areas, all of which will include elements of grant. This analysis will be different to that used by other Authorities

Government Grant Related

10. The provisional local government settlement was issued in late December and is expected to be confirmed in late January. As usual this has been subject to the usual consultation process, but it is unlikely to change. Key features of this are that there are no grant reductions and government appear to have fulfilled its promise to fund the Employers National Insurance increases.
11. It was originally expected that Department for Levelling Up and Communities (DLUC) would implement changes to the local government funding formula this year and it had managed to secure £825m additional funding to smooth this transition. As this change has now been delayed this funding has been distributed this year as a one-off allocation, before moving into the base under the new formula from 2023/24.
12. As the Fire formula will not change for this CSR period the three-year allocation of this money to fire is highly likely to remain unchanged. One general change that will impact on fire is that the revised formula is expected to switch back from using actual to using average Council Tax levels, which could be advantageous to this Authority. No advantage has been assumed in the MTFP.

13. As Fire Revenue grants (for New Dimensions and Firelink) are technically part of central government expenditure (rather than part of the local government settlement) they cannot be announced until late February but all indications are that this will remain unchanged.
14. Pension Grant was expected to move from Home Office (HO) to DLUC this year but legal questions around the distribution mechanism under the local government settlement have seen this revert back to HO. As a consequence, this also cannot be confirmed until late February but again all indications are that this will remain unchanged.
15. It is also helpful to see that the small Rural Services Delivery Grant is to continue.
16. The table below shows a comparison between the MTFP assumptions and the provisional settlement with the 2021/22 position shown to provide context.

	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 MTFP £m	2022/23 Provisional £m
Revenue Support Grant	2.081	2.123	2.144
Business Rate Top Up Grant	3.372	3.372	3.372
S31 Grant - Freezing Business Rates	0.176	0.247	0.277
2022/23 Services Grant			0.392
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0.115		0.115
S31: Fire Revenue Grant - New Dims	0.820	0.820	0.820
S31: Fire Revenue Grant - Firelink	0.157	0.182	0.182
Pension Grant	1.568	1.568	1.568
	8.289	8.312	8.870

17. Even allowing for the fact that the settlement included funding of £0.214m of National Insurance Costs this represents a real £0.344m improvement in the position.

Precept Related

18. Precept income is a combination of the tax-base and the Band D tax-level. The Authority has approved a planning assumption of an annual increase of 1.96% which is continued. The tax-base projections were provided by the Billing Authorities and were cautious when making these projections in the midst of the unknown long-term implications of Covid and an overall increase of only 0.36% was forecast.
19. Although most of the Billing Authorities have, as yet, not formally notified the Authority of tax-bases, information provided to other Preceptors indicates that an actual overall increase of 1.93% is likely. As yet there is no indication on the Collection fund position and although we need to allow for the spreading of the 2020/21 deficit the indications from the tax-base growth suggest that a small surplus for 2021/22 may be likely. However, the current projection continues to assume a neutral position on 2021/22.

20. In the absence of information on future tax-base changes, the current assumption is for an annual 0.8% increase, which is a reasonable historical average for planning purposes.
21. In summary, the position is as set out below and again this represents a significant improvement on the MTFP position:

	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 MTFP £m	2022/23 Provisional £m
Council Tax Precept	24.601	25.175	25.568
Council Tax Collection Fund	(0.032)		
Council Tax Collection Fund Spread	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.088)
LCTSS Grant	0.372		
Collection Fund Deficit Grant	0.035	0.035	0.035
	24.888	25.122	25.515

Business Rate Related

22. In principle. Business Rates are relatively straightforward, but in practice they are the area of most complication and uncertainty. Although Billing Authorities are required to provide information to Preceptors for budget setting purposes, the statutory deadline for this is not until 31 January.
23. In practice the position has historically been recorded as the baseline position (i.e. the yield the government is assuming for settlement purposes) and a plus/minus adjustment brings this to the actual level the Billing Authorities are projecting. There is then an adjustment for the Collection Fund deficit or surplus.
24. In recent years there has been an added complication that government has provided a Section 31 grant to compensate for the impact of national decisions to restrict the annual rise in the Business Rate below that was allowed for in the legislation. An estimate of this figure will be given by the Billing Authorities in January but is also estimated by government as part of its "Spending Power" calculations in the financial settlement.
25. In addition to this, government has also implemented a system of business-rate tax-relief at a national level and compensated for this locally by a further Section 31 grant. This figure will be estimated by the Billing Authorities in January. It is not clear if this scheme of relief is the same in 2022/23 as in 2021/22.
26. The third element of uncertainty is around the Collection Fund position. The deficit in 2020/21 (which formed part of the 2021/22 funding) was substantial at over £1m, representing over 40% of the gross yield. Whilst this might have been expected as a result of Covid, only a very small proportion - £0.200m - qualifies as exceptional and is being spread over three years. For MTFP purposes this

deficit was assumed to be abnormal and a return to normality was forecast for 2022/23 and beyond.

27. Reliable data is still awaited on:
 - a. Gross business rate yield
 - b. Collection Fund surplus/deficit
 - c. S31 Relief Grants

Financial Summary

28. The current uncertainty over the Business Rates position means that it is not possible to confirm whether the improvements to the grant and precept position will permit future investment or compensate for ongoing reductions in Business Rate income.
29. Members will also be aware that the current MTFP included some budget gap, which were considered acceptable pending the three-year settlement and covered by the budget reduction reserve. As a reminder the current MTFP is summarised below:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m
Gross Expenditure	36.618	37.372	38.739
Forecast Funding	(36.120)	(37.106)	(38.052)
Structural Gap	0.498	0.266	0.687

30. Based on the latest information the revised position can be summarised as follows:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m
Gross Expenditure	36.853	37.557	38.924
Grant Related Funding	(8.870)	(8.986)	(8.922)
Council Tax Related Funding	(25.515)	(26.223)	(27.007)
Known Business Rate Related Funding	(0.137)	(0.141)	(0.198)
Gap Before Business Rates & Council Tax collection Fund	2.331	2.207	2.797
Business Rates at 2021/22 levels	(1.702)	(1.736)	(1.771)
	0.629	0.471	1.026
Business Rates at MTFP levels	(0.858)	(0.875)	(0.893)
	(0.229)	(0.404)	0.133

31. It can clearly be seen how much the overall position is determined by the outcome on Business Rates, although Members are reminded that the estimates do not currently include any Council Tax Collection Fund figures either.

Future Variables

32. As has been stated previously there is still uncertainty over direction of funding that may arise from the CSR and the table below just gives an indication of some of the potential impacts. *(Note: a figure in brackets indicates an impact that reduces the deficit).*

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m
1) 5% cut per year in SFA		0.391	0.790
2) 25% cut per year in RSG		0.547	1.116
3) 10% cut per year in SFA		0.782	1.580
4) 15% cut per year in SFA		1.173	2.231
5) Freezing Council Tax in 2022/23	0.492	0.504	0.520
6) 0.1% additional increase in tax-base		(0.026)	(0.054)

SFA = Settlement Funding Assessment – the figure which government determines will be funded from Retained Business Rates, Business Rate Top-up Grant and Revenue Support Grant.

RSG = Revenue Support Grant, one of the elements that make up RSG.

33. In addition, the following areas have uncertainty around them:
- Pension Grant - £1.6m. Introduced as a temporary funding measure in 2019/20 to cover the significantly increased cost of employers' contributions; this was intended to be dealt with through the next CSR. In the interim it has been passed from Home Office back to DLUC for inclusion in core funding and it is uncertain if the existing distribution can be maintained.
 - Pension Costs – FFPS rates are due for revision from April 2024 indications are of another increase.
 - Pension increases – As injury pensions (and On-call pensions prior to 2006/2000) are paid from the revenue account the “triple-lock” arrangement, if implemented, would increase costs by an additional £0.050m.
 - Early indications are that the cost of the Emergency Service Network (ESN) may be less than the current Firelink arrangements, by up to £0.2m from 2024/25, but there is still a lot of detail to be provided before this can be relied upon.

ESN is the new national emergency services communications network being developed by government. Firelink is the Fire element of the existing government developed communications system, sometimes known as Airwave.

“Spending Power”

34. As part of the local government settlement, the government provides information on changes to local authority spending power. This is a slightly odd calculation because it uses some actual data and some where government is

making estimates (e.g. council tax-base growth). It is noteworthy that government is assuming that all Authorities increase precept by 2%.

35. Government is quoting an average increase for Fire of 4.7% but the figure for Hereford & Worcester is only 4.0%. This compares to 4.7% for Shropshire although the difference is due to differences in assumptions about council tax-base growth.

Conclusion

36. The overall position is totally dependent on the business rate yield. The previous MTFP projected a position that was some 50% better than in 2021/22 (allowing for the abnormal Collection Fund loss), but to provide a balanced budget only requires an improvement of around 40%. At the other extreme an improvement of only 10% will result in overall deficits in line with the previous MTFP and which were considered to be within the manageable parameters accepted in Feb 2021.
37. It would not be unreasonable, therefore, to expect a revised MTFP that is financially more favourable than the previous one.
38. A final report, with confirmed information, will be brought to the Authority in February for decision on Budget and Precept for 2022/23.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Whole Report
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Update on progress with the Invest to Improve programme

Purpose of Report

1. This report is intended to update Members of the Committee on the progress being made following the release of funding from strategic reserves in June 2021 to make long term improvements in some key elements of core service delivery and infrastructure.
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Recommendation

It is recommended that the schemes identified within the Invest to Improve programme and progress to date, be noted.

Introduction and Background

2. In June 2021 the Fire Authority agreed to release funding through restructuring of reserves and utilising other available funding to support a programme of investment across the Service. The purpose of this was to ensure a number of key projects could be completed, to initiate improvements in several key areas and ensure that investment to underpin a broad range of capital and revenue based improvements could be realised over the next three to four years, aligned to the core strategic objectives.

Progress

3. Detailed below is a summary of some key areas of development (not definitive):
4. A new incident command suite has now been completed in Worcester which will provide vastly improved technology and training both on site and remotely to all locations. This facility is undergoing commissioning in the New Year.
5. Funding has been allocated to a three year project to improve marketing and recruitment for on-call staff at all 25 operational locations. This project will also drive improvements in diversity, in particular recruiting female staff, but also new staff from a range of backgrounds. This project has now been scoped out and it is anticipated that by Spring (2022), the delivery team will be formed and begin to deliver support for on-call recruitment targeted at those stations most in need initially.
6. The digital transformation required to provide new training packages and technology to enable instructors to deliver training for operational staff aligned to

National Operational Guidance is being developed. Funding has been allocated to provide all staff with fully interactive on-line tutorial and assessment packages. This will replace the current PowerPoint style packages which need to be delivered manually and in the workplace each year. The new style training packages can be accessed remotely and on personal devices making it easier for all staff to train from any location or at home. Initial prototype packages have now been developed and changes to training staffing are being finalised to ensure these new packages can be built, updated and maintained in the future.

7. Introduction of a new system for tracking, testing and tracing equipment. The current system is now aging and relies on serial numbers on each item of equipment (around 16,000 items) to be manually recorded and inputted into a database when, used, tested or moved. A new system is being researched which will automate this function to a large degree and allow items of equipment to be electronically tagged. Once implemented this project will ultimately realise significant capacity benefits for the wider workforce leaving more staff time available for prevention activities, and operational training.
8. Fire investigation: A joint project with Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service, monitored through the Strategic Alliance Programme, is aiming to deliver a joint solution (with West Mercia Police) to align Fire Service staff to new regulations in regard to becoming approved and qualified fire investigation specialists for criminal investigations. This project is being led by HWFRS on behalf of both Services and is making good progress. This will also provide conformity with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) framework and provides resilience across the Alliance, driving future effectiveness and efficiency.
9. There is a need to digitise and reshape how the Service uses corporate (external) and managerial (internal) communications, by utilising and enhancing the new technology that has proven to be effective during the Covid pandemic. The Service has carried out a selection process and identified a digital marketing consultancy company to review our current, and future internal and external needs. The research, when completed, will provide a delivery plan for what is needed in terms of technology, messaging, transmission routes, absorption rates, perceptions and feedback. This also aligns to areas identified by the Inspectorate (HMICFRS), with regards to leadership, visibility of senior managers and how we gather and use staff feedback more effectively.
10. Some of the approved funding has been allocated to underpin and support capital projects such as the completion of the final strategic training facility in north Herefordshire, at Leominster Police Station. It is anticipated that the new training facility will go live in late 2022/23.
11. Funding has also been made available to develop and improve both the Prevention and Protection functions. This project is currently being scoped out and will drive improvements in technology to help handle, manage and utilise data better to underpin targeting and evaluation of Prevention work. It will also ensure that Protection work is also seamlessly transitioned into the Response 'Intel' database to improve operational responder knowledge and risk information. A new Intel risk information database is also required and built into the Invest to Improve programme.

12. Additional funding has also been provided to ensure that the ambitious Protection (Fire Safety) training programme is fully funded to realise and drive higher skill and knowledge levels across all operational staff. Succession planning and training for certain key specialist posts is also included within this project. The requirement to undertake this work is aligned to national expectations, through NFCC, and the HMICFRS that have emerged as a result of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
13. Funding will also be allocated to underpin the Services Environmental and Sustainability (5 year) Plan, however due to a staffing shortage this has been delayed and the funding requirement is not established. It is anticipated that a new Estates Manager post will be recruited into in Spring 2022, which will drive this piece of work forward.

Conclusion

14. The Invest to Improve programme is ambitious, wide ranging and not yet fully formed in some areas. The Senior Management Board (SMB) aims to review the programme in the New Year and target how to further develop and resource these key workstreams.
15. A number of key areas are already in progress and outlined in this report. However, due to staffing issues and with new members in post at SMB and middle management levels it has taken longer than hoped to initiate some projects. Additionally, it has been important to engage and consult with the workforce, and ensure that the programme is built progressively, so it is owned and developed by the wider management team and workforce.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Identified in core funding and release of reserves see Appendix 1 and Treasurer's regular update to Authority on MTFP.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	This paper links to all core strategies and enabling strategies alongside MTFP & CRMP.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Not applicable at this stage.

