



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Tuesday, 22 January 2019, 14:30

Minutes

Members Present: Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Ms T Bowes, Ms K S Guthrie, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr M Hart, Mr P Middlebrough, Dr K Pollock, Professor J W Raine, Mr S D Williams

111 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr B Matthews.

112 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

113 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

114 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 25 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

115 Annual Audit Letter 2017/18

The External Auditor presented the Annual Audit Letter 2017/18 to the Committee summarising the findings from the 2017/18 Audit.

Members were pleased to note that no significant issues were found with the primary statements in the 2017/18 audit and that the Authority has proper arrangements in place to secure value for money in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2018.

The Treasurer confirmed that he had no concerns from the Audit Findings Report.

[Cllr Agar and Cllr Amos entered the meeting at 14:34].

RESOLVED that the Annual Audit Letter 2017/18 from External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP be noted.

116 Internal Audit Progress Report 2018/19

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented an update on the 2018/19 audit plan delivery.

Members were pleased to note the Internal Audit Plan for 2018/19 was progressing steadily with 64% of the reviews either nearing completion or completed with the remaining timetabled for quarter 4 delivery and recommendations that had been made were being addressed through robust management action plans.

A Member queried the Data Protection Officer post and was advised that the Head of Legal Services currently held the position, however a permanent solution was being looked at with the possibility of outsourcing to the company that had recently concluded a GDPR audit for the Service.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

117 Annual Statement of Assurance 2018-19

The Chief Fire Officer presented the Statement of Assurance 2018-19 to the Committee for approval and publication on the Service's website.

A Member requested that the wording in the third paragraph on page 4 of 16 of the Statement of Assurance be amended to read "A significant proportion of incidents..." rather than "The majority of incidents..." in relation to false alarms and also reference to Service Headquarters at Kings Court be amended to Hindlip at the end of the document.

There was discussion around false alarms and Members were assured that the Service works closely with businesses to reduce the number of false alarms.

Members agreed that the document was well written and easy to read.

RESOLVED that the Committee adopts the draft Statement of Assurance 2018-19 and approves it for publication, subject to the

amendments stated above.

118 Employment Monitoring Data 2017-18

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report summarising the progress against the Public Sector Equality Duty prior to the publication of the Employment Monitoring Data 2017-18 on the Service's website.

A Member queried the statistics in paragraph 18 of the report. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that out of the 76 leavers, there were 55 resignations, 12 retirements and 9 others. Members were also assured that figures in the report and the Appendix would be double checked prior to publication on the Service's website.

Members were assured that the Service continues to make progress in embedding Equality and Diversity and will continue to provide updates to this Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Members note there have been minimal changes to the overall make up of the Service's workforce since the previous employment monitoring report for 2016-2017; and**
- ii. The Employment Monitoring Report 2017-2018 is approved for publication.**

119 Health and Safety Committee Update

The Head of Operation Support presented an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

Members were assured that the increase in personal injuries was minimal and generally minor in nature. Some of the injuries were during training incidents and the Health and Safety Committee were looking into these in more detail.

Members discussed violence and aggression on members of staff and were assured that the Service worked closely with the Police and were pleased to report that incidents were relatively small in number. Members were also informed that body worn and vehicle CCTV cameras were now able to record incidents.

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

- i. Health and Safety performance information recorded during April**

**2018 to September 2018 (Quarters 1 & 2); and
ii. The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety
initiatives.**

The Meeting ended at: 15:18

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman