



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Full Authority

AGENDA

Wednesday, 22 June 2022

10:30

**Council Chamber, County Hall
County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP**

Fire Alarm

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

Toilets

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

Parking

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

Smoking Policy

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

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Cafe

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

Shop

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

Grounds/Site traffic

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

Public Transport

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

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

- the right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”;
- the right to film, record or report electronically on any meeting to which the public are admitted provided you do not do so in a manner that is disruptive to the meeting. **If you are present at a meeting of the Authority you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed or recorded by anyone exercising their rights under this paragraph;**
- the right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>);
- the right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees for up to six years following the meeting (available on our website: <http://www.hwfire.org.uk>); and
- the right to inspect background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 22 June 2022,10:30

Agenda

Councillors

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

No.	Item	Pages
1	Election of Chairman To elect a Chairman of the Authority.	
2	Election of Vice Chairman To elect a Vice Chairman of the Authority.	
3	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	
4	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.	
5	Chairman's Announcements To update Members on recent activities.	

6	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 17 June 2022). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.	
7	Confirmation of Minutes	1 - 7
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2022.	
8	Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies	8 - 12
	To consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, the membership of those committees and appointments to outside bodies.	
9	Provisional Financial Out-turn 2021-22	13 - 34
	1. To receive provisional financial results for 2021-22, to approve final transfers to/from reserves, and to approve the reallocation of reserves.	
	2. To review Treasury Management activities for 2021-22 and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code indicators.	
10	Annual Service Review 2021-22	35 - 56
	This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2021-22.	
11	Annual Service Plan 2022-23	57 - 70
	This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Plan 2022-23.	
12	Fire Reform White Paper	71 - 74
	To inform Members of the publication of the Home Office consultation on the white paper "Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service" and to provide an opportunity for discussion.	

13	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update May 2022	75 - 100
	To update Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 15 December 2021.	
14	Property Update	101 - 104
	To provide an update for Members on the current property programme.	
15	Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee	105 - 109
	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2022.	
16	Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee	
	Details	
17	Retirement of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer	
	To note that DCFO Keith Chance will be retiring on 16 August 2022 after over 30 years' service. Pending a review of structures in early 2023, ACFO Guy Palmer has been designated as acting DCFO and AC Ade Elliott has been temporarily promoted to ACFO.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 15 February 2022, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Brookes, Mr D Chambers, Mr A Ditta, Ms K S Guthrie, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Morris, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs D Toynbee, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

346 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Clayton, Cllr E Eyre, Cllr R Phillips, Cllr J Monk and Cllr D Boatright.

347 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

348 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman, along with all Members of the Authority, extended their deepest and sincere sympathy to family, colleagues and friends of Matthew Lee, an on-call firefighter from Wyre Forest, who had been tragically killed earlier in the week.

The Chairman reminded Members of the Service Exercise being held on Saturday 26 February 2022, details of which had been sent to them via email and were urged to attend if they were able.

349 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

350 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 12

December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

[Cllr Morehead entered the meeting at 10.37am].

351 Budget and Precept 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan

The Treasurer presented Members with the Budget and Precept 2022/23 and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members were asked to note the supplementary report and appendices that had been shared following late receipt of the data in relation to Business Rates and final confirmation of the final grant settlement.

Members were asked to determine the Revenue and Capital Budgets and the Council Tax Requirement for 2022/23, approve the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2022/23, approve the Capital, Investment and Reserves Strategies, approve the level of Fees & Charges for chargeable services for 2022/23 and identify potential future resources, their consequential impact on future year budgets and the future Council Tax Requirement (the Medium Term Financial Plan).

Members were pleased to note that the settlement and Comprehensive Spending Review were relatively favourable to the Service, having resulted in the Service being just under £1m better off than anticipated in the MTFP.

Members were also pleased to note that following previous concerns about the impact of construction industry inflation on the Major Buildings Programme, the two small budget surpluses in 2022/23 and 2023/24 would be held against the potential future costs.

Members requested the Policy and Resources Committee consider options for the use of any potential future resources and the Head of Legal Services undertook to draw this to the attention of the Chairman of the Committee, Councillor R Phillips.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Capital Strategy (paragraphs 13-27) be approved;***
- ii) the Capital Budget and Programme (Appendix 1) be approved;***
- iii) the Core Net Revenue Budget of £36,853,000 (Appendix 11) be approved;***

- iv) the Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix 13) be approved;*
- v) the Authority calculates that under the provisions of the relevant sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), and, in relation to the year 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 15:*
- a) the aggregate expenditure it will incur [S42A(2)(a)] will be £36,928,800.00;*
- b) the aggregate income it will receive [S42A(3)(a)] will be £11,266,646.00;*
- c) the amount transferred to financial reserves [S42A(2)(c)] will be £208,432.00;*
- d) the amount transferred from financial reserves [S42A(3)(b)] will be £49,000.00;*
- e) the net collection fund surplus [S42A(10)] is £253,207.70;*
- f) the net amount of its Council Tax Requirement [S42A(4)] will be £25,568,078.30;*
- g) the basic amount of Council Tax [S42B] will be £89.40 (Band D);*
- h) the proportional tax-bands [S47] will be:*
- Band A £59.60*
 - Band B £69.53*
 - Band C £79.47*
 - Band D £89.40*
 - Band E £109.27*
 - Band F £129.13*
 - Band G £149.00*
 - Band H £178.80*
- i) the precept demands on the individual Billing Authorities [S48] are:*
- Bromsgrove £3,353,491.52*
 - Herefordshire £6,280,582.13*
 - Malvern Hills £2,871,451.56*
 - Redditch £2,373,271.31*
 - Worcester £2,908,024.25*
 - Wychavon £4,721,986.20*
 - Wyre Forest £3,059,271.33*
- vi) the Reserves Strategy (paragraphs 69-77 and Appendix 16) be*

approved;

vii) the Investment Strategy (paragraphs 78-83) be approved;

viii) the fees and charges for 2022/23 (Appendix 9) be approved; and

ix) the Statement of Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (Appendix 10) be approved.

352 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Report and Improvement Plan

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the outcome of the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report and the preparation of an improvement plan.

Members were informed that the inspection had been carried out completely remotely which may explain the lack of context in the report. There were 22 areas of improvement identified in the report. Officers were preparing a draft Improvement Plan, to be presented to a future meeting and which would then be regularly updated and published as progress was made. Proposals would be assessed to ensure they met the Service's overall Core Purpose and aligned to the core strategies.

Members queried why they had not been interviewed by the inspectors as they had done previously. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the only Member involved was the Chairman, HMICFRS were very specific as to who they interviewed as they were not looking at governance. Members were assured that HMICFRS were complimentary about the level of detail the Service provides to Members.

Members noted that the previous Cause of Concern was being reported on separately via the Audit and Standards Committee.

RESOLVED that Members noted the findings of the HMICFRS inspection report and the proposed improvement plan.

353 Attendance Performance Measure

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a report to seek permission to undertake public consultation on a new Service Attendance Performance Measure as outlined in the 2021-25 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Members were reminded that this was a public consultation only on the performance measure and not on any changes to fire cover or the speed at which the Service would respond to incidents.

Members noted that a revised attendance performance measure would provide local communities with a much clearer picture of the emergency incident response time for the area in which they live for each type of incident attended.

It was proposed that the response time would be measured from the time of mobilisation to the arrival at the scene by the first appliance. Call handling time would not be included as part of this measure. Attendance performance would be reported against expected travel times by using a new mobilising system, which was being progressed currently. Route network analysis would be used in order to determine the risk areas of 10, 15 and 20 minutes response time using each fire station's location as a starting point.

Members noted that in adopting this model would support the strategic alliance with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and ensured a more transparent consistent approach across both Services. A company would be appointed to carry out the consultation on the Service's behalf, at a cost of approximately £15,000, which had already been budgeted for.

Members requested sight of the consultation document before the process commenced. It was agreed that this would be shared with Group Leaders for consideration.

RESOLVED that the consultation document be provided to Group Leaders for consideration prior to the commencement of the public consultation on a revised Attendance Performance Measure.

354 Replacement Mobilising System Reserve Budget

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a report to seek the authorisation to begin spend against the Fire Control Reserve to procure a replacement mobilising system for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).

[Cllr Hart left the meeting at 11.32, returned at 11.34am].