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Formal consultation not required, however informal consultation has taken place with staff, managers and trade unions.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Equalities impact assessments will normally be undertaken as each element of this programme develops.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – HWFA Reserves

Appendix 1 – Invest to Improve Programme

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: Reserves

		£m	Approved 31-Mar-21 £m	In this Report £m
<u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u>				
Sustainability Reserve			0.310	0.310
Organisational Excellence Reserve	NOG Implementation	0.600		0.600
	Command Competence	0.280		
	FI Accreditation	<u>0.160</u>	1.040	0.160
C&C Reserve			1.527	
ESMCP Reserve			1.099	
RPE Reserve			1.000	
Broadway Reserve			0.981	
On Call Recruitment Reserve			1.000	1.000
ICT Replacements Reserve	Intel	0.500		
	Equipment Tracking	0.500		0.500
	Station End Equipment	<u>0.200</u>	1.200	
Capital Projects Reserve	STF (top up)	0.250		0.250
	Training Relocation	<u>0.650</u>	0.900	
Property Maintenance Reserve	Planned Maintenance	0.562		
	Station Refurbs	<u>0.250</u>	0.812	
Pension Tribunal Reserve			0.400	
Development Reserve	Development Reserve	0.121		
	Alliance Reserve	<u>0.189</u>	0.310	
Pensions Reserve			0.216	
Protection Grants Reserve	20/21 Building Risk Review	0.060		
	20/21 Protection Uplift	0.092		
	20/21 Grenfell Infrastructure	0.037		
	20/21 Accreditation	<u>0.012</u>	0.201	
Safety Initiatives Reserve			0.110	
Fire Prevention Reserve			0.231	
Equipment Reserve			0.190	
			11.527	2.820
<u>Other Specific Reserves</u>				

Operational Activity Reserve	0.600	
Insurance Excess Reserve	<u>0.130</u>	0.730
<u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u>		
Budget Reduction Reserve	1.428	
Budget Reduction Reserve (Covid-19)	0.602	
TIG Reserve	0.146	2.176
Total Earmarked Reserves		14.433
General (Un-earmarked) Reserves		1.538
Total Reserves		15.971

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Director of Prevention and Assets

Fleet Strategy Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update for Members on the current Fleet Strategy.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fleet Strategy update be noted.

Introduction and Background

2. The purpose of the Fleet Strategy is to provide a 5 year structured approach to vehicle management that ensures that HWFRS continues to provide and maintain the right vehicles in order that our staff can undertake their jobs effectively, and is in line with the mission, purpose and Service strategies.
3. HWFRS aims to maintain a high standard of fleet provision through continual improvement, evaluation and investment. The current Fleet Strategy was developed in 2015 to cover the period 2016 to 2021 and has been updated annually. The current document covers a five year period from 2021/22 to 2025/26 (see **Appendix 1**), and a full review of the current strategy is underway to ensure that it aligns with the new core strategies, and this will be published in 2022.
4. In September 2016 Members were asked to approve the revised Fleet Strategy (2016-2021). At that meeting Members noted that the Fleet Strategy would be reviewed annually and the Committee would receive further updates at the January meeting each year, aligned to the budget setting processes. Councillor Phillips, as Chairman of a fleet task and finish group that considered fleet issues earlier in the year, noted that the strategy was in accordance with the task and finish group's findings.

Fleet Strategy Update

5. The table below outlines the predicted fleet replacements based upon the current fleet assumptions and aspirational fleet replacement ages.

	2021/22	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Red Fleet (fire appliances)	4 Fire engines "2005 Scania's"		6 Fire Engines "2008 MAN's"		6 Fire Engines "2010 Scania's"
Red Fleet (specialist appliances)	2 x RAV's "carried fwd"	1x Argo Cat		USAR crew bus 2 x Water Carriers Pending review	
Responding Officer Cars		30 (may increase to 36)	6 (may be procured in 2022/23)		1 USAR K9 van
White Fleet (vans & cars)	3 x cars 2 x small vans 2 x cars carried fwd	7 x 4x4 Pickup trucks	1 x Large van BA		5 x Cars
Estimated costs	£1,833,148	£1,295,000	£2,047,400	£572,500	£1,952,543

6. The estimated costs shown are included in the capital budget planning agreed annually with the Director of Finance and Senior Management Board.

Current Year 2021/22

7. The Service has four new Scania fire engines in build which will replace 4 no. 55 registration plate fire engines. These are due for delivery in early 2022, two of which have been designed to hold specialist animal rescue equipment based at Pershore and Bromyard fire stations.
8. A new Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) is also due to be delivered in early 2022 and will replace the existing RAV based at Whitchurch fire station.
9. To complement the pilot of two new compact fire engines that commenced at the end of 2020, a new 4 x 4 compact fire engine with the addition of a compressed air foam system (CAFS) is currently being built. This vehicle will be tested at Ross-on-Wye fire station and is due to be delivered February/March 2022.
10. An evaluation of replacement responding officer cars is currently underway, together with appraisals of electric small cars and vans to replace seven white fleet vehicles.
11. As detailed in the strategy it is important to regularly assess the current lifespans of the fleet to determine whether it is beneficial to reduce or extend these lifespans further. The replacement of a vehicle may be determined (increased or decreased) based upon a number of considerations; such as the type of vehicle and any bespoke built elements, costs of maintenance, residual value, public perception and image, financing and any other cost related matters over the life of the vehicle. As detailed in the updated Fleet Strategy appendix, replacement dates have been extended for; the two Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALPs) by 5 years and the three Land Rovers following a review of condition. The revised replacement year for all five vehicles is now 2026/27.

Conclusion/Summary

12. The purpose of the fleet strategy is to provide a 5 year structured approach to vehicle management. The current fleet strategy was developed in 2015 to cover the period 2016 to 2021 and is updated annually. A full review of the current fleet strategy is underway to ensure that it aligns with the new core strategies, and will be published in 2022.
13. The Service currently has four new Scania fire engines in build, together with a Restricted Access Vehicle and a 4 x 4 compact fire engine, all due for delivery in early 2022. The fleet team are also evaluating replacement responding officer cars, together with the replacement of seven white fleet diesel vehicles with electric cars / vans.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Estimated costs shown are included in the fleet capital budget plans.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The structured approach to fleet management underpins Service strategies.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	None.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	None.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	None.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - HWFRS Fleet Strategy dated Nov 2021 v8.1



Fleet Strategy

Folder Name		Folder Number	
Section Name		Section Number	
Part Name		Part Number	

Status	Approved
Document Version	Version 8.1
Author	AC J Pryce
SMB Sponsor	DCFO Hodges
Department	Operational Logistics/ Fleet
Date Approved	August 2016
Review frequency	Annually
Next Review	November 2022

Version History		
Version	Date	Description
1.0	23/02/2015	Fleet strategy
2.0	July 2016	Feedback from BB / RD
3.0	July 2016	JP review
4.0	July 2016	Consult
5.0	Aug 2016	SMB version
6.0	Sep 2016	Final Version
7.0	Nov 2018	Review and update JD
8.0	Jan 2021	Review and update JD
8.1	Nov 2021	Para 2.2 and Appendix 1 updated JD/LW

Executive Summary

About this document

This document forms part of a range of key strategies which encompass Fleet, Equipment, Supplies and Water. The document illustrates how HWFRS will procure, maintain and replace vehicle assets in order to meet current and future operational needs.

