



HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AUTHORITY

Full Authority

AGENDA

Wednesday, 16 September 2020

10:00

This will be held as a virtual meeting on Teams.

The meeting can be accessed via a link which will be emailed to participants.

Information for Members of the Public

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority will be holding this meeting in accordance with the arrangements for remote meetings of a local authority. For more information please refer to: Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Please note that this is a public meeting, to be conducted remotely by video conferencing between invited participants and live streamed on the internet for general access. You are able to listen and view the live video stream of the meeting via the link that will be published on the Fire Authority's website <https://hwfire.cmis.uk.com/hwfire/Meetings.aspx>

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

- 1) the right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings by viewing or listening to the live stream unless the business to be transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”;
- 2) the right to film, record or report electronically on any meeting to which the public are admitted provided you do not do so in a manner that is disruptive to the meeting.
- 3) the right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>);
- 4) the right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees for up to six years following the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>); and
- 5) 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.

If you are participating at a virtual meeting of the Authority under the Public Participation item, you will be deemed to have consented to being broadcast via the Authority’s website and/or filmed or recorded by the Authority and/or anyone exercising their rights under paragraph 2 above. Alternatively, your representations can be read out at the meeting on your behalf.

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

If you have any queries regarding this agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of these rights of access to information please contact Committee & Members’ Services by email at committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk.

WELCOME AND GUIDE TO TODAY’S MEETING. These notes are written to assist you to follow the meeting. Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Members** who are democratically elected representatives and they will be advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals. The Fire Authority comprises 25 Members and appoints committees to undertake various functions on behalf of the Authority. There are 19 Members who are Worcestershire County Councillors on the Authority and 6 who are Herefordshire Council Councillors. The Police & Crime Commissioner also attends Fire Authority meetings as a non-voting Member.

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 is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting.

Officers - Also present during the meeting will be the Chief Fire Officer and/or other Officers of the Fire 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 Members to vote. The Officers do not have a vote.

Protocols for Remote Meetings

Status of these protocols

- These protocols supplement the new legislative arrangements permitting remote meetings of a local authority, under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.
- The Monitoring Officer reserves the right to amend or revoke these protocols at any time on reasonable notice. These protocols may also be revoked, superseded or amended by any standing orders that the Authority specifically adopts in respect of remote meetings.
- These protocols apply to anyone participating in a remote meeting, being: Members, officers, members of the public, other invited participants.

Participating in a remote meeting

- Officers and Members should join the meeting no less than 15 minutes before the scheduled start time to allow for any technical issues and avoid disrupting proceedings after the start time.
- At the start of the meeting the chairman will conduct a roll-call to confirm who is present and check for any connectivity issues.
- Where using video-enabled equipment, Members are asked to leave their cameras on throughout the meeting (unless connection speeds militate against this).
- Members should mute the microphone on their device when not speaking in order to reduce feedback and background noise. Committee and Members' Services can perform this function as well.

Access to documents

- Committee and Members' Services will publish the agenda and reports for meetings on the Fire Authority's website in the usual way and will notify Members and Officers by email.
- Members can either download the agenda pack from the link to the website or use the PDF sent with the email on a separate device to the one which they are using for the remote meeting.
- Printed copies will be sent to Members and Officers to support the effective conduct of the meeting where necessary. Printed copies will not be available for inspection at the Fire Authority's offices.

Officer Presentations

- Any presentations from Officers (eg Powerpoint) will be circulated to Members in PDF format in advance wherever possible and will be displayed on screen at the relevant point in the meeting. Where possible, presentations will be published on the Authority's website alongside the reports.
- When referring to reports or making specific comments, Officers should refer to the agenda page number so that all parties have a clear understanding of what is being discussed.

Protocol for Members speaking at meetings

- The Authority will be using Microsoft Teams, which will enable Members to participate in meetings remotely.
- The Chairman will ask all Members who wish to speak to indicate by pressing the 'raise your hand' button. Please do not speak or turn on your microphone until invited to do so by the Chairman. After speaking you must 'lower your hand' and turn off your microphone.

- The Chairman's ruling in regard to who should speak will be final and the Chairman will have the ability to mute any attendee's microphone if required.
- When referring to reports or making specific comments, Members should refer to the agenda page number so that all parties have a clear understanding of what is being discussed.