Members noted that it had been agreed to provide a proven and tested system rather than one in development or untested in a UK Fire Service. It was anticipated that an 'off the shelf' command and control system could be live in HWFRS control room by the end of 2023, if procurement was initiated in February 2022. At the latest it was anticipated that the product would be fully live by the end of 2024.

RESOLVED that Officers be authorised to utilise the agreed Fire Control reserve to procure a replacement command and control

system for the Service.

355 Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the Pay Policy Statement for 2022-2023 for approval and publication on the Authority's website.

Members noted that the Localism Act required the Authority to adopt, prior to the commencement of each financial year, a Pay Policy Statement to operate for the forthcoming financial year. The Statement set out, amongst other items, the Authority's policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce and in particular the senior staff and the lowest paid employees.

RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement for 2022-2023 be approved and published on the Authority's website.

356 Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23

The Head of Legal Services presented Members with a report to propose an increase in the allowances paid to Members for 2022/23 and that future increases be linked to the National Joint Council annual pay award (if any) for 'Green Book' staff.

It was noted that Members' allowances had previously been nominally linked to the annual increase in CPI but in practice, against a backdrop of austerity and public sector pay restraint, Members had declined to make any changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme for several years. It was proposed that linking future increases to the annual pay awards for the Authority's non-operational, NJC 'Green Book' staff would be a more appropriate benchmark than the CPI.

The Head of Legal Services informed Members that the proposed increase of 1.75% for 2022/23 would equate to an additional cost overall of £900, which would be funded from within existing budgets.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the existing basic and special responsibility allowances paid to Members be increased by 1.75% for 2022/23; and

(ii) in subsequent years, allowances be increased by the same percentage as the preceding year's pay award for National Joint Council 'Green Book' staff.

357 Fire Authority and Committee Dates 2022/23

The Head of Legal Services presented Members with the Fire Authority and Committee dates for 2022/23.

Members were asked to note the revised date of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting in October 2022 since publication.

RESOLVED that the meeting dates for 2022/23 be agreed.

358 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 19 January 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 19 January 2022 be received and noted.

359 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 26 January 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 26 January 2022 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 11:49

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Report of the Head of Legal Services

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Purpose of report

1. To consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, the membership of those committees and appointments to outside bodies.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i) the allocation of Committee seats to political groups as set out at Appendix 1 be agreed;***
- ii) the current chairmanship and membership of Committees, as set out in Appendix 2, remain unchanged for 2022/2023;***
- iii) Cllrs S Bowen, E Marshall and N McVey be reappointed Member Champions of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;***
- iv) Cllr B Clayton be reappointed as the Member Champion on the Health & Safety Committee;***
- v) a Member be appointed as Fire Cadets' Member Champion;***
- vi) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 be continued; and***
- vii) the place and vote on the Local Government Association Fire Commission continues to be exercised by the Chairman of the Authority.***

Political Groups and Committee Appointments

2. The Authority is required to review the arrangements for political balance and the allocation of seats to political groups either at its annual meeting or as soon as practical thereafter. We are given to understand that a recent review of the political balance within Herefordshire Council may result in a change to their nominees on the Fire Authority (and which may then affect the allocation of our own committee seats) but at the time of publishing this report we have not been notified officially. Subject to this, it is proposed that the allocation of seats, along with the current Committee memberships, remain as shown attached at Appendix 1. Any update to that appendix will be presented at the meeting.

Member Champions

3. Cllr S Bowen was appointed as the Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) at the Authority's annual meeting last year. In view of the importance of this subject matter, Audit & Standards Committee when considering the annual Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report at its meeting in January 2022, appointed Cllrs N McVey and E Marshall to be additional Member Champions alongside Cllr Bowen. The Member Champions meet with officers on a regular basis to monitor delivery of the Authority's ED&I objectives. It is suggested that all three Members be reappointed.
4. Cllr B Clayton has served as the Member Champion on the Health & Safety Committee for the past year and has indicated his willingness to continue in that role.
5. Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting in May 2022 supported the creation of a local branch of UK Fire Cadets within the Service, in succession to the former Young Firefighters' Association. The Committee has recommended that the Authority appoint a Fire Cadets' Member Champion.
6. There are no special responsibility allowances attached to any of the Member Champion roles.

Outside Bodies

7. The Local Government Association (LGA), works with local authorities to ensure local government has a voice with national government. This Authority is a corporate member of the LGA and as such is entitled to:
 - (a) appoint up to 4 representatives to serve on the General Assembly. Our current representatives are the leaders of the four political groups; and
 - (b) exercise 13 Service votes on the Assembly. These votes are allocated between the representatives on a politically proportionate basis in the same proportions as the seats on Policy & Resources Committee (above).
8. All Fire and Rescue Authorities are also entitled to a place and a vote on LGA Fire Commission. The Authority has previously appointed the Chairman or his nominee to the Commission and to exercise the vote on behalf of this Authority.

Conclusion/Summary

9. The current arrangements with regard to membership of committees and appointments to outside bodies have proven to be effective and it is recommended that these continue as set out above.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Authority has approved a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022/23 which sets out special responsibility allowances for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority, Committee Chairmen and Political Group Leaders. This will be met within existing budgets. There may be some costs associated with travel by appointees to meetings of outside bodies. This will also be met within existing budgets
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None directly.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None directly.
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?)	An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out as the report does not contain a recommendation to approve a policy.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Political balance and allocation of committee seats

Appendix 2 – Existing committee memberships

Political Balance & Allocation of Committee Seats

		Conservative Group	Herefordshire Alliance	Green & Independent Alliance	Unity Group	Total
Number in Group		17	4	2	2	25
%		68%	16%	8%	8%	
Committee	Seats					
Appointments Committee	7	4	1	1	1	7
Audit and Standards	12	8	2	1	1	12
Policy and Resources	13	9	2	1	1	13
TOTAL SEATS	32	21	5	3	3	32
%		66%	16%	9%	9%	

Policy & Resources Committee

Conservative Group (8)	Herefordshire Alliance (2)	Ind. & Green Alliance (1)	Unity Group (1)
Cllr. R. Phillips (Chairman)	Cllr. L. Stark	Cllr. T. Wells	Cllr. R. Udall
Cllr. C. Taylor (Vice)	Cllr. K. Hey		
Cllr. D. Chambers			
Cllr. A. Ditta			
Cllr. K. Guthrie			
Cllr. J. Monk			
Cllr. D. Morehead			
Cllr. L. Robinson			

Audit & Standards Committee (cannot include Chair/Vice-Chair of Authority, Chair of Policy & Resources or Group Leaders)

Conservative Group (8)	Herefordshire Alliance (2)	Ind. & Green Alliance (1)	Unity Group (1)
Cllr. M. Hart (Chairman)	Cllr. D. Toynbee	Cllr. N. McVey	Cllr. D. Boatright
Cllr. A. Amos (Vice)	Cllr. S. Bowen		
Cllr. R. Brookes			
Cllr. B. Clayton			
Cllr. A. Hardman			
Cllr. I. Hardiman			
Cllr. E. Marshall			
Cllr. R. Morris			

Appointments Committee

Conservative Group (4)	Herefordshire Alliance (1)	Ind. & Green Alliance (1)	Unity Group (1)
Cllr. C. Taylor	Cllr. L. Stark	Cllr. T. Wells	Cllr. R. Udall
Cllr. R. Phillips			
Cllr. M. Hart			
Cllr. E. Eyre			

Report of the Treasurer

Provisional Financial Out-turn 2021-22

Purpose of report

1. To receive provisional financial results for 2021-22, to approve final transfers to/from reserves, and to approve the reallocation of reserves.
2. To review Treasury Management activities for 2021-22 and to confirm compliance with the Prudential Code indicators.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Authority:

- i) Notes the provisional financial results for 2021-22;***
- ii) Notes the transfers from Earmarked Reserves approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy;***
 - a) £132,400 from the Organisational Excellence Reserve;***
 - b) £67,286 from the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP) Reserve;***
 - c) £38,495 from the Broadway Fire Station Reserve;***
 - d) £5,000 from the On-Call Recruitment Reserve;***
 - e) £277,141 from the Property Maintenance Reserve;***
 - f) £7,910 from the Pensions Reserve;***
 - g) £144,673 from the Protection Grants Reserve;***
 - h) £48,035 from the Safety Initiatives Reserve; and***
 - i) £51,154 from the Taxation Income Guarantee (TIG) Grant Reserve.***
- iii) Approves transfers to Earmarked Reserves as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee:***
 - a) £75,696 to the Safety Initiatives Reserve; and***
 - b) £1,168,801 to the Capital Projects Reserve.***

iv) Approves additional transfers to Earmarked Reserves as set out below:

a) £192,675 to the Protection Grants Reserve;

b) £115,000 to the ICT Replacements Reserve;

c) £51,850 to the Pensions Reserve; and

d) £366,468 to the Capital Projects Reserve.