HWFRS aims to maintain a high standard of Fleet provision through continual improvement, evaluation and investment. The current Fleet Strategy was developed to cover periods 2016 – 2021, however this strategy has now been updated to provide an overview of the current position of the fleet and 5-year replacement plan from 2021 to 2026.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Fleet Strategy is to provide a 5 year structured approach to vehicle management that ensures that HWFRS continues to provide and maintain the right vehicles in order that our staff can undertake their jobs effectively, and is in line with the Service strategy.

1.1. Control of the Fleet Strategy

The Fleet Strategy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Board and an annual report will be made to the Policy & Resources Committee (P&R) aligned with the budget setting processes. The report will outline the significant vehicle procurements planned for the following fiscal year, as well as an indicative plan of those in the year thereafter.

Note: This is due to the lead times required on some complex vehicle procurements which often cannot be delivered within one fiscal year.

The Fire Authority established a Member Task & Finish Group that reviewed the Fleet Strategy in January 2016 of which the findings were:

- The Fleet Strategy 2007-2015 provided a long-term Strategy for the replacement of vehicles, which had served the Authority well, but the detail was now out of date.
- An updated Strategy was therefore required.
- The Strategy had been applied flexibly so as to respond to the changing needs of the Service and it was appropriate that this continue.
- Any updated Strategy should reflect the distinction between operational decisions over the specification and choice of vehicles/equipment, which were matters for officers, and broader strategic issues affecting the Authority's finances or the service to the public, which ought to be subject to Member involvement.
- The Fleet Strategy should in future be reviewed at least every five years and in the interim, a yearly update on the Strategy should be provided to Members as part of the budget setting process.

1.2. Condition of the Fleet 2018

The existing Service fleet was generally fit for purpose, however there were a number of vehicles that fell within the planned replacement age that were to be purchased between 2018 and 2025. Future procurement will conform to the fleet strategy and will usually form part of the vehicle replacement programme with only relatively minor variations as deemed necessary.

However, there may be a requirement for a significant deviation of parts of the existing fleet strategy whereby for example:

- ✓ An urgent operational need is identified - that cannot be met by utilising existing vehicles or by adapting existing vehicles at an economical cost.
- ✓ Significant "invest to save" or collaborative benefits are identified where an opportunity arises that presents a viable operational and/or financial benefit.

- ✓ A significant incident such as a catastrophic vehicle failure, (or replacement parts issue), defect or omission, presents a need, or opportunity, to procure or dispose of a vehicle that would not normally have been the case.
- ✓ The Service has a need to develop, introduce or trial new technology or concepts which may present different ways of working or a different model of delivery to the communities served such as electric powered vehicles to reduce the service carbon footprint.

The fleet is one of the key categories of physical assets for the Service. The way in which a Fire and Rescue Service fulfils its duties in meeting the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) is through the Integrated Risk Management Planning process and will to some extent, dictate the type of fleet the Service will maintain.

The fleet strategy comprises of three main categories (see Appendix 1):

- Red Fleet – all fire appliances and similar specialist operational vehicles utilised for an emergency response role and/or to meet a specific capability.

Within this category there are three sub-headings:

- Fire appliances - vehicles regardless of size or type that offer a first response front line capability to most incident types.
- Special appliances - vehicles that regardless of size are designed or built to meet a specific identified local or strategic need(s). This may also include trailers used to support operational assets.
- National Resilience Assets.
- Responding Officers' cars – all officer cars, spare response cars and Principal Officer cars that have an emergency response role.
- White Fleet – all cars vans and other type of vehicles (including trailers) not used for operational response as their primary role.

The fleet consists of the following (see appendix 1):

- 41 operational fire engines,
- 9 fire engines for operational reserve, training & Young Firefighters Association
- 22 specialist red fleet vehicles plus eight trailers
- 36 responding officer & principal officer cars
- 53 white fleet vehicles, vans (small and large) and cars

Note: additional functions and as vehicles are procured and disposed of will result in the numbers of vehicles actually owned to vary.

Current position

The performance of the red fleet (fire appliances and specialist vehicles) is considered suitable and to a high standard. Responding officers cars were reviewed in 2015/16 with the results being published widely and replacement taking place in 2018-19 and due again in 2022-23.

The performance of the white fleet is largely suitable, but this strategy had identified certain vehicles that required review. The age of this fleet had increased significantly in the last decade, but significant investment brought the age profile back on line in 2018. The cost vs. benefit of alternative fuels for the car and van fleet is still an uncertain area but will always be considered, however a

change to small clean running petrol engines from diesel was carried out on the car fleet with 15 purchased in 2018 with a further 5 in 2019.

Consideration to procurement of fully electric and hybrid vehicles will be considered for all future white fleet and response car replacement from 2021 and once charging infrastructure has been put in place.

In creating the existing fleet there has been significant user engagement which will form part of any future procurement. Future planned reviews will endeavour to achieve efficiencies whilst maintaining a high standard of vehicle and user satisfaction.

There is also some scope to investigate other vehicle types and explore new technological solutions within this strategy over the next five years.

Overall, the entire fleet appears to be in a good state with no category of vehicle being considered 'Unsuitable', however, where some vehicles are considered 'Not Entirely Suitable' (for example certain older white fleet vehicles), this will be addressed through the revised replacement programme in this strategy.

Adverse Weather

Where possible vehicles that have an operational response element should incorporate or be able to accommodate a high degree of resilience for adverse weather conditions, such as the ability to mobilise promptly in sub-zero temperatures, wading depths, all-wheel drive or traction in snow and ice.

2. Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet

It is the role of the Fleet Engineer to carry out a continuous and detailed appraisal of the fleet, in conjunction with the user requirements.

Any assessment should identify:

- Those vehicles which are in the current fleet yet are not meeting staff or Service needs and therefore suggest change is required.
- Those vehicles which require improvements to make the vehicle more suitable.
- Vehicles which are performing well and which can be used to provide guidance for future vehicle choice.

2.1. Lifespan of vehicles

Fleet replacement programmes vary across the UK FRS and there is no appropriate industry benchmark to equate this to. Informal benchmarking with some partner FRSs suggests that the lifespan of HWFRS vehicles has been greater than that of some other Services, particularly metropolitan FRSs in relation to the red fleet.

The age of a vehicle has some potential to present increased maintenance and repair costs, however, this must be offset against the effect of low vehicle mileages, low operational usage, above average maintenance cycles and the quality of the product that is procured at the outset.

Conversely consideration should also be given to whether the lifespan of vehicles will limit the ability to respond to technological advances. Vehicle specifications and designs have allowed modifications and updates to occur where necessary, but older vehicles generally have lower levels of technology and may not be able to accommodate the retrofitting of technical advances.

It is important to regularly assess the current lifespans of the fleet to determine whether it is beneficial to reduce or extend these lifespans further. The areas taken into account in these assessments by the Fleet Engineer and user should not be limited to age or mileage.

The replacement of a vehicle may be determined (increased or decreased) based upon a number of considerations. As well as the factors detailed above, other areas such as the type of vehicle and any bespoke built elements, costs of maintenance, residual value, public perception and image, financing and any other cost related matters over the life of the vehicle.