Voting

- Where it appears to the Chairman that the will of the majority of Members in the meeting is clear, the Chairman may put the motion to the meeting and ask if there are any votes against or any Members wishing to abstain. Those Members not voting against the motion or indicating they wish to abstain will be taken to be in favour.
- In all other circumstances a named vote will be taken. The Monitoring Officer will read out the Members' names, record the votes and announce the outcome to the meeting.
- Named votes will not be recorded in the minutes unless an individual Councillor asks to be recorded as voting "for", "against" or "abstained".

Participation by members of the public and the media

- A member of the public who has been given permission to speak during the public participation section of the meeting will be sent the relevant link to join the remote meeting and be invited to participate at the relevant point on the agenda. Members of the public who have been given permission by the Chairman to address a meeting may read out their question or written statement, of which prior notice will have been given, when invited to do so by the Chairman.
- As an alternative, members of the public who wish to address the meeting may submit a written statement that can be read out by the Chairman at the appropriate time.

Dealing with exempt items of business

- When confidential, or "exempt" information – as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – is under consideration, the Chairman and Monitoring Officer will close the meeting and a private meeting will convene with Officers and Members only.
- Any Councillor or Officer in remote attendance who fails to disclose that there are other persons present, who are not permitted to see and/or hear the meeting, will be in breach of the Authority's Code of Conduct.

Dealing with technical difficulties

- In the event that the Chairman or Monitoring Officer identifies a failure of the remote participation facility, the Chairman may declare an adjournment while the fault is addressed.
- If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting is inquorate, the meeting will be abandoned until such time as it can be reconvened.
- If the meeting remains quorate, it will continue. A vote will be taken in the absence of any Members who are unable to continue to participate remotely.
- If the meeting was due to determine an urgent matter or one which is time-limited and it has not been possible to continue because of technical difficulties, the matter may be dealt with in accordance with the 'urgent business' arrangements permitted by the Authority's Constitution.

Interpretation

Where the Chairman is required to interpret the Authority's Constitution in light of the requirements of remote participation, he or she shall take advice from the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer prior to making a ruling, where practicable. The Chairman's decision in all cases shall be final.



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 16 September 2020,10:00

Agenda

Councillors

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

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

4 Public Participation

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

Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal Services in writing or by email indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation to be received no later than 2 clear working days before the meeting (in this case 11 September 2020). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

1 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020.

6 Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Appointment – Options Analysis

11 - 19

To commence the process of succession planning for the current postholder and provide the Fire Authority with an options analysis for the appointment of a new Chief Officer / Chief Executive, with a view to recommending the best option that most effectively meets both the current and likely future challenges and needs facing the Fire Authority over the medium term.



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 10 June 2020,10:30

Chairman: Mr R Phillips
Vice-Chairman: Mr P Tuthill

Minutes

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

Also in attendance: Mrs Tracey Onslow, West Mercia Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

258 Election of Chairman

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

259 Election of Vice Chairman

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

260 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr S Bowen and Cllr A Fry.

261 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 & Wales) and Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory

Board (England & Wales).

262 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Deputy Chief Fire Officer John Hodges for his time with the Service as this was the last Authority meeting before his retirement in September. He said his diligent and professional standards earned him the greatest respect by the Fire Authority and staff. The Chairman also congratulated Keith Chance on his temporary promotion to Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Jon Pryce for his temporary promotion to Assistant Chief Fire Officer. Congratulations were also passed to Alison Buttle who had qualified as a Solicitor on 1 June 2020.

The Chairman then asked the Chief Fire officer to update Members on the flooding events earlier in the year including Storm Dennis, Covid-19 and the long period of dry weather.

[Cllr A Hardman joined the meeting at 10.43am].

Cllr Pollock thanked the Chief Fire Officer for the help the Service provided to the residents in Tenbury during the floods.

The Chairman then informed Members of the following:

- Since the last Fire Authority meeting the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman had sent out several briefing notes updating Members on the Service's activities.

[Cllr A Amos joined the meeting at 10.46am].