v) Approves the closure of the DCP Change Reserve and the transfer of the small remaining balance to the Safety Initiatives Reserve.

vi) Notes that the Treasurer will certify the 2022-22 Statement of Accounts, in accordance within the regulatory time-scale

vii) Notes that the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP; and

viii) Confirms that the Prudential Indicators for 2021-22 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters require further action

Background

3. The two areas covered by this report normally come under the Terms of Reference of the Policy and Resources Committee, but because they require attention between meetings of that Committee, they are considered by the Full Authority.
4. The two areas are:
 - a. Provisional Financial Results
 - b. Treasury Management and the Prudential Indicators

Provisional Financial Results

5. The Audit and Standards Committee will consider the full Statement of Accounts; which will be completed on the basis of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) following completion of the external audit.
6. Until the external audit process is completed these financial results technically remain provisional, but it is unlikely that they will change materially as a result of the audit.
7. The basis of the Statement of Accounts differs from the statutory framework within which the Authority is required to manage its budget. The detail of the differences between the two is dealt with in more detail by the Audit and Standards Committee.
8. This report is concerned with the statutory position under which the Authority is charged with governance.

Revenue Budget 2021-22

9. The financial year 2021-22 saw the continued impacts of Covid, economic impacts of exit from the European Union and latterly the impact of conflict in Ukraine.
10. An interim financial position was reported to the Policy & Resources Committee in May and identified a significant positive financial impact of a large late grant payment, and the Committee made recommendations as to its use.
11. The out-turn position, detailed in Appendix 1, is summarised below:

£		
Employee Related	Line 7	24,721,047
Running Costs	Line 30	8,155,353
Capital Financing	Line 32	2,365,581
Expenditure	Line 33	35,241,981
Funding Grants	Line 34	(7,504,676)
Council Tax	Line 35	(24,480,406)
Business Rates & Grants	Line 36	(3,090,931)
Special Grants	Line 37	(1,364,363)
Funding	Line 38	(36,440,376)
	Line 39	(1,198,396)

12. This will involve a net transfer to (i.e. an increase in) reserves of £1.198m and can in simple terms be attributed to late receipt of additional Business Rate Support Grant (as outlined in paragraph 18a below) of £1.169m.
13. However, the picture is slightly more complicated than this, as the total expenditure figure includes Invest to Improve (and other) spending which is being supported by specific earmarked reserves in accordance with the approved Reserves Strategy.
14. Of the total expenditure of £35.242m, £0.501m related to expenditure funded from reserves. This funding will come from those appropriate reserves and the impact is summarised below:

		Actual	Reserves	Core		
		£	£	£		
Employee Related	Line 7	24,721,047	(314,190)	24,406,857		
Running Costs	Line 30	8,155,353	(148,255)	8,007,098		
Capital Financing	Line 32	2,365,581	(38,495)	2,327,086		
	Line 33	35,241,981	(500,940)	34,741,041		
		Budget	Core	Variation		
		£	£	£		
Employee Related	Line 7	24,387,000	24,406,857	19,857	over	
Running Costs	Line 30	8,392,000	8,007,098	(384,902)	under	
Capital Financing	Line 32	2,497,000	2,327,086	(169,914)	under	

Line 33	35,276,000	34,741,041	(534,959)	under
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15. The key variations on the expenditure side are shown in Appendix 1 and explained below:
- Prevention £0.075m under (Line 13): Smoke alarms. Due to worldwide shortages it has been difficult to replenish stocks. As reported to the Policy & Resources Committee, there have been sufficient stocks to continue with the visit programme in 2021-22, but the Committee specifically recommended that the underspend be reserved to be used when stocks become available.
 - Fleet £0.070m under (Line 16): In spite of the increases in fuel prices in the last quarter of the year, reduced mileage resulting from Covid restrictions in the earlier part of the year have seen a temporary saving in the fuel budget.
 - Property £0.100m under (in Line 17) Since the transfer of property management functions from Place Partnership (PPL) to the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) budgets are now much more on track but the position is impacted by a large retrospective rebate on business rates on closed fire stations.
 - ICT £0.0115m under (Line 19) Supply change delays causing late delivery of some hardware
 - Performance & Information £0.040m under (in Line 20) Budget made provision for public consultation on changes to the Attendance measure, however this will now take place in 2022-23.
 - Insurances £0.067m over (Line 25) Increased premiums as a result of a hardening market and recent claims experience.
 - Travel Costs £0.059m under (in Line 26) Reduced claims for travel and subsistence etc, as a result of Covid restrictions and other changed working arrangements. This was forecast as a £0.050m underspending from Quarter 2.
 - Capital Financing £0.170 under (Line 31) Arising from delay in capital spend in 2020-21 and 2021-22; was forecast as £0.160m from Quarter 2.
 - Net other variations total £0.027m over.
16. The total variation £0.535m represents 1.5% of the relevant budget.
17. Of this total variation it is planned to take certain items to reserves to meet the expenditure when deliveries are again available:
- £75,696 to pay for smoke alarms - as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.
 - £115,000 to cover delayed ICT hardware supplies.
 - Remainder £344,264 – proposed transfer to Capital Projects Reserve (see paragraph 22 below).
18. On the funding side, Appendix 1 shows that the out-turn has exceeded the budget by £1.493m (i.e. there is more income than budgeted). This is attributable to additional and unexpected grants being paid at the end of (and after) the financial year.

- a. Business Rate – Retail Relief Grant £1.168m additional (in Line 36): Members may recall that in 2020/21 government introduced significant additional Business Rate reliefs for retail premises in the March Budget. As this was after the statutory Retained Business Rate setting process it was compensated for in year via the Billing Authorities. However, this was adjusted out for the purposes of setting the 2021-22 Retained Business Rates, resulting in a significant Collection Fund loss, of over £1m. Government has now provided compensation for this loss.
 - b. The Policy & Resources Committee have recommended that this grant be reserved to meet the inflationary pressures on the major building programme to ensure the works at Hereford, Redditch, Broadway and North Herefordshire training facility can be completed.
 - c. Other small grants £0.340m additional (in Line 37) comprising:
 - i. £0.077m unbudgeted MORSE (*Making Our Roads Safer for Everyone*) grant from the PCC.
 - ii. £0.193m Fire Protection Grant – originally paid as a one-off grant in 2020/21, but later paid in 2021-22 as well. Now expected for the period 2022-23 – 2024-25 as well.
 - iii. £0.042m NHS Covid Grant – paid by Home Office in late March.
 - iv. £0.052m Pension Admin Grant – one-off notified and paid by Home Office after year end, to meet the future administrative costs of the pensions remedy.
 - v. Offset by a reduction in FireLink grant as government had previously miscalculated the inflationary increase in the grant.
19. This £1.493m additional income will fall to balances as follows:
- a. £192,675 to the Protection Grants Reserve.
 - b. £51,850 to the Pension Reserve.
 - c. £1,168,801 to the Capital Projects Reserve, to provide cover for building costs inflation on the major building projects – as recommended by Policy & Resources Committee.
 - d. Remainder £80,850 – proposed transfer to Capital Projects Reserve (see paragraph 22 below).
20. There is one variation to report in relation to the use of reserves. When setting the budget, it was expected that government would be paying grant to support the loss of tax-base as a result of Covid. In February 2021 this was anticipated to give £0.116m to draw on in support of the 2021-22 budget. By the time the final figures emerged this support was £0.065m less than budgeted
21. The total impact of these variations on the transfer to reserves is given below:

	£	£	£
<u>From Reserves</u> - Invest to Improve etc.			(500,940)
<u>To Reserves</u> - Expenditure			
Smoke Alarms (P&R)		75,696	
ICT Hardware		115,000	
Remainder	#	344,264	534,960
<u>To Reserves</u> - Funding			
Protection Grants Reserve		192,675	
Pensions Reserve		51,850	
Capital Projects Reserve (P&R)		1,168,801	
Remainder	#	80,050	1,493,376
			1,527,396
<u>To/(From) Reserves</u> - Budgeted			
	Planned	Adjust	Actual
Property Reserve (planned)	(220,000)		(220,000)
TIG Grant Reserve (planned)	(116,000)	64,846	(51,154)
Budget Reduction Reserve (planned)	7,000	(7,000)	0
	(329,000)	57,846	(271,154)
			1,256,242
Reduction in TIG Reserve (paragraph 20)	#		(57,846)
			1,198,396

22. It is proposed that within the spirit of the concerns of the Policy & Resources Committee about building costs inflation that items marked “#” above, totalling £366,468 are also taken to the Capital Projects Reserve.