Aspirational fleet replacement ages:

- Fire engines – 15 years
- Operational support vehicles - Van sized up to 3.5 tonne & 4x4 – 10 years
- Operational support vehicles - large over 3.5 tonne (e.g. ALP) – 15 years to 20 years
- Responding officers cars – 4 years
- Non-operational cars and small vans – 6 years
- Non-operational larger ancillary vehicles – 10 – 12 years

Vehicle Rotation

Where fleet assets are subject to low mileage, (not necessarily low usage) these vehicles may be rotated and swapped with other similar vehicles of higher mileage during their lifespan. Where a vehicle consistently demonstrates low mileage and low usage the management responsible for that vehicle will be expected to consider whether the vehicle can be removed from the fleet and other options for a more efficient use of transport explored.

2.2. Fleet Replacement Programme

Based upon the current fleet assumptions (See Appendix 1) and aspirational fleet replacement ages the following 5 year plan outlines the predicted replacements:

	2021/22	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Red Fleet (fire appliance)	4 Fire engines "2005 Scania"		6 Fire Engines "2008 MAN"		6 Fire Engines "2010 Scania's"
Red Fleet (other)	2 x RAV'S "carried fwd"	1x Argo Cat		USAR crew bus 2 x Water Carriers Pending review	
Responding Officer car		30 (may increase to 36)	6 (may be procured in 2022/23)		1 USAR K9 van
White Fleet (vans and cars)	3 x cars 2 x small vans 2 x cars carried fwd	7 x 4x4 Pick up trucks	1 x Large van B.A		5 x Cars
Estimated cost Total	£1,833,148	£1,295,000	£2,047,400	£572,500	£1,952,543

Notes relating to table above;

The two large vans are workshop vans that have very high mileage and are becoming unreliable and costly to operate, so replacement was brought forward by one year.

2021/22

Five fire engines would have been purchased, but the purchase of the three CAFS appliances in 2020/21 used more budget than a basic fire engine and did not leave enough to buy five, other work within the fleet will compensate for this.

The five cars and three vans are a combination of three years requirements held back to allow installation of charging points and replacement with electric vehicles, the budget will need to be reviewed as electric vehicles are more expensive than oil powered cars.

The two RAV replacements are overdue from 2017 and are late as a suitable vehicle has been difficult to find and only became available in 2020, budget has been adjusted to suit annual cost increases and different style of vehicle.

2022/23

No update required

2023/24

Six fire engines are required these may be different to our standard vehicles depending on the results of a review of service vehicle types and water carrying capacities in 2022.

2024/25

The service currently has three water tankers and two were due replacement in 2018, their lives have been extended due to low mileage and condition and until a water strategy review takes place in 2022

2025/26

Six fire engines are required these may be different to our standard vehicles depending on the results of a review of service vehicle types and water carrying capacities in 2022.

Due to international supply chain difficulties lead time on vehicles may be extended affecting project build times. This should be taken into consideration when planning projects as it may affect Capital budget planning, this should be monitored annually.

Note

Cost estimates may vary and are based on assumptions from previous procurements with a 3% year on year increase, existing user specification and supplier advice, which are all subject to change and updating.

Vehicle Procurement

Vehicles will be procured in accordance with all relevant guidelines, standing orders and legislative requirements and may be either procured directly through the appropriate tender process or off an existing framework or other means. The procurement process will seek to determine the method of obtaining the best value for money over the life of the vehicle, whilst providing the user with the most appropriate and best quality vehicle.

The Treasurer will determine the best method of funding these vehicles which may involve outright purchase, lease, capital or revenue financing or any combination of these.

In reaching procurement decisions in this matter there will be regard to (not definitive):

- Whole life costs including resale values
- Manufacturer and product support
- Maintenance requirements
- User requirements and specification
- Product testing and user feedback
- Feedback from other users
- Reliability ratings
- Estimated lifespan of the vehicle
- Environmental impact
- Fleet consistency (see below)

2.3. Consistency of the Fleet

Alongside the need for transparent and regularly reviewed procurement when replacing vehicles there is also a balance with the needs of the organisation. It is beneficial to avoid having too many different technical characteristics which would result in incompatibility, or a disproportionate level of technical difficulty in operation and maintenance. This should not be a barrier to new types of vehicles entering the fleet but is a legitimate consideration which may be taken into account at review periods.

Where appropriate and in the interests of efficiency, vehicles may be procured for consistency over an extended period (such as a call-off contract or framework), which should not normally exceed four years, after which a full review of the specification and procurement route should be undertaken.

Such matters that may need consideration in regard to differing vehicles manufacturers could be the costs associated with:

- Varying makes of vehicles requiring extensive technician training for maintenance
- Provision of replacement parts, stock held on site, product support and tools required.
- Driver familiarisation and interoperability of the fleet by the user.
- Wide variances in stowage solutions, as appropriate.

2.4. Secondary and tertiary use of vehicles

Consideration can be given to determine whether vehicles in the fleet strategy can be used in more than one way during their lifespan or adapted at the end of their lifespan for alternate secondary or tertiary uses. However, it will normally be the policy to dispose of a vehicle at the end of its life (see 2.6 below). This does not preclude the extension of the use of a vehicle where appropriate beyond its aspirational replacement age.

The legacy costs of aged vehicles and the adoption of old vehicles into roles they may not be entirely suited to should be avoided and especially where they are not specified within the fleet strategy.

Where ad hoc vehicles are required or short term use is identified for fixed periods, existing vehicles may be adapted or utilised. However, other means should be explored, such as the user providing their own vehicle and claiming appropriate recompense, or the hiring or loan of a suitable vehicle.

2.5. Collaboration

HWFRS will ensure that where appropriate, collaboration discussions are considered for all fleet procurements (between appropriate partners) and will include the potential for loan, hire and support arrangements.

2.6. Disposal of vehicles

It is the policy of this strategy that at the end of a vehicle's life it is disposed of and in such a way as to realise the best value for the asset and through the most appropriate route.

Regard to the following areas should be given when disposing of a vehicle:

Maximising re-sale value - the primary objective upon disposal of a vehicle is to ensure best value is obtained therefore the Service will normally explore the most efficient route for disposal to achieve this. In some cases this does not always equate to the financial amount realised following disposal. Where public value is best served there may also be alternative routes for disposal within the public sector.

Security - to ensure vehicles are not acquired by purchasers who could potentially use an ex-HWFRS vehicle for purposes that are detrimental to the national interests of the country e.g. crime or terrorism.

Charitable organisations - there may be requests to supply end of life vehicles to charitable organisations to help developing countries. The ability to do so will be considered against the residual value of any vehicle, which often can be significant, thus the donation of a public asset worth several thousands of pounds to a charity may not be appropriate.

Assisting other UK Fire Services and partners - vehicles may still have a useful function for other organisations, however, as noted above the value of any asset owned by the Fire Authority would need to be considered before any such agreements are made.

Spare parts – some vehicles may be utilised for spare parts before disposal, where this represents better value for money or provides parts that cannot be obtained through other cost effective methods.

2.7. Environmental considerations

There are five main areas which could have a significant effect on CO₂ emissions:

1. Reducing the number of vehicles
2. Reducing the number of vehicle movements
3. Improved driving techniques
4. Changing to more environmentally friendly fuels
5. Changing to cleaner and more fuel efficient vehicles.

The Service, primarily through the CRMP has identified the requirements for the red fleet, which cannot easily be reduced further unless the CRMP determines as such. During the previous fleet strategy (2007-2015), the number of all vehicles was reduced significantly over the period, thus making further reductions more challenging within the next five years.

The potential to switch one or more categories of vehicles to an alternative fuel such as electricity or LPG provides a number of challenges at this time:

- Alternative fuels can often incur higher costs in the initial procurement but could deliver efficiencies over the period of use, with uncertain resale values at the end of life. This makes the financial assessment of these vehicles hard to determine.
- A transfer to alternate fuelled vehicles may present challenges over a large rural geographic area for obtaining sufficient resilient support for obtaining fuel and/or charging across both counties in comparison to the relatively widespread availability of current fuels.
- Vehicles with alternate fuels or hybrids may present challenges with existing fleet support for maintenance, training and parts and may require a greater reliance on using external maintenance providers at a higher costs than the current resilient internal provision.

3. Appendix 1

HWFRS Fleet Updated 11/11/2021

Red Fleet

Vehicle Class	Vehicle Type	Operator	Date In Service	Proposed Replacement Year
MERCEDES ATEGO	Pump - Training	DROITWICH TRAINING	01/02/2002	REPLACED 2018
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	BROADWAY STN	01/02/2011	2026/27
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	DROITWICH STN	01/05/2012	2027/28
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	EWYAS HAROLD STN	22/07/2016	2031/32
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	BROMYARD STN	01/02/2011	2026/27
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	DROITWICH STN	30/11/2012	2027/28
DENNIS SABRE	Pump - Spare	OPS LOGISTICS	01/12/2003	REPLACED 2020
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	EVESHAM STN	04/05/2012	2027/28
DENNIS SABRE	Pump - Spare	OPS LOGISTICS	01/12/2003	REPLACED 2020
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	FOWNHOPE STN	01/06/2008	2023/24
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	HEREFORD STN	01/06/2008	2023/24
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	HEREFORD STN	30/11/2012	2027/28
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	EARDISLY STN	21/07/2016	2031/32
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WYRE FOREST STN	01/11/2005	2020/21
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WYRE FOREST STN	22/07/2016	2031/32
DENNIS SABRE	Pump - Spare	OPS LOGISTICS	01/12/2003	REPLACED 2018
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	KINGTON STN	01/11/2005	2020/21
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Spare	OPS LOGISTICS	01/11/2005	REPLACED 2018
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	TRAINING DROITWICH	01/11/2005	REPLACED 2018
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	PEBworth STN	01/06/2008	2023/24
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	LEOMINSTER STN	01/07/2008	2023/24
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	REDDITCH STN	19/07/2016	2031/32
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	MALVERN STN	01/09/2010	2025/26
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	PERSHORE STN	01/11/2005	2020/21
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	BROMYARD STN	01/11/2005	2020/21
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WHITCHURCH STN	01/05/2012	2027/28
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	REDDITCH STN	01/09/2010	2025/26
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	BROMSGROVE STN	30/11/2012	2027/28
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	ROSS ON WYE STN	01/07/2008	2023/24
MERCEDES ATEGO	Pump - Training	TRAINING DROITWICH	01/02/2002	REPLACED 2018
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WYRE FOREST STN	01/05/2012	2027/28
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Spare	OPS LOGISTICS	01/11/2005	REPLACED 2020
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Training	DRIVER TRAINING	01/02/2011	REPLACED 2018
MAN APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	PETERCHURCH STN	01/07/2008	2023/24
SCANIA 4SERIES	Pump - Front Line	WORCESTER STN	01/11/2005	2020/21
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WORCESTER STN	20/07/2016	2031/32
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WORCESTER STN	01/09/2010	2025/26
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	DROITWICH STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	EVESHAM STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	LEDBURY STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	TENBURY STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	MALVERN STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	LEINTWARDINE STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	LEOMINSTER STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	KINGSLAND STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	HEREFORD STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
SCANIA APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	WYRE FOREST STN	08/11/2018	2033/34
IVECO DAILY 7 TONNE	Pump - Compact	ADDITIONAL ON TRIAL	13/09/2019	2033/34
IVECO DAILY 7 TONNE	Pump - Compact	ADDITIONAL ON TRIAL	13/09/2019	2033/34
SCANIA CAFS APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	ROSS ON WYE STN	03.02.2020	2034/35
SCANIA CAFS APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	UPTON STN	03.02.2020	2034/35
SCANIA CAFS APPLIANCE	Pump - Front Line	BROMSGROVE STN	03.02.2020	2034/35

Red Fleet (Specials)

Vehicle Class	Vehicle Type	Operator	Date In Service	Proposed Replacement Year
LAND ROVER 130	Special	WYRE FOREST STN	23/05/2013	2026/27*
IVECO 7.2T ISV2	Special	DROITWICH STN	22/03/2016	2025/26
MERCEDES SRT	Special	EVESHAM STN	01/01/2021	2030/31
SCANIA WATER CARRIER	Special	EVESHAM STN	01/12/2003	2022/23
SCANIA ALP	Special	HEREFORD STN	01/01/2007	2026/27**
LAND ROVER 130	Special	HEREFORD STN	11/11/2009	2026/27*
MERCEDES SRT	Special	HEREFORD STN	01/01/2021	2030/31
SCANIA WATER CARRIER	Special	PETERCHURCH STN	01/03/2003	2022/23***
SCANIA WATER CARRIER	Special	LEOMINSTER STN	01/09/2010	2025/26***
ARGOCAT 8X8	Special	MALVERN STATION	01/10/2012	2022/23
LAND ROVER 130	Special	MALVERN STN	01/10/2012	2026/27*
MERCEDES LINE RESCUE	Special	MALVERN STN	01/01/2021	2030/31
MERCEDES RAV	Special	PETERCHURCH STN	04/12/2006	2019/20
MERCEDES EPU	Special	WYRE FOREST STN	03/12/2010	2022/23
MERCEDES RAV	Special	WHITCHURCH STN	04/12/2006	2019/20
SCANIA ALP	Special	WORCESTER STN	01/01/2007	2026/27**
MERCEDES SRT	Special	WORCESTER STN	01/01/2021	2030/31
MERCEDES COMMAND VEH	Special	LEDBURY STN	20/10/2019	2033/34
MERCEDES COMMAND VEH	Special	WYRE FOREST STN	20/10/2019	2033/34
MERCEDES ANIMAL RESCUE	Temp role	PERSHORE STN		Replaced 2021
MERCEDES RECRUITMENT	Temp role	OPS LOGISTICS		Replaced 2021