- In early March, the Chairman, together with Cllr Oborski, attended the LGA Fire Conference in Blackpool. The conference speakers included the lead Home Office civil servant Luke Edwards, Zoe Billingham (HMICFRS), Matt Wrack (FBU) and our own Chief Fire Officer who spoke as the lead national Fire Officer for Climate Change. He reminded Members that a copy of his presentation had been forwarded to Members recently. Other topics included the response to the State of Fire and Rescue report 2019 by Sir Thomas Winsor, preparation of the submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Fire Formula, post Grenfell and cultural change.
- The Chairman attended a virtual Fire Commission meeting which included an address from the new Fire Minister Lord Greenhalgh who is a former leader of Hammersmith and Fulham and was one of Boris Johnson's Deputy Mayors for Policing and Crime.
- The Chairman worked with Employer and employee representatives on the sector response to HM Treasury consultation on the rectification of the pension scheme as a result

- of the Sargent/McCloud judgement.
- The HM Inspectorate postponed the Service's second inspection that was due this month due to Covid-19.
- Members would be receiving a summary of the latest position on the Judicial Reviews regarding the Police Commissioners desire to take over the two FRAs of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Telford and the Wrekin.
- The Chairman attended many meetings with Officers, National Lead Members, Group Leaders and continued to work with colleagues in Shropshire.

[Cllr K Pollock left the meeting at 10.50am].

263 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

264 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 12 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at an appropriate time.

265 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

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

RESOLVED that:

- i) the allocation of Committee seats to political groups as set out at Appendix 1 be noted;**
- ii) the current Committee membership as set out in Appendix 1 be retained for 2020/2021, as agreed by Group Leaders;**
- iii) Cllr F Oborski and Cllr T Baker-Price be appointed as Member Champions of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;**
- iv) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 be continued;**
- v) the place and vote on the Local Government Association Fire Commission continues to be exercised by the Chairman of the Authority; and**
- vi) the Chairman of the Authority continues as the Member**

representative on the Place Partnership Ltd. Shareholder Group.

266 Provisional Financial Out-turn 2019-20

The Treasurer presented a report with the provisional financial results for 2019-20 and the Treasury Management Activities for 2019-20.

Members were reminded that detailed budget monitoring reports had been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis throughout 2019-20 and subject to specific areas highlighted in the report, the out-turn was consistent with the reporting.

There was a query regarding the alliance costs, of which £200,000 had been set aside for the Alliance programme with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority. Members were informed that approximately £150,000 was committed to the shared cost of the joint ICT post, to be spread over three years with the Alliance Reserve to meet the agreed costs in future years as they occur.

With regard to the capital budget a Member requested an update on Redditch fire station. The Head of Legal Services assured Members that a substantial amount of work had already been undertaken and an update would be sent out to Members next week.

Members were reminded that due to the pandemic the Statement of Accounts this year needed to be signed off by the Treasurer no later than 31 August 2020 and approved no later than 30 November 2020, rather than the normal dates of 31 May and 31 July respectively. The Treasurer confirmed that he had actually signed them on 29 May and that they were on track for the Audit and Standards Committee to approve the Accounts at their scheduled meeting on 8 October 2020.

The Deputy PCC queried why the Legal Services budget had increased. The Head of Legal Services explained that this was due to the Judicial Review which had incurred £37,000 costs and the remainder included employment tribunal costs.

With regard to Treasury Management activities, in 2019/20 additional borrowing of £3.000m was taken, in line with the Capital Financing Requirement, to replace temporary funding of capital from internal cash balances and anticipating the maturity of £1.500m of loans in 2020/21.

The Treasurer was pleased to inform Members that the Prudential Code Indicators for 2019-20 were within the limits set by the Authority and no

matters required further action.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

- i) Notes the provisional financial results for 2019/20;**
- ii) Notes the transfers between reserves previously approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy, or approved by the Fire Authority on 18th December 2019 as below;**
 - a) £0.454m from the Budget Reduction Reserves;***
 - b) £0.381m from the new Dimensions Reserve;***
 - c) £0.300m from General Balances;***
 - d) £0.130m from the Pensions Reserve;***
 - e) £0.285m to the July 2017 Pay Award Reserve; and***
 - f) £0.250m to the Broadway Fire Station Reserve***
- iii) Notes the revised transfers arising from timing differences previously approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy or approved by the Fire Authority on 18th December 2019 as below as below;**
 - a) £0.115m from the Property Maintenance Reserve;***
 - b) £0.270m from the Equipment Reserve; and***
 - c) £0.242m to the Prevention Reserve***
- iv) Approves the final transfers to Earmarked Reserves as set out below:**
 - a) An additional £0.130m from the Pension Reserve;***
 - b) £0.188m to the Alliance Collaboration Reserve; and***
 - c) £0.164m to the Day Crew Plus (DCP) change reserve.***
- v) Notes that the Treasurer will certify the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts, in accordance within the regulatory time-scale, of 31st August 2020;**
- vi) Notes that the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP; and**
- vii) Confirms that the Prudential Indicators for 2019/20 were within**

the limits set by the Authority and no matters require further action.