Impact on Reserves

23. As a reminder the outrun position on the General Fund is shown in Column 4 of Appendix 1 and is summarised below:

	£
Expenditure	Line 32 35,241,981
Funding	Line 37 (36,440,376)
Difference	Line 38 (1,198,396)

24. There will therefore be a net transfer to balances of £1.198m, but this will be made up of a number of different movements, for reasons explained above, and the individual reserve transactions are as set out below:

In accordance with approved Budget

Transfer from: Property Maintenance Reserve	(220,000)
Transfer from: TIG Grant Reserve	(51,154)
	<u>(271,154)</u>

In accordance with MTFP Reserves Strategy

	£
Transfer from: Organisational Excellence Reserve	(132,400)
Transfer from: ESMCP Reserve	(67,286)

Transfer from: Broadway Reserve	(38,495)
Transfer from: On Call Recruitment Reserve	(5,000)
Transfer from: Property Maintenance Reserve	(57,141)
Transfer from: Pensions Reserve	(7,910)
Transfer from: Protection Grants Reserve	(144,673)
Transfer from: Safety Initiatives Reserve	(48,035)
	<hr/> (500,940)

Recommendations of Policy & Resources Committee

	£
Transfer to: Safety Initiatives Reserve (<i>Smoke Alarms</i>)	75,696
Transfer to: Capital Projects Reserve (<i>Inflation</i>)	1,168,801
	<hr/> 1,244,497

Final Proposals

	£
Transfer to: Protection Grants Reserve (<i>2021-22 grant</i>)	192,675
Transfer to: ICT Replacements Reserve (<i>late deliveries</i>)	115,000
Transfer to: Pensions Reserve (<i>one-off grant</i>)	51,850
Transfer to: Capital Projects Reserve (<i>Inflation</i>)	366,468
	<hr/> 725,993

£ 1,198,396

25. There is a small amount (£462.60) remaining on the DCP Change Reserve and it is proposed to transfer this to the Safety Initiatives Reserve to allow the former, un-required, reserve to be closed.
26. The impact on individual reserves is shown in Appendix 2.
27. The Reserves Strategy envisaged the holding of the Budget Reduction Reserve pending the outcome of any future funding reductions. Whilst the current Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) looked reasonably favourable, and might have allowed release of some of this £1.9m reserve. However, current and projected inflationary pressures may require a re-think and this will be reviewed by officers during 2022-23.

Capital Budget 2021/22

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

	Vehicles	Major Builds	Major Equip	Alloc. Minor	Unalloc Minor	Future Builds	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Approved at Dec 2021	2.715	7.916	0.590	2.423	0.177	12.949	26.770
Major Scheme Allocation		0.177				(0.177)	0.000
Minor Scheme Allocation				(0.013)	0.013		0.000
	2.715	8.093	0.590	2.410	0.190	12.772	26.770
Expenditure to 2020/21	0.423	7.219	0.318	0.590			8.550
Available Budget	2.292	0.874	0.272	1.820	0.190	12.772	35.320

29. Major Schemes provision is that for Hereford, Redditch and Broadway Fire Stations and the North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility, which are not disclosed separately in case they prejudice any future tender/contract processes.
30. Expenditure against these schemes has been slow for a number of reasons including significantly longer lead times on vehicle supplies from the European Union.
31. Members' attention is drawn to the Redditch scheme (Line 12) where £0.506m has been allocated to preliminary costs. Following discussion with the PCC regarding financing of this joint project it now appears to be more economical to the tax-payer if the project is initially funded by the PCC (a significant Stamp Duty Land Tax saving). This will involve a number of budget changes in the future:
 - a. The transfer of some of the expenditure already incurred to the PCC;
 - b. The removal of the capital scheme and consequential capital financing from the fire budget and the replacement with an equivalent rent type payment. The net budget impact should be at least neutral.
32. Schemes shown as “#” in the Appendix are completed and will be removed from future monitoring reports.

Role of the Audit and Standards Committee

33. The Statement of Accounts will be prepared on an International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) basis and will show the true economic cost (but not the overall economic benefits) of providing a Fire and Rescue Service.
34. The IFRS basis differs substantially from the statutory basis on which Members are charged with managing the finances of the Fire Authority which is the basis of this Provisional Financial Results element of this report.
35. This is because there are significant items which are: either required to be charged by statute but which are not permitted under IFRS, or required to be charged under IFRS but which are prohibited by statute.
36. The Statement of Accounts will reconcile these differences and the Audit and Standards Committee will scrutinise this reconciliation as well as the Accounts themselves.
37. The Accounts and Audit Regulations normally require that the Statement of Accounts is signed by the Chief Financial Officer (the Treasurer) no later than 31 May. The Regulations have again been temporarily amended this year to make this date 31 July. Progress is on track to achieve this date.
38. These Regulations also oblige the Authority to approve and publish the audited Statement of Accounts normally by 31 July, although this year this has been amended to 30 September.

Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators

39. The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Authority to 'have regard to' the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Authority's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
40. This guidance continues to make it clear that investment priorities should be security and liquidity, rather than yield and that authorities should not rely solely on credit ratings, but consider other information on risk.
41. In accordance with both the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, and current Fire Authority Financial Regulations the Treasury Management Activities are required to be reviewed by Members twice a year, but are now incorporated into the quarterly budget monitoring reports.
42. The final review of 2021-22 would normally have been brought to Policy & Resources Committee in September but, to allow inclusion of audited data within the Prudential Indicators, this has again been brought forward to this Authority Report.

Treasury Management Activities

43. Treasury Management is about managing the Authority's cash flow and investments to support its finances for the benefit of the public and the services that it provides. These activities are structured to manage risk foremost and then optimise performance.
44. The Treasury Management function strives to ensure the stability of the Authority's financial position by sound debt, cash and risk management techniques. The need to minimise risk and volatility is constantly addressed whilst aiming to achieve the treasury management objectives.
45. Banking arrangements and the Treasury Management functions for the Authority, in respect of lending and borrowing, are carried out by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) under a Service Level Agreement (SLA). All Authority funds are invested or borrowed by WCC in accordance with their Treasury Management Strategy; this means that the Authority is subjected to the same levels of risk and return as WCC. An extract of the relevant elements of WCC Treasury Management Strategy for 2021-22 is included at Appendix 4.
46. At 31 March 2021 the Authority had long-term debt totalling £12.137m, and during 2021-22 £1.726m was repaid as planned, bringing the total debt at 31 March 2022 to £10.411m.
47. A further £1.365m is scheduled for repayment in 2022-23 and, as revenue reserves (currently used in lieu of external borrowing) are used up as the Invest to Improve projects are progressed, it may be necessary to take further borrowing in future.

48. As a rule of thumb borrowing should not exceed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which at 31 March 2022 stood at £20.914m.

49. In accordance with the SLA investment risk is shared with WCC proportionate to the relative funds invested. At 31 March 2022 the share of investment is as below:

	£m
Money Market Funds	3.581
Call (instant access)	1.049
Cash Plus (liquidity fund)	1.913
Other Local Authorities	0.957
	<hr/>
	7.500

50. As part of the defined investment risk strategy Authority funds are currently deposited with the Bank of England and other organisations deemed to be low risk, such as other Local Authority Bodies, WCC Treasury Management keeps this policy under constant review. With the downgrading of several large financial institutions, to comply with the AA credit rating required by the Treasury Management Strategy, which ensures the continued reduction of risk exposure, there are now fewer financial institutions available where investments can be made which increases reliance upon the Bank of England / HM Treasury.

51. However, with investment rates remaining as low as they currently are, a less prudent risk strategy would not greatly increase the expected yield whilst significantly increasing the associated risk.

Prudential Indicators

52. In considering the budget and precept for the year the Authority approves indicators and limits in respect of capital expenditure, borrowing and revenue consequences.