* Land Rover replacement date extended and all dates aligned agreed by SMB

** ALP replacement date extended by 5 years following review of condition agreed by SMB.

*** Scania Water Carriers replacement date extended pending water strategy review.

White Fleet

Vehicle Class	New Vehicle Type	Operator	Date In Service	Proposed Replacement Year
MERCEDES SPRINTER	Large Van	OPS LOGISTICS	01/01/2021	2030/31
MERCEDES SPRINTER	Large Van	OPS LOGISTICS	01/01/2021	2030/31
MERCEDES SPRINTER	Large Van	TRAINING CENTRE	01/03/2014	2023/24
CITROEN BERLINGO	Small Van	ICT	04/08/2015	2021/22*
CITROEN DESPATCH	Small Van	OPS LOGISTIC	04/08/2015	2021/22*
VAUXHALL VIVARO COMBI 9 SEATER	Mini Bus	TRAINING CENTRE	01/09/2018	2028/29
FORD FIESTA	Car leased	DISPOSED "written off"	25/07/2015	2020/21*
FORD FOCUS ESTATE	Car	PROTECTION	01/07/2015	2021/22*
FORD FOCUS ESTATE	Car	OPS POLICY	01/07/2015	2021/22*
FORD FOCUS ESTATE	Car	REDDITCH STN	13/03/2013	2019/20*
FORD FOCUS ESTATE	Car	DROITWICH STN	08/10/2014	2019/20*
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	20/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBI	Small Van	PREVENTION	18/05/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	RESPONSE	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL VIVARO COMBI 9 SEATER	Mini Bus	TRAINING CENTRE	01/09/2018	2028/29
VAUXHALL COMBO	Small Van	PREVENTION	01/06/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBO	Small Van	PREVENTION	01/06/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBO	Small Van	PREVENTION	01/06/2018	2024/25

VAUXHALL VIVARO	Medium van	OPS LOGISTICS	01/09/2018	2028/29
VAUXHALL VIVARO	Medium van	OPS LOGISTICS	01/09/2018	2028/29
VAUXHALL VIVARO	Medium van	OPS LOGISTIC S	01/09/2018	2028/29
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	SOUTH DISTRICT	28/04/2017	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	WEST DISTRICT	23/12/2016	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	KIDDERMINSTER STN	30/12/2016	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	NORTH DISTRICT	30/12/2016	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	HEREFORD STN	30/12/2016	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	WEST DISTRICT	30/12/2016	2022/23
MITSUBISHI TITAN	4x4	SOUTH DISTRICT	23/12/2016	2022/23
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	ICT	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	TRAINING CENTRE	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	OPS POLICY	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBI	Small Van	WEST DISTRICT	18/05/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBI	Small Van	PREVENTION	18/05/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	OPS LOGISTICS	01/07/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBI	Small Van	SOUTH DISTRICT	18/05/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL COMBO	Small Van	PREVENTION	01/10/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	10/04/2018	2024/25
VAUXHALL MOVANO	Large Van	OPS LOGISTIC	01/11/2018	2028/29
VAUXHALL MOVANO	Large Van	OPS LOGISTIC	01/11/2018	2028/29
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	01/02/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	PROTECTION	01/02/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	MALVERN STN	23/10/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	WORCESTER STN	23/10/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	HEREFORD STN	22/11/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	EVESHAM STN	22/11/2019	2024/25
VAUXHALL ASTRA EST	Car	BROMSGROVE STN	22/11/2019	2024/25

* Not yet replaced to allow for establishment of charging infrastructure

Response Cars

VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	26/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	PRINCIPAL OFFICER	19/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	26/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	01/11/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/11/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/11/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	05/11/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	29/08/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	08/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	04/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	11/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	PRINCIPAL OFFICER	09/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	15/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	20/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	14/08/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	19/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	11/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	08/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	WORKSHOP SPARE	13/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	05/06/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	18/06/2018	22/23

VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	12/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	20/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	26/10/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	20/07/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	18/10/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	18/10/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	22/08/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	31/08/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	20/08/2018	22/23
VOLVO XC60 4x4	PRINCIPAL OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24
VOLVO XC60 4x4	PRINCIPAL OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24
VOLVO XC60 4x4	RESPONSE OFFICER	02/07/2019	23/24

Report of Deputy Chief Fire Officer / Director of Prevention and Assets

Property Services Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update for Members on the current property programme.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the property update and progress is noted.

Background

2. It was reported to the committee meeting in September 2021 that the Fire Authority entered into an agreement for the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to deliver our property management functions as part of a joint property team, as a result of the wind down of PPL. The new service became operational on 1st April 2021 and continues to transition and develop well.

Property Update

3. **Broadway Fire Station:** Broadway is a single fire engine on-call station. It has been recognised for some time as being in a very poor state of repair and lacking the facilities necessary for a modern fire station. The existing site is constrained but, following several unsuccessful attempts to identify a suitable alternative location, the Fire Authority gave approval for the redevelopment of a new station on the existing site.
4. A detailed planning application was submitted in May 2021, and planning approval has now been granted by the local authority. The project team have advertised the approved plans and detailed designs via the Bluelight procurement portal, and will be evaluating submitted tenders and interviewing prospective contractors during January.
5. **Redditch Fire Station:** The replacement of Redditch Fire Station has been part of the Authority's approved capital programme for several years. In collaboration with West Mercia Police, the Service is developing plans to provide a joint Fire and Police facility, building upon the concept of the Bromsgrove joint Fire / Police station.

6. Following the property update to members in September 2021, a detailed planning application was submitted on the 17th December 2021 to the local authority. Utilising a procurement framework, four potential contractors have submitted initial expression of interest proposals to the project team. Interviews are being held during January 2022 to review initial programme and preliminary cost proposals for completing the scheme, subject to planning permission being granted.
7. **Hereford Fire Station:** Following approval to progress the redevelopment of Hereford Fire Station at St Owen Street, a high-level feasibility options appraisal of the existing fire station site has been completed, along with a number of surveys of the site. The preferred option proposes a new four bay fire station with associated accommodation, improving access and egress from the site and enhancing car parking.
8. The completed feasibility drawings and surveys will now form the basis of the tender pack to appoint architects who will develop the scheme to enable a planning application submission. Tenders are due to be advertised in January, with evaluations and interviews with the project team in February 2022.
9. **North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility:** At the last committee approval was given to progress with plans for a new training facility at the Police station site in Leominster. At that time, we also sought approval to provisionally develop options for the potential future redevelopment of part of the existing Police Station, into a fire station with the addition of a three bay fire appliance. Various sketch layouts are currently being incorporated into the feasibility plans for the proposed training facility.
10. Site surveys and feasibility drawings will form the basis of the tender pack to appoint architects to progress the scheme to completion. This information is planned to be released for tender in February 2022.
11. **Relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station:** The architects who completed the Wyre Forest scheme have visited the existing Training Centre in Droitwich and met with the centre managers to commence initial scoping works, and formulate accommodation schedules for the proposed requirements of a new facility. This work will continue throughout the new year and we will update the committee on progress as options start to formulate.
12. **Planned and reactive property maintenance:** General maintenance and building works continue across the Service's estate. Notably, the redesign and refurbishment of the day-crewing plus building at Worcester Fire Station being converted to a dedicated Incident Command Training Centre is now complete.

Site Disposals

Windsor Street, Bromsgrove

13. This is the site of the former Bromsgrove Fire Station which has been vacant since the new joint Police / Fire Station was opened in 2014. The site is complex in that the building adjoins the former County Council library and the buildings overlap.
14. We reported previously that a sale that was being negotiated in conjunction with the County Council to a developer for retirement living accommodation had fallen through. Instead, the County Council is working with Bromsgrove District Council to investigate other options for regeneration schemes on the site.
15. Bromsgrove District Council have secured a £14.5m Levelling Up Fund grant for Bromsgrove, which would include funding the purchase of the former fire station and library buildings at Windsor Street, subject to a feasibility study which is due to report back in mid-February. The Council have indicated they will be taking a report to their Cabinet on 19th January 2022 and subject to this, have appointed agents to negotiate the purchase from the Fire Authority.
16. The Council are aiming for completion by mid-March but that is very much dependant upon whether an acceptable sale price can be agreed. As yet there has been no formal offer for the site. The Council have been made aware that we also currently have interest from another potential purchaser but that the Council would be given first refusal.