267 Fire Authority Annual Report 2020-21

The Fire Authority Annual Report 2020-21 was presented by the Chief Fire Officer for adoption and approval for publication.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that this is a key document that presents an overview of the Service's activities over the past 12 months, including a summary of overall performance and achievements, and outlines plans for 2020-21.

A Member congratulated Ross on Wye station for securing runners-up spot in the extrication section of the United Kingdom Rescue Organisation National Challenge and earning a place at the World Rescue Challenge 2020.

The Service was congratulated on producing clear graphics in the report that made the report worthy of distribution.

RESOLVED that the Authority adopts the draft Fire Authority Annual Report 2020-21 and approves it for publication, subject to any final minor changes as agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman.

268 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 – Consultation

The Chief Fire Officer presented the Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 to Members for approval for public consultation.

Members were informed that this Plan had been drafted in conjunction with Shropshire FRS's preparation of their IRMP for 2021-25, both of which were due to be published on 1 April 2021. It was proposed to conduct the consultation primarily online over the coming summer months, given the present Covid-19 circumstances. Members were assured that full details of the consultation and analysis of responses would be presented back to the Fire Authority for consideration at the earliest opportunity to ensure the final CRMP 2021-2025 could be published on 1 April 2021.

Members were reminded that this Plan had not identified the need to make any further changes to stations or crewing arrangements, at this time, unless a significant external issue had an impact on the

sustainability of the Service's finances.

A Member was concerned about fire cover in the west of Worcester due to the expansion of housing. The Chief Fire Officer assured the Member that the Plan was appropriate for the current time, it had taken into account the changes in demographics and the scale of housing. He also explained that new build houses have the most up to date fire standards.

A Member also had concerns with fire cover in Herefordshire and the recruitment of on-call firefighters. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the on-call stations in the County generally had excellent availability and a lot of work had recently been undertaken for on-call recruitment.

There was discussion about the attendance standard and why it needed to change based on the changing nature of risks since its adoption in 2008-2009 and other factors effecting it, such as traffic conditions.

Members were advised that they would be informed of the start date of the consultation period when it was known.

RESOLVED that the Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25 be approved for for public consultation.

269 Place Partnership Ltd

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on matters relating to Place Partnership Ltd and the Authority's property function.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that due to Redditch Borough Council and Worcester City Council withdrawing from the partnership in 2018 and now Worcestershire County Council giving 12 months' notice to terminate their service contract with PPL with effect from 31 March 2021, discussions needed to take place between the remaining partners; Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police.

Due to Worcestershire County Council accounting currently for approximately one third of PPL's workload, it forced the remaining partners to consider whether they wished to continue with the current arrangements, make changes to the structure or ownership model of PPL or look to provide some or all of their property functions in a different way, such as taking services back in-house or possibly entering into new shared services agreements.

There was a discussion regarding the appropriate level of Member

involvement in any subsequent decision but in view of the likely time constraints, it was agreed that delegation to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with Members, was the only practical way forward.

RESOLVED that the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Group Leaders, be given delegated authority to determine the future arrangements for the delivery of the Authority's property function including entering into any shared service or outsourced arrangement as appropriate.

The Meeting ended at: 12:08

Signed:..... Date:.....