53. These are set by the Authority, as part of the overall budget setting process, in February prior to the start of the financial year.

54. Appendix 5 sets out the relevant indicators as approved and as they out-turn, and demonstrates that they are within the limits of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Conclusion

55. Since the advent of Austerity in 2011-12, where the underlying level of budget has remained virtually unchanged, the Authority has prudently managed its finances to ensure stability and overall finances remain well controlled.

56. The SLA with WCC and the use of its Strategy Statement ensures that the Authority invests its resources within a robust and effective framework to deliver a maximum return on investments within a secure environment. The monitoring of the Prudential Indicators has demonstrated that the Authority has complied with its Treasury Management targets.

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).	Budget prepared in support of current policy priorities
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	n/a
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	n/a
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	n/a

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Revenue Budget 2021-22: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 2: Earmarked Reserves 2021-22: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 3: Capital Budget 2021-22: Provisional Out-turn

Appendix 4: Treasury Management Strategy: 2021-22 (WCC Extract)

Appendix 5: Prudential Indicators: 2021-22 Provisional Out-turn

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: 22nd June 2022
Provisional Out-turn 2021/22
Revenue Budget

Col Line		(2) Revised Budget £	(3) Forecast Provisional Out-turn £	(4) Forecast Variation (Raw) £	(5) Reserves Effect £	(6) Forecast Variation (Underlying) £
1	WT Firefighter Pay	13,938,900	14,038,829	99,929	(161,776)	(61,847)
2	OC (RDS) Firefighter Pay	4,102,600	4,117,247	14,647		14,647
3	Fire Control Pay	899,500	983,497	83,997	(67,286)	16,711
4	Support Staff Pay	4,291,000	4,420,406	129,406	(85,128)	44,278
5	Other Employee Costs	120,000	72,457	(47,543)		(47,543)
6	Pension Costs	1,035,000	1,088,610	53,610		53,610
7		24,387,000	24,721,047	334,047	(314,190)	19,857
8	Strategic Management	105,500	103,463	(2,037)		(2,037)
9	Leadership Development	0	30,035	30,035		30,035
10	New Dimensions	46,400	28,738	(17,662)		(17,662)
11	Ops Policy	37,800	76,285	38,485		38,485
12	Protection (TFS)	17,800	109,733	91,933	(89,994)	1,939
13	Prevention (CFS)	213,000	138,424	(74,576)	(1,120)	(75,696)
14	Training	621,500	612,074	(9,426)		(9,426)
15	Ops Logistics	1,190,000	1,143,645	(46,355)		(46,355)
16	Fleet	547,000	477,315	(69,685)		(69,685)
17	Property	2,025,500	2,008,218	(17,282)	(57,141)	(74,423)
18	PCC Property Services	380,100	356,528	(23,572)		(23,572)
19	ICT	2,003,700	1,888,788	(114,912)		(114,912)
20	Performance & Information	74,300	13,183	(61,117)		(61,117)
21	Corporate Comms	28,300	27,883	(417)		(417)
22	Human Resources	452,800	450,884	(1,916)		(1,916)
23	Fire Authority Costs	62,000	52,889	(9,111)		(9,111)
24	Legal Services	37,800	26,855	(10,945)		(10,945)
25	Insurances	361,800	428,508	66,708		66,708
26	Finance (FRA)	139,400	80,433	(58,967)		(58,967)
27	Finance (SLA)	88,300	82,156	(6,144)		(6,144)
28	Finance (Misc.)	0	19,316	19,316		19,316
29	Unallocated Budgets	(41,000)	0	41,000		41,000
30		8,392,000	8,155,353	(236,647)	(148,255)	(384,902)
31	Capital Financing	2,497,000	2,365,581	(131,419)	(38,495)	(169,915)
32		2,497,000	2,365,581	(131,419)	(38,495)	(169,915)
33	Core Budget	35,276,000	35,241,981	(34,019)	(500,940)	(534,960)
34	Funding Grants	(7,506,600)	(7,504,676)	1,924		
35	Council Tax	(24,480,400)	(24,480,406)	(6)		
36	Business Rates & Grants	(1,935,000)	(3,090,931)	(1,155,931)		
37	Special Grants	(1,025,000)	(1,364,363)	(339,363)		
38	Total Funding	(34,947,000)	(36,440,376)	(1,493,376)		
39		329,000	(1,198,396)	(1,527,396)		

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: 22nd June 2022
Provisional Out-turn 2021/22
Earmarked Reserves

	Balance 31-Mar-2021 £	Budget Use £	Planned Use £	P&R Cttee £	FRA £	Balance 31-Mar-2022 £
<u>Future Expenditure Reserves</u>						
Sustainability Reserve	309,935					309,935
Organisational Excellence Reserve	1,040,000		(132,400)			907,600
C&C Reserve	1,526,606					1,526,606
ESMCP Reserve	1,099,481		(67,286)			1,032,195
RPE Reserve	1,000,000					1,000,000
Broadway Reserve	981,048		(38,495)			942,553
On Call Recruitment Reserve	1,000,000		(5,000)			995,000
ICT Replacements Reserve	1,200,000				115,000	1,315,000
Capital Projects Reserve	900,000			1,168,801	366,468	2,435,269
Property Maintenance Reserve	811,547	(220,000)	(57,141)			534,406
Pension Tribunal Reserve	400,000					400,000
Development Reserve	310,237					310,237
Pensions Reserve	215,865		(7,910)		51,850	259,805
Protection Grants Reserve	201,400		(144,673)		192,675	249,402
Safety Initiatives Reserve	110,270		(48,035)	75,696		137,931
Fire Prevention Reserve	230,507				463	230,970
Equipment Reserve	189,167					189,167
DCP Change Reserve	463				(463)	0
	11,526,526	(220,000)	(500,940)	1,244,497	725,993	12,776,075
<u>Other Specific Reserves</u>						
Operational Activity Reserve	600,000					600,000
Insurance Excess Reserve	130,000					130,000
	730,000	0	0	0	0	730,000
<u>Budget Reduction Reserves</u>						
Budget Reduction Reserve	1,234,706					1,234,706
Budget Reduction Reserve (Covid-19)	602,000					602,000
TIG Reserve	146,165	(51,154)	0			95,011
	1,982,871	(51,154)	0	0	0	1,931,717
	14,239,397	(271,154)	(500,940)	1,244,497	725,993	15,437,792
				1,198,396		

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority: 22nd June 2022
Provisional Out-turn 2021/22
Capital Budget

Col Line	(2) Budget £	(3) Budget Change £	(4) Revised Budget £	(5) Prior Year Expenditure £	(6) Balance at 01-Apr-21 £	(7) 2021-22 Expenditure £	(8) Remaining Unspent £
Vehicle Programme							
1 Pumps 20-21	1,332,563		1,332,563		1,332,563	1,109,079	223,484
2 Water Carrier 20-21	412,000		412,000		412,000		412,000
3 Remote Access Vehicle 20-21	404,130		404,130		404,130	200,478	203,652
4 Water Rescue Vehicle (3) 20-21	262,650	(29,878)	232,772	226,481	6,291	6,291	(0)
5 Rope Rescue Vehicle(1) 20-21	87,550	(11,550)	76,000	76,000	0		0
6 Van-Spec 20-21	130,000		130,000	120,024	9,976		9,976
7 Car 20-21	27,800		27,800		27,800		27,800
8 Van-Small 21-22	29,000		29,000		29,000		29,000
9 Car 21-22	29,000		29,000		29,000		29,000
10 Fireground Welfare Vehicles	0	41,428	41,428		41,428	35,594	5,834
11 Total	2,714,693	0	2,714,693	422,505	2,292,188	1,351,442	940,746
Major Buildings							
12 Redditch FS Prelims	506,183		506,183	56,220	449,963	254,313	195,650
13 Wyre Forest Hub	7,273,000		7,273,000	7,128,340	144,660		144,660
14 Hereford Prelims Holmer Road	250,000		250,000	15,655	234,345	550	233,795
15 Broadway FS Prelims	57,447		57,447	18,952	38,495	38,495	0
16 North Hereford STF - Prelims	0	5,750	5,750		5,750	5,750	0
17 Total	8,086,630	5,750	8,092,380	7,219,166	873,214	299,108	574,106
Other Major Schemes							
18 Mobile Data Terminal Replacement	340,000		340,000	291,347	48,653	39,630	9,023
19 Fire Control	249,911		249,911	26,558	223,353	73,069	150,284
20 Total	589,911	0	589,911	317,905	272,006	112,699	159,307
Minor Schemes							
21 224 - Audit Software	35,035		35,035	22,325	12,710		12,710
22 237 - Intel Software	20,000		20,000		20,000		20,000
23 247 - ICT Strategy Cloud Services	96,082		96,082	41,477	54,605	13,605	41,000
24 248 - ICT Strategy SharePoint	200,000		200,000	72,000	128,000	8,550	119,450
25 249 - ICT Strategy Professional Services	150,000		150,000	117,666	32,334	17,050	15,284
26 250 - ICT Strategy Equipment	250,000		250,000	117,579	132,422	51,199	81,223
27 254 - Leintwardine Rear Extension	179,000		179,000	19,139	159,861	895	158,966
28 264 - Ladders	73,376		73,376	54,632	18,744	18,744	(0) #
29 272 - Ledbury Asbestos works	21,500	(9,634)	11,866	11,866	0		0 #
30 274 - Leominster Fire Station Tower	10,000		10,000		10,000		10,000
31 276 - Pershore Re Roof and Guttering	0	363	363		363	363	0
32 277 - Peterchurch STF Pallet Storage	8,000		8,000	6,306	1,694		1,694
33 302 - Ross Drainage	85,000		85,000		85,000		85,000
34 303 - Leominster Welfare Refurb	23,000		23,000		23,000		23,000
35 304 - Tenbury Rear Yard	40,000		40,000	4,830	35,170		35,170
36 305 - Redditch Water First Responders	15,000		15,000		15,000		15,000
37 309 - Disaster Recovery	37,000		37,000		37,000	9,796	27,204
38 310 - ICCS Firewall	23,993		23,993	20,254	3,739	0	3,739
39 311 - Thermal Imaging Cameras	148,000	(356)	147,644	102,108	45,536	45,536	0 #
40 312 - Air Bags	62,474		62,474		62,474	62,474	0 #
41 313 - Power Tools	45,000		45,000		45,000		45,000
42 318 - Wi-Fi Improvements	19,985		19,985		19,985	16,671	3,314
43 319 - Traffic Management Droitwich	30,000	(5,847)	24,153		24,153	24,153	0 #
44 320 - Houses Droitwich	25,000	(18,640)	6,360		6,360	6,360	0 #
45 321 - Droitwich 1st Floor	24,000		24,000		24,000		24,000
46 322 - Desford Welfare	70,000		70,000		70,000	54,906	15,094
47 324 - Bromyard Appliance Bay Floor	5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000
48 326 - Bromyard Heating	3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000
49 327 - Ross On Wye Roof	46,543		46,543		46,543	425	46,118
50 329 - Electrical Charging Points	50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000
51 354 - Command Training Relocation	130,000	(259)	129,741		129,741	129,741	0 #
52 355 - Ledbury Roof Works	37,120	(940)	36,180		36,180	36,180	0 #
53 356 - Hereford Welfare (Showers)	30,000	4,161	34,161		34,161	34,161	0
54 357 - Service Wide: LED Lighting	35,000		35,000		35,000		35,000
55 358 - Service Wide: Appliance Bay Pits	30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000
56 359 - Droitwich Appliance Bay Doors	31,820		31,820		31,820	31,820	0 #
57 360 - Pershore: Cellar Works	1,100	(1,100)	0		0		0 #
58 361 - Tenbury: Appliance Bay Doors	5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000
59 362 - Wyre Forest: STF	8,000		8,000		8,000		8,000
60 363 - Hose Branch Renewal	50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000
61 364 - Water First Responder Update	150,000		150,000		150,000		150,000
62 365 - WAN Hardware	139,000		139,000		139,000	69,686	69,314
63 367 - Whitchurch Kitchen Works	6,000	(6,000)	0		0		0 #
64 Sub-Total	2,449,028	(38,252)	2,410,776	590,182	1,820,594	632,315	1,188,279
65 Minor Schemes - Unallocated	151,696	38,252	189,948		189,948		189,948
66 Total	2,600,724	0	2,600,724	590,182	2,010,542	632,315	1,378,227
Future Building Schemes							
67 Budgetary Provision	12,777,834	(5,750)	12,772,084	0	12,772,084	0	12,772,084
68 Total	12,777,834	(5,750)	12,772,084	0	12,772,084	0	12,772,084
69 Capital Budget	26,769,792	0	26,769,792	8,549,758	18,220,034	2,395,564	15,824,470
70 # Completed/Closed Schemes	566,390	(42,776)	523,614	168,606	355,008	355,008	(0)
71	26,203,402	42,776	26,246,178	8,381,152	17,865,027	2,040,556	15,824,471

Extract from Worcestershire County Council Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22**Background**

In accordance with the County Council's Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice the Council is required to approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2021/22. The Treasury Management Strategy is reflected in the Personal Assurance Statement given by the Chief Financial Officer concerning the 2021/22 budget calculations.

Treasury management is undertaken by a small team of professionally qualified staff within financial services.

In addition, the County Council employs Treasury Management advisors, Link Asset Services (formally Capita Asset Services), who provide information and advice on interest rate movements which is used to inform borrowing and investment decisions. The advisors have been engaged on a fixed term basis after a tendering procedure completed in August 2016.

Relevant information is also obtained from other financial commentators, the press and seminars arranged by other organisations, for example CIPFA and the Local Government Association.

Information received from these different sources is compared in order to ensure all views are considered and there are no significant differences or omissions from information given by the County Council's advisors.

All Treasury Management employees take part in the County Council's Staff Review and Development scheme, where specific individual development needs are highlighted training in Treasury Management activities and networking opportunities provided by both professional and commercial organisations are taken up where appropriate.

During 2020/21 the County Council has invested its surplus cash with selected Banks, AAA-rated Money market and cash-plus funds, the UK Debt Management Office and with other local authorities.

Economic Commentary

The COVID-19 outbreak has done huge economic damage to the UK and economies around the world. After the Bank of England took emergency action in March to cut Bank Rate to first 0.25%, and then to 0.10%, it left Bank Rate unchanged at its subsequent meetings to 16th December, although some forecasters had suggested that a cut into negative territory could happen. However, the Governor of the Bank of England has made it clear that he currently thinks that such a move would do more damage than good and that more quantitative easing is the favoured tool if further action becomes necessary. As shown in the forecast table above, no increase in Bank Rate is expected in the near-term as economic recovery is expected to be only gradual and, therefore, prolonged.

The balance of risks to the UK

- The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably even, but dependent on how quickly the economy can reopen over the coming months.

- The balance of risks to increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PWLB rates are broadly similarly to the downside.

One risk that is both an upside and downside risk, is that all central banks are now working in very different economic conditions than before the 2008 financial crash as there has been a major increase in consumer and other debt due to the exceptionally low levels of borrowing rates that have prevailed since 2008. This means that the neutral rate of interest in an economy, (i.e. the rate that is neither expansionary nor deflationary), is difficult to determine definitively in this new environment, although central banks have made statements that they expect it to be much lower than before 2008. Central banks could therefore either over or under do increases in central interest rates. Another complication is a post-COVID inflation spike, which could effectively end the post-2008 era of ultra-low interest rates, but this is not certain.

The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 11th of August 2020. However, following the conclusion of the review of PWLB margins over gilt yields on 25th November 2020, all forecasts below have been reduced by 1%. These are forecasts for certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80bps:

Link Group Interest Rate View													
9.11.20													
These Link forecasts have been amended for the reduction in PWLB margins by 1.0% from 26.11.20													
	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24
BANK RATE	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
3 month ave earnings	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
6 month ave earnings	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
12 month ave earnings	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
5 yr PWLB	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
10 yr PWLB	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30
25 yr PWLB	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80
50 yr PWLB	1.30	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60

Treasury Management Strategy

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance requires the Council to set several Prudential Indicators. The Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with these indicators.