Former Bewdley Fire Station

17. Contracts were exchanged in August 2020, subject to planning permission for a mixed retail and residential use. At the time of the September 2021 committee we reported that completion of a s.106 agreement, which would then enable the grant of planning permission, had been negotiated and was in the process of being executed. The sale was due to complete on 20th December but was delayed because the purchaser was not ready, we will update during the committee meeting if this position changes.

Former Kidderminster Fire Station

18. We previously reported that the Authority has accepted an unconditional cash offer for the site. Despite the purchaser's initial commitment to complete the transaction quickly, contracts have still not yet been exchanged. However, the purchaser has indicated that he is still keen to exchange and complete as soon as possible but matters are currently delayed due to enquiries regarding access.

Former Stourport Fire Station

19. The former fire station is adjacent to the County Buildings which are due to become vacant later this year. We have now received an offer for the site from the County Council and the advice from the PCC Property Team is to sell the property. Hopefully this matter can be concluded fairly shortly.

Conclusion

20. The Fire Authority has entered into an agreement for the OPCC to deliver our property management functions as part of a joint property team. The new service became operational on 1st April 2021 and continues to transition and develop well.
21. There are currently four new build schemes being planned / developed, including; Broadway Fire Station, Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station, and a Strategic Training Facility in north Herefordshire. Planned and reactive property maintenance continues across the Service's estate. Site disposal of the former fire station sites at Windsor Street Bromsgrove, Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport continue to be progressed.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	None.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Details underpin a number of key property priorities for the Authority.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	None.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	None.

Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Director of Response and Protection

Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 2 December 2020.
-

Recommendation

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

- (i) Occupational Health provider***
- (ii) HMICFRS Inspection and Cause of Concern***
- (iii) Policies***
- (iv) Job Evaluation***
- (v) 12 Hour Day Duty System trial at Hereford Fire Station***
- (vi) Standardising promotion processes***

Background

2. The JCC acts as the main route for formal employee consultation. It consists of managers and employee representatives who meet every six weeks to discuss issues of mutual interest. The JCC is not a decision making body.
3. Employees are represented on JCC by members from each of the Representative Bodies (RBs) in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, namely the FBU, FOA, FRSA and Unison.
4. The Committee is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer who is currently responsible for industrial relations. Other management representatives include the Assistant Directors/Area Commanders responsible for Protection, Prevention, Response and Assets, as well as the Head of HR and Development.

Update

5. The Joint Protocol for Industrial Relations SPI provides the framework for communicating, consulting and negotiating with all Trade Unions.

6. Following a review of how the JCC operates, all new items raised at JCC meetings are now categorised under one of the following headings thus enabling a more structured flow of information between management and RBs:
- For consultation
 - For negotiation
 - Service Policy and Instructions (SPI) undergoing formal consultation
 - Items for Information/Updates for TU Reps
 - Requests for information/Issues raised by TU Reps
 - Other Items
7. Since its last update to the Committee, the JCC has met on 8 occasions – 6 January 2021, 25 February 2021, 1 April 2021, 6 May 2021, 17 June 2021, 22 July 2021, 9 September 2021 and 11 October.

New Issues under discussion since the last Update

8. New key issues that have been discussed are as follows:
9. Occupational Health Provider
- A new contract with Heales Medical commenced on 1 September. Communications have been issued to staff via the Service Bulletin on a regular basis leading into the transition away from the previous provider. Every member of staff was contacted regarding their personal medical information and how the transfer process would be carried out.
10. HMICFRS Inspection and Cause of Concern
- The Prevention Cause of Concern Action Plan has now been finalised with everyone at JCC having had sight of it. The HMICFRS Liaison Lead and the Assistant Director for Prevention are now holding regular monthly meetings. The internal Prevention Improvement Panel now meets to discuss issues every other week linked to addressing the concern. The Prevention Improvement Panel are now looking at all factors and providing regular updates to Audit & Standards Committee and the Senior Management Board. The full inspection report will be release later on this year.
11. Policies
- The main focus over the coming months in terms of policies is currently as follows:
1. Attendance Management SPI (draft currently being finalised) – this has been delayed by the implementation of the Occupational Health contract.
 2. Capability SPI (draft currently being finalised)
 3. Fitness SPI (being progressed by the H&S Working Group).
12. Job Evaluation
- The Assistant Director for Prevention advised JCC a final report has now been received from the external consultant with recommendations for the Service to consider. The Head of HR & Development has shared the report with Unison with additional meetings booked to discuss next steps.

13. 12 Hour Day Duty System trial at Hereford Fire Station

The Assistant Director for Response advised that a report has been received from managers based at Hereford who are enjoying working the revised duty pattern. Work is now underway between Representative Bodies and managers to finalise and agree the variation to the duty pattern in policy.

14. Standardising Promotion Processes

The Resourcing Manager is finalising a draft framework for managers in terms of promotions for Green Book staff with principles for consideration against the current Grey Book principles. The Head of HR & Development and Resourcing Manager are due to update Unison regarding the outcome in the coming weeks.

Previous Issues under Discussion

15. Lateral Flow Testing for COVID

Following a decision made on 25 March 2021, confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing has now been re-introduced. Consequently, should a member of staff test positive from any lateral flow test, they would also take a follow-up PCR test as soon as possible. Home testing kits will be provided going forward, however is proving challenging at this time.

16. Long COVID

A guidance paper was made available on SharePoint for those individuals (and their managers) who may be suffering from Long COVID.

17. HMI Inspection

The HMI Inspection commenced on 12 April with the same footprint as the previous inspection. It lasted for a period of six weeks and was mainly carried out online and remotely by the Inspectors. A Strategic Briefing was held with SMB and the FRA Chairman on Tuesday 20 April. Additionally, a staff survey was carried out to support the audit and closed on 29 April.

18. PPL

It was noted that Place Partnership Limited (PPL) ceased trading on 31 March; therefore from 1 April, HWFRS have entered into a Service Level Agreement with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). There has been a transition period as work commences with the OPCC Estates Team; however, new systems have been in operation since 1 April which replace the existing PPL contact centre and associated processes.

19. Debriefs for Disciplinarys, Grievances, Capability Processes

Debriefs are now being held following all significant disciplinary cases, grievances or capability processes in order to establish any learning points or areas for improvement.

20. Fitness Policy

Due to the COVID pandemic, it has been a challenging task trying to train the Level 3 Fitness trainers who will support our staff in maintaining their fitness levels to meet the required standards. HR are liaising with the provider to review other options with the University of Worcester continuing to carry out COVID fitness testing on stations.

Conclusion

21. The Policy and Resources Committee has responsibility to monitor and review staffing matters discussed by the JCC and as such is required to receive regular reports on these matters. This report provides Members with an update on the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications)	The JCC forum links to the successful discharge of the People Strategy.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)	None
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation has been carried out on all significant policy changes as per service procedures. In addition, managers are consulted regarding COVID 19 issues via the COVID 19 Response Group, along with SMB.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	All significant policy changes are fully supported by EIAs.