Chairman

Membership of Committees 2020-21

<u>Policy and Resources Committee (13)</u>	<u>Conservatives Group (8)</u>	<u>Labour Group (2)</u>	<u>Independent Group (1)</u>	<u>2017 Group (2)</u>
	Mr K Taylor (Chair)	Mr R Udall	Dr C Hotham	Mrs F Oborski MBE
	Mr R Adams (Vice Chair)	Mr A Fry		Prof. J Raine
	Mr T Baker-Price			
	Mr B Clayton			
	Ms K Guthrie			
	Mr R Phillips			
	Mrs J Potter			
	Mr P Tuthill			
<u>Audit & Standards Committee (12)</u>	<u>Conservatives (7)</u>	<u>Labour (1)</u>	<u>Independents (2)</u>	<u>2017 (2)</u>
<i>Cannot include:</i>	Mr M Hart (Chair)	Ms P Agar	Mr S Bowen	Mr L Stark
<i>Chair/Vice-chair of</i>	Mr A Amos (Vice-Chair)		Mrs K Hey	Mrs D Toynbee
<i>Authority;</i>	Mrs E Eyre BEM			
<i>Outgoing Chair of</i>	Mr A Hardman			
<i>Authority;</i>	Mr I Hardiman			
<i>Chair of Policy &</i>	Mr R Morris			
<i>Resources; or Group</i>	Dr K Pollock			
<i>Leaders</i>				
<u>Appointments Committee (7)</u>	<u>Conservative (4)</u>	<u>Labour (1)</u>	<u>Independent (1)</u>	<u>2017 (1)</u>
<i>Should normally include:</i>	Mr R Phillips (Chair)	Mr R Udall	Dr C Hotham	Mrs F Oborski MBE
<i>Chair of Authority</i>	Mr P Tuthill (Vice-Chair)			
<i>Chair of P & R</i>	Mr M Hart			
<i>Chair of A & S</i>	Mr K Taylor			

Member / Officer Working Group Representatives

Health & Safety Committee:

Mr B Clayton

Chairman of the Young Firefighters' Association Executive Committee

Mr T Baker-Price

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion

Mrs F Oborski and Mr T Baker-Price

Report of Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive

Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Appointment – Options Analysis

Purpose of report

1. To commence the process of succession planning for the current postholder and provide the Fire Authority with an options analysis for the appointment of a new Chief Officer / Chief Executive, with a view to recommending the best option that most effectively meets both the current and likely future challenges and needs facing the Fire Authority over the medium term.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i) the Fire Authority agrees to appoint a substantive operational Chief Fire Officer in succession to the current postholder;
- ii) the Appointments Committee commence a recruitment process as soon as possible;
- iii) there be no change to the remuneration package of the Chief Officer post at this time;
- iv) the Fire Authority maintains the flexibility to accommodate potential candidates' personal circumstances (e.g. home location within an approved area outside of the two county boundaries).

Introduction and Background

2. Since the appointment of the current Chief Fire Officer in 2016, the Service has undergone significant changes, as a result of both internal factors and external drivers and influences. For example, organisationally, the Service has had to manage significant reductions in 'real-terms' finances; legal challenges to pension changes; government reform of the fire sector; introduction of HMI inspections; large-scale retirement of Full-time firefighters coupled with the increasing challenges of recruiting and retaining On-Call firefighters; resetting of the Service's culture and values; the on-going modernisation and rationalisation of the Service's estate; a developing alliance with Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service - and a drawn out and disputed bid for governance change. Operationally, the knock-on impacts to the Service of both the Grenfell Tower fire and the Manchester Arena bombing are still to be fully determined, whilst wide-area flooding and the Covid-19 pandemic have dominated the Service's work activities throughout 2020 to the present.
3. Going into 2020, however, thanks to the difficult but necessary decisions made by the Fire Authority over the last four years, the Service now has the strong foundations of a sustainable medium-term financial plan (unless government

choose to change the financial 'goalposts' significantly); efficient, effective and well-supported frontline and back-office functions; a 'can-do' culture and a professional workforce who have pride in and ownership of working for the Service; a collaborative and flexible approach that looks to work with partners in order to add more value to local communities – and a growing ambition to do even more. The 2021-2025 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) clearly sets out the journey that the Service has been on and its ambition and vision for the future. And although the Service still has some way to go to achieve its ambitions in full, the positive impact of dedicated organisational and political leadership throughout these last few years should not be underestimated. Therefore, it is within this context that the following options are presented.

4. As a consequence of both the national and local contexts, the Fire Authority now has a number of options to consider in terms of how it best moves forward with its soon-to-be vacant Chief Officer / Chief Executive position, following the planned retirement of its Chief Fire Officer early next year.