Borrowing Strategy

There was much speculation during the second half of 2019 that bond markets were in a bubble which was driving bond prices up and yields down to historically very low levels. The context for that was a heightened expectation that the US could have been heading for a recession in 2020. In addition, there were growing expectations of a downturn in world economic growth, especially due to fears around the impact of the trade war between the US and China, together with inflation generally at low levels in most countries and expected to remain subdued. Combined, these conditions were conducive to very low bond yields. While inflation targeting by the major central banks has been successful over the last thirty years in lowering inflation expectations, the real equilibrium rate for central rates has fallen considerably due to the high level of borrowing by consumers. This means that central banks do not need to raise rates as much now to have a major impact on consumer spending, inflation, etc. The consequence of this has been the gradual lowering of the overall level of interest rates and bond yields in financial markets over the last 30 years. Over the year prior to the coronavirus crisis, this has seen many bonds yield up to 10 years turn negative in the Eurozone. In addition, there has, at times, been an inversion of bond yields in the US whereby 10-year yields have fallen below shorter-term yields. In the past, this has been a precursor of a recession. The other side of this coin is that bond prices are elevated as investors would be expected to be moving out of

riskier assets i.e. shares, in anticipation of a downturn in corporate earnings and so selling out of equities.

Gilt yields had therefore already been on a generally falling trend up until the coronavirus crisis hit western economies during March 2020. After gilt yields spiked up during the financial crisis in March, we have seen these yields fall sharply to unprecedented lows as investors panicked during March in selling shares in anticipation of impending recessions in western economies, and moved cash into safe haven assets i.e. government bonds. However, major western central banks took rapid action to deal with excessive stress in financial markets during March, and started massive quantitative easing purchases of government bonds: this also acted to put downward pressure on government bond yields at a time when there has been a huge and quick expansion of government expenditure financed by issuing government bonds. Such unprecedented levels of issuance in “normal” times would have caused bond yields to rise sharply. Gilt yields and PWLB rates have been at remarkably low rates so far during 2020/21.

As the interest forecast table for PWLB certainty rates above shows, there is expected to be little upward movement in PWLB rates over the next two years as it will take economies, including the UK, a prolonged period to recover all the momentum they have lost in the sharp recession caused during the coronavirus shut down period. From time to time, gilt yields, and therefore PWLB rates, can be subject to exceptional levels of volatility due to geo-political, sovereign debt crisis, emerging market developments and sharp changes in investor sentiment, (as shown on 9th November when the first results of a successful COVID-19 vaccine trial were announced). Such volatility could occur at any time during the forecast period.

The County Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with external debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This will continue, given the current low to non-existent returns on cash.

As HM Treasury has, de-facto removed the 100-bps uplift from PWLB rates, this is now a viable source for long-term funding again. Other borrowing sources are not ruled-out, when assessing these, the following will be considered:

- Borrowing from other local authorities -an active and easily accessible market with terms of up to 5 years available
- Plain vanilla, fixed rate borrowing from other financial institutions, for fixed terms of up to 30 years, requiring some credit assessment by the lender and longer lead-times than PWLB.
- Forward rate agreements with lenders for fixed rate loans above, to secure funding for drawdown at a future date, for a certain rate.

The strategy will be to borrow to replenish a proportion of the reserves and cash balances used to support capital expenditure since October 2008. This will mitigate any interest rate risk in that borrowing and will be taken before borrowing rates increase significantly. The timing of the borrowing will depend on cashflow requirements and forecast future developments and on interest rate movements and the forecast for those future movements. A mixture of shorter and longer-term loans will be taken to fit with the County Council's debt maturity profile.

Interest rates will be monitored but as forecasts stand it is likely that borrowing could be undertaken late in 2020/21 and mid-year 2021/22.

The gross capital borrowing requirement for 2021/22 is estimated to be £71.3 million. After the use of the minimum revenue provision to repay debt of £13.5 million, the net capital borrowing requirement is estimated to be £57.8 million.

The management of the County Council's debt will be exercised in the most efficient manner considering maturing debt. The opportunity may be taken to reschedule any outstanding debt

if rates become favourable to delivering savings in the revenue budget. The cost of external interest of maintaining the council debt is estimated to be £14.7 million in 2021/22.

Annual Investments Strategy

The County Council's Investment Strategy has been drawn up having regard to both the Communities and Local Government's Guidance on Local Authorities Investments and the CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and CIPFA Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. This strategy will be revised and presented to Council if changes occur outside those envisaged within this strategy.

The policy objective for the County Council is the prudent investment of its cash balances. The investment priorities are firstly the security of capital (protecting sums from capital loss) and secondly the liquidity of investments (ensuring cash is available when required). Only when these two priorities are met will the third, of achieving the optimum return on investments, be taken into account.

The County Council will not borrow money purely to invest. The County Council will only borrow up to 2 years in advance of cash being required to fund its capital expenditure and the amount borrowed will not exceed the annual borrowing requirement.

The investments, which the County Council can use for the prudent management of cash balances are categorised as 'Specified Investments' and 'Non-Specified Investments'.

A Specified Investment offers high security and high liquidity, must be in sterling and have a maturity date of less than a year. Any Specified Investment must be with the United Kingdom Government, a local authority in England or Wales or a similar body in Scotland or Northern Ireland, a parish or community council, a AAA-rated Money Market Fund, a bank which is partowned by the UK Government, or with a body of high credit quality. The County Council defines a body of high credit quality as counterparties who satisfy the criteria as described below:

- For overnight investments, or money placed in instant access accounts, the council defines a body of high credit quality as firstly having the below Short-Term ratings:

Agency:	Short-Term rating:
Fitch	F1
Moodys	P-1
Standard and Poors	A-1

- For **unsecured** term deposits between 2 and 364 days, the council will firstly define a body of high credit quality as having the below Long-term ratings:

Agency:	Long-Term rating:
Fitch	A+
Moodys	A1
Standard and Poors	A+

- The County Council will undertake continued due diligence and will not automatically lend to Counterparties that merely satisfy the above criteria. As additional consideration, the County Council will assess for each:
- Input from Treasury Advisors

- Other market data from a reputable source
- Press coverage
- Market presence by the Counterparty
- Availability of suitable products from the Counterparty
- Ease of execution with the Counterparty
- Level of Customer service from the Counterparty
- The above list is not exhaustive, the County Council may at any time exclude a Counterparty should it perceive any reasonable doubt concerning its Creditworthiness; the 2011 Code and subsequent revisions advise that subjective criteria may be used, in line with the Council's risk appetite.
- For **secured** term deposits, the council defines high credit quality as an **instrument** that has the above ratings with every agency that rates it.
- Enhanced Money Market funds or Cash Plus funds, which carry a AAA-rating from at least one rating agency.

Non-Specified Investments have a range of vehicles not covered by the definition of Specified Investments, which are set out in the Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and generally carry more risk.

The only types of non-specified investments the County Council will enter into or hold during the coming financial year are as below:

- A routine term deposit with a counterparty as described above for Specified Investments, for a period of more than 1 year. This type of investment will be considered when rates are favourable and cash balances allow. The Council's prudential indicators allow no more than £10 million to be invested in this category.
- Investments in Pooled Property Funds, these will be considered as having a 5 to 10-year term.

The credit ratings of Fitch, Moodys and Standard and Poors are monitored at least weekly, ratings-watches and downgrades are acted upon immediately. Any other information that is deemed relevant to the creditworthiness of any Counterparty will be acted upon, in line with the 2009 code revision.

The County Council may hold cash within its current account overnight as a transactional control to mitigate the risk of going overdrawn and incurring penalty and interest charges. The County Council may also leave funds in this account when it is impractical and/or not economically feasible to invest elsewhere. These balances are considered as cash or cash equivalents and not investments.

The County Council will aim to have not less than 50% of its investments returnable within 28 days with at least 20% within 7 days.

Prudential Indicators 2021-22 Out-turn

Introduction

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to provide a code of practice to underpin the system of capital finance embodied in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Prudential Code supports a system of self-regulation that is achieved by the setting and monitoring of a suite of Prudential Indicators that directly relate to each other. The indicators establish parameters within which the Authority should operate to ensure the objectives of the Prudential Code are met.

Recent revisions to the code have reduced the number of mandatory indicators, but the Treasurer believes that they provide useful information to the Authority so they continue to be included.

Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Indicators for which the Authority set limits are as follows:

1. Capital Expenditure

The actual amount of capital expenditure that was incurred during 2021-22 was as follows:

	Original (Feb 2021) £m	Revised (Feb 2022) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Capital Expenditure	6.508	2.307	2.396

2. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Financing Costs include the amount of interest payable in respect of borrowing or other long-term liabilities and the amount the Authority is required to set aside to repay debt, less interest and investments income.

The actual Net Revenue Stream is the 'amount to be met from government grants and local taxation' taken from the annual Statement of Accounts, and the estimated figure is the Authority's budget net of any transfers to or from the balances.

The indicator only requires that the costs associated with capital expenditure are measured in this way. However, the Authority has used, and may continue to use Operational Leasing as a cost-effective method of acquiring vehicles. In the spirit of the Prudential Code these costs are included for comparative purposes.

	Original (Feb 2021) £m	Revised (Feb 2022) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
Financing Costs	2.497	2.097	2.087
Net Revenue Stream	35.056	34.901	36.437
Ratio	7.12%	6.01%	5.73%

3. Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The capital financing is a measure of the extent to which the Authority needs to borrow to support capital expenditure. It does not necessarily relate to the actual amount of borrowing at any one point in time. The Authority arranges its treasury management activity via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) which has an integrated treasury management strategy where there is no distinction between revenue and capital cash flow, and the day to day position of external borrowing and investments can change constantly.

The capital financing requirement concerns only those transactions arising from capital spending, whereas the amount of external borrowing is a consequence of all revenue and capital cash transactions combined together following recommended treasury management practice.

	Original (Feb 2021) £m	Revised (Feb 2022) £m	Provisional Out-turn £m
CFR at 31st March 2022	22.978	21.902	20.914

4. Authorised Limit

The Authorised Limit represents an upper limit of borrowing that could be afforded in the short term but may not be sustainable.

5. Operational Boundary

The Operational Boundary represents an estimate of the most likely, prudent, but not worst case scenario and provides a parameter against which day to day treasury management activity can be monitored.

The limits for these indicators set for 2021/22

0/21 and the final out-turn are given below, and it can be confirmed that the out-turn figure represents the maximum borrowing at any point in the year, i.e. the Authorized limit was not exceeded.

	£m
Authorized Limit at 31st March 2022	35.000
Operational Boundary at 31st March 2022	32.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2022	10.411

6. Fixed Interest Rate Exposures

The Authority set an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures as follows:

	£m
Upper Limit at 31st March 2022	35.000
Actual Borrowing at 31st March 2022	10.411

7. Variable Interest Rate Exposures

The Authority set an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures, however all current borrowing is at fixed rates.

8. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

The upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings are as follows:

	Lower Limit £m	Actual £m	Upper Limit £m
Under 12 months	0.000	1.365	2.603
Over 12 months but within 24 months	0.000	0.211	2.603
Over 24 months but within 5 years	0.000	0.347	5.206
Over 5 years but within 10 years	0.000	4.000	7.809
Over 10 years	2.603	4.488	9.370
		10.411	

Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

Annual Service Review 2021-22

Purpose of report

1. This report seeks approval for the draft Annual Service Review 2021-22.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Review 2021-22 and approves it for publication on the Service website.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service produces a Fire Authority Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan as part of its corporate planning process. The Annual Service Review provides a review of the previous year's activity and performance, and an overview of the Service organisation and budget. The Annual Service Plan is a look ahead to activities planned for the coming year: the Plan is reported elsewhere on your agenda.
3. The two report format was introduced last year as a replacement to the Fire Authority Annual Report, reflecting a change to a more accessible, visual and engaging style suited to an increasingly online audience.

The Annual Service Review 2021-22

4. The Annual Service Review provides information on the Service's main activities throughout the year. In addition to a wealth of information about the Service's frontline activities and incident statistics, the report has a focus on some of the highlights of work behind the scenes. The Service attended 7,418 incidents during 2021-22, an increase of 6 per cent on the previous year. This was largely accounted for by a 19 per cent rise in the number of Special Service incidents attended, particularly Road Traffic Collisions, which increased by 32 per cent. This may be related to the gradual opening up of the country following the relaxing of Covid-19 restrictions.
5. The Review also includes articles on the publication of the new Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 and the development of three Core Strategies setting out how the aims and priorities of the CRMP will be delivered through our Response, Protection and Prevention services. The year also saw another inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), which showed some

good areas of work as well as a number of areas for improvement which are being addressed. There was also a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) with a set of new strategic equality objectives plus three Members of the Fire Authority becoming EDI Champions.

6. The Review is included as Appendix 1.

Conclusion/Summary

7. This report presents the Annual Service Review 2021-22, which is a look back at the range of work undertaken over the last year, including headline activities and incident statistics.
8. Subject to Fire Authority approval, the finalised report will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Annual Service Review provides information on resources necessary to support the implementation of Fire Authority objectives and priorities.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The Review highlights key achievements and performance in delivering the Service's core purpose during 2021-22.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	The Review reports on activity from the previous year.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Strategic Leadership Board consultation.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	When preparing projects or other activities, departments are required to consider proposed actions against the Service's equality objectives as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-25.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	No personal data is processed in the Review.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Service Review 2021-22 – separate enclosure

Annual Service Review

2021-2022



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Hereford & Worcester
Fire Authority

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Unless stated, figures used in this Review are as at 31 March 2022, rounded to the nearest 100 where appropriate. Population figures are updated to mid-2021 (the latest available).

Foreword

We are pleased to introduce our Annual Service Review for 2021-2022. We hope it helps you to appreciate the wide range of work we do to keep our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire safe from fire and other emergencies.

The Review is a look back over the last twelve months (April 2021 – March 2022) focusing on some of the highlights and main events of the year.

Over the year, our 24/7 emergency response service dealt with fires, road traffic collisions, flooding and many other emergencies. We attended 7,419 incidents, up by 6% on last year. While the number of fires attended was down by 4%, there was a 19% rise in the number of Special Services incidents. This is largely accounted for by a 32% increase in the number of road traffic collisions attended following the gradual relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.

We also carried out many other activities to reduce risk and improve community safety, such as home fire safety visits, inspecting buildings and enforcing fire safety legislation.

While most people are aware of our upfront work in emergency response and our protection and prevention work with businesses and communities, we've also been busy behind the scenes:

- At the beginning of the year, we launched the new Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 and developed three new Core Strategies setting out how we will deliver the aims and priorities of the CRMP through our Response, Protection and Prevention services.
- We outlined our commitments to our communities and staff in relation to Covid-19, as restrictions are gradually relaxed and we all try to live with Covid-19.
- This year the HMICFRS carried out their latest inspection of the Service, and their report in December 2021 highlighted some good areas of work and also some areas for improvement, which we have been addressing.
- We signed up to the NFCC's Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Service and set out our strategic equality objectives in support of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments.

We've focused on some of the highlights and main events of last year in this Review, but you'll find a lot more about the wide range of our work on the [News and Events](#) page of our Website.

This Review sits alongside our Annual Service Plan for 2022-2023, which is a look-ahead to what we're planning to do over the next twelve months. You will find the Plan on our [Publications](#) page.

Finally, we'd like to thank our Members and staff for their continued professionalism and dedication to keeping our communities safe during what has been another challenging year.



Councillor Kit Taylor,
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Jonathon Pryce, Chief Fire
Officer / Chief Executive

The Service in 2021-22



Core Purpose

“Keeping people safe from fire and other risks – responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.”



Staff
Members
693
(770 roles)



25

Fire
Stations



Fire
Engines
41



Budget

£35.3 Million



Population
791,700*

355,600*
Households



Area in
Hectares
392,000



Road length
in Miles
4,755



44,375*
Businesses



* Mid-2021 estimates

Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25

At the beginning of April 2021, we launched the new [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25](#) (CRMP). The CRMP is our overall strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe from fire and other emergencies with the resources available to us.

It looks at the fire and rescue-related risks facing the communities we serve, and sets out our high-level plans for tackling those risks through our emergency response, protection and prevention services over the next four years (2021-2025).

The CRMP also highlights our plans for supporting our workforce and maintaining value for money.



Supporting the CRMP are five additional documents providing more detailed information on fire and rescue-related risks across the two counties:

- [Economy](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Transport](#)
- [People & Places](#)
- [2020 Risk Review](#)

Alongside the CRMP, we have prepared three Core Strategies, which set out how we will deliver our core functions over the term of the CRMP. More details on the next page.



Core Strategies

In line with our Purpose, Vision and Mission, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is committed to putting the community first by keeping people safe from fire and other risks and protecting the most vulnerable. To support the delivery of the [Community Risk Management Plan](#) (CRMP), during the year we prepared our three core strategies – [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#) – which set our direction for the next four years (2021 – 2025).

Response

Availability

Making sure we