Current and Medium-Term Operating Context – Key Drivers:

5. In order to best determine both the appropriateness and suitability of each potential option, it is important first for the Fire Authority to consider the main driving factors within the current and most likely future operating environment of HWFRS. These are as follows:

6. Duty to Collaborate/Governance Change

- 6.1. The introduction of the Policing & Crime Act in 2017 formalised the requirement for closer working between FRS's and most notably the Police. At a local level, HWFRS already has strong and well-established collaborative working relationships with both Shropshire FRS (SFRS) and West Mercia Police (WMP) as well as with other public sector partners across the two counties and with neighbouring FRS's. HWFRS has championed a collaborative approach for many years now and, as a result, can evidence a number of important examples of positive collaborative work and projects (both delivered and planned).
- 6.2. In the West Mercia area, the legislation also resulted in bid back in 2017 by the current Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to take over governance of the two fire & rescue services, based on a business case predicated on delivering substantial financial savings (estimated at being upto £4m per annum), which was to be achieved primarily by absorbing the back-office and ICT functions of the smaller organisations (i.e. fire & rescue services) into the larger entity at the time (i.e. the merged support functions of West Mercia and Warwickshire police services) - as well as the merger of the two Fire Control Rooms, the rationalisation of senior management posts across both fire services, sharing premises between Fire & Police and reducing the overheads / expenses of the two current Fire Authorities as a result of their dissolution.
- 6.3. During the research and consultation phases of the business case, both Chief Fire Officers and their respective Fire Authorities expressed concerns about the

potentially detrimental impact and efficacy of the proposals on the quality of services they currently deliver – particularly the theoretical absorption of back-office & ICT functions, as well as the financially focussed, cost-reducing merger of the two Control Room functions. Furthermore, as the disputed bid has been drawn out for more than two years now (due to the legal challenges of the two Fire Authorities and most recently the intervention by the Policing minister (June 2020) to ask for a review of the current business case and to delay any decision on governance until after the May 2021 PPC election) it is appropriate to reconsider the impact and efficacy of the business case set against the changing operating context of both the respective Police and Fire Alliances, as well as the impact of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Manchester Arena bombing, the severity and frequency of extreme weather events and the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 6.4. Furthermore, if the current PCC is not re-elected in May next year, then this would potentially leave a business case lodged with the Home Office that no longer has a local political sponsor. If this occurs, there may be an expectation from central government that the existing Fire Authorities should deliver the business case instead. If this was the case, the Fire Authorities would need to provide suitable evidence that implementing the business case was (or was not) in the best interests of either local communities and/or the two Fire & Rescue Services.

7. Breakdown of Police Alliance

- 7.1. According to the Office of the PCC (OPCC), the breaking up of the strategic alliance between West Mercia Police and Warkwickshire Police will continue to have a significant impacts on both organisations' Enabling and ICT Services for at least 18 months, if not longer (see '*PCC submission report to Worcestershire County Council June 2020 – End of the Strategic Policing Alliance – Update Report*' – para 28 p4-5). As a consequence, these changes will have a significant draw on the resources and time of both the OPCC's and WMP's management teams across the affected functions for many months, if not years.
- 7.2. Furthermore, at the start of this redesign phase, no mention or approach has been made by WMP to collaborate and understand the needs of HWFRS in these areas, which only suggests that the redesign will be undertaken exclusively to meet the needs of WMP.
- 7.3. Therefore, ensuring the appropriate, fair and effective management of HWFRS funding and resources throughout any period of potential collaborative change of this nature is vitally important.

8. Strategic Fire Alliance

- 8.1. In 2018, the two Fire Authorities approved a formal alliance between HWFRS and Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS). The primary aim of the alliance being to improve capacity and resilience across the two services in order to best utilise their finite resources. In the preceding five years or more before the alliance, both services had already spent considerable time and effort making

both their frontline and back-office functions significantly more efficient and effective to meet their specific needs. Furthermore, the Manchester Arena bombing (May 2017) and the Grenfell Tower fire (June 2017) became two key drivers (for both change and investment) that needed to be considered when forming the Fire Alliance. Grenfell Tower is mentioned in the PCC business case (see below), but its implications, at the time, were not considered as being material to the savings that were attributable to the business case proposals.

Extract from PCC Full Business Case – Page 17

The impact of the Grenfell Tower Fire

3.2.14. It is suggested that the inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire will not have a direct impact on proposals for governance because changes in governance do not, by themselves, result in changes in service delivery. Changes to service delivery that result from the Grenfell inquiry will apply regardless of governance models and will need to be implemented by the fire and rescue services not by the governing body. The focus will remain on public safety.

3.2.15. The focus of the inquiry is on fire safety in multi-occupancy high-rise buildings. There are few of these in West Mercia. It is possible that the inquiry could lead to increased, unfunded responsibilities for fire and rescue services through new regulation. It is the contention of this FBC that the proposed change in governance and ensuing increase in collaboration will make West Mercia more able to implement any such requirements. This will be achieved through closer working between HWFRS and SWFRS, particularly the development and implementation of policy, training and expertise, and through the economic benefits that will result from the change in governance and from increased collaboration.

- 8.2. However, what is now apparent is that both events will have much more widespread consequences to fire and rescue services – operationally, financially, functionally, collaboratively and in relation to a number of their key ICT systems – which means the savings attributed to areas such as ICT and enabling services in the PCC business case, as well as the control room merger, need to be significantly reassessed. It also means HWFRS will require clear and strong leadership to ensure the Service's interests are both heard and taken into account in these matters both before and after any final decision is made in respect to future governance arrangements.

9. Covid 19, Brexit, Future Government Funding for the Fire Sector

- 9.1. The financial and organisational impact of all of these areas are, as yet unknown. It is important, therefore, that HWFRS maintains strong leadership to ensure its interests are promoted and protected, irrespective of potential future changes to governance.

10. Employee Relations / FBU Pay Claim

- 10.1. With the recent announcement of a FBU pay claim of circa 12.5% minimum, there is an increased potential of national industrial action being called to further that claim in the foreseeable future. Any industrial action will have a significant impact on the capacity of the respective senior management teams across both HWFRS and SFRS.

11. Staff Morale and Motivation

- 11.1. One of HWFRS key strengths in the last five years has been its workforce's ability to maintain responsive and professional prevention, protection and emergency response services for the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, whilst at the same time managing significant changes to the way it works, as well as how it is structured and resourced. This has resulted in a number of difficult decisions being made by the Fire Authority, which have been successfully implemented by HWFRS managers, led by SMB and the Chief Fire Officer. As these changes are embedded and the Service begins to stabilise, it will be imperative for HWFRS to maintain its approach of constructive engagement with the workforce – providing strong leadership, empathy and motivation during a further period of potential uncertainty and change.

Corporate Considerations - Appointment Options:

12. Taking into account the operating environment and key drivers highlighted above, the main appointment options for the new Chief Officer are set out below, with commentary on the respective advantages and disadvantages of each option:

Option 1- Chief Fire Officer (with requisite operational command and strategic Fire Service management experience) – also acting as Chief Executive for the Fire Authority:

Advantages

- Maintains the strategic Fire Sector experience and understanding of the current operating context (including wider UK Fire & Rescue Service / central government network experience) – particularly in relation to government's Fire Service Reform agenda, HMICFRS, Grenfell Tower fire and the Manchester Arena bombing.
- With the potential to rationalise senior management posts across the two fire services in the future, and the continuing need for strategic operational management (for example, in the face of recent extreme weather events and the Covid-19 pandemic), operational competence at this level is identified as an essential within a small management cadre.
- Allows HWFRS to continue to contribute towards national FRS work streams, allowing the organisation to remain well-informed of national initiatives and direction, as well as maintaining the development of the Service's strong reputation within the national FRS arena.
- Provides the security of leadership over the medium term compared to temporary or fixed term options – whilst still allowing for assimilation into any changed management structures that may be brought about by governance change. In addition, if the case for governance change is eventually ratified and implemented by government, the PCC has already acknowledged the need to retain senior management capacity for a period

post-transition, in order to assist in implementing any changes that may be forthcoming.

- Offers the Fire Authority their own professional adviser who can lead and negotiate on their behalf during a period of potentially significant change both locally and nationally, with the background of having significant previous experience of collaborative working with other blue light services.
- Demonstrates to local communities and staff the commitment of the Fire Authority to the organisation in its current form whilst the longer term direction of the organisation is developed.
- Ensures the principal officer operational rota is maintained without having to increase the operational establishment – as well as maintaining the senior operational command resilience required to effectively manage protracted and large scale incidents, such as wide-area flooding or Covid-19.
- Provides potential appointees with a role that offers them the main achievement of their career goals.

Disadvantages

- In the short term, it may limit the scope for immediately reducing a senior management post following a change of governance.

Option 2 - Chief Executive (without operational command or previous strategic Fire Service management experience)

Advantages

- Offers the potential for a wider range of applicants across both the public and private sectors, bringing with them specific expertise in areas such as change management, mergers and private sector management approaches.
- Provides potential security of leadership over the medium term compared to temporary or fixed term options, although this may not be realised, if the successful candidate views the appointment as a short term opportunity within a wider ranging career.

Disadvantages

- Successful candidate could lack UK Fire Sector experience at a period of significant change.
- Local communities and staff could raise concerns over the future direction of the Service, dependent on the previous roles / experience of the appointee. This could send the wrong message to those key stakeholders at a time of significant change and challenge.
- There could be a need to establish a separate senior command role in addition to the Chief Executive post, in order to effectively maintain the operational Principal Officer command rota, particularly in light of more

recent experience regarding extreme weather events and Covid-19 strategic level response.

- Successful candidate could potentially need to quickly develop UK Fire Service / central government network relationships and experience, during a time of significant change and challenge in the sector – particularly in relation to the Grenfell Tower fire and Manchester Arena bombing inquiry findings.

Option 3 - Joint Chief Officer or Joint Chief Executive:

Advantages

- Potential to put in place one Head of Paid Service over at least two organisations, signalling the intended direction of both organisations to join up in the medium-term.
- Potential to gain support from central government due to the approach being in line with current government thinking.
- Savings in annual salary and associated costs (albeit these could be less than expected if operational command rotas need to be added to in order to maintain command group levels).

Disadvantages

- Sharing of such a key senior position would need to follow the strategic mandate and direction of the Fire Authority and at least one other partner to change the structure and identities of both their Services. For this to be a viable option, therefore, the strategic joint direction of both organisations would need to be well defined and signed up to by both parties (such as the clear intention for a more fundamental alliance or merger in the foreseeable future). With no such local political agreement envisaged in the short term between the Fire Authority and either another neighbouring Fire Authority (i.e. SFRS) and/or the local PCC (and the further uncertainty surrounding the latter due to the Home Office instigated review of the business case), the reality of progressing with a joint post would be seen as a high risk option, although this risk may be mitigated by the use of a fixed term temporary option first (see below), in order to help manage the organisational and political transitions.

Option 4 - Fixed Term Temporary Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive:

Advantages

- Leaves the Fire Authority with the option to lose / consolidate the Chief Officer or Chief Executive role within a short time period, dependent on the future direction of the organisation regarding collaborative working, merger and / or changes in governance arrangements.
- Potential to save future redundancy costs if consolidation route was taken.
- This option also has the potential to work with the Joint Chief Officer / Chief Executive option, at a later date, if managed appropriately.

Disadvantages

- Potential for appointee to view the role as a short term opportunity only and move on before any future direction is established and implemented – which runs the risk of the interests of the Service not being effectively represented and protected.
- Potential difficulties in recruitment (due to the temporary nature of the post), which could have the knock-on effect of putting the Fire Authority in a weak position in terms of future discussions / negotiations with potential partners and/or the PCC.
- Timings and nature of any future organisational direction – being dependent on multiple factors and a number of other organisations' priorities – could mean the fixed-term approach would not line up with either the political and/or organisational timetable that could be practically delivered.
- Does not provide the security of leadership over the medium term compared to permanent appointment options.

Conclusion

13. Taking into account the need to maintain strong leadership of the Service, the complexity and uncertainty of the current operating environment, the key drivers and the advantages/disadvantages of the main options highlighted above, this report recommends the Fire Authority to seek the permanent appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer with the requisite operational command and strategic Fire Service management experience (Option 1) in succession to the current postholder whose retirement is planned for early 2021.
14. This would provide the Fire Authority with the best mixture of experience, leadership and capability to effectively manage the Service over the medium term, whilst at the same time, providing it with a suitably experienced professional adviser during a period of potential further significant change in the local and national operating contexts.
15. However, it is recognised that attracting suitable candidates may be difficult, due to the factors highlighted above. In order to mitigate these, it is also

recommended that the Fire Authority maintains the flexibility to accommodate potential candidates' personal circumstances (e.g. home location within an approved area outside of the two county boundaries)

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Previously identified resources to undertake selection and recruitment process
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The commitment to having the right people, with the right skills and training is part our vision and mission.
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)	N/A
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	The recruitment and selection process will be a fair process and will take equalities issues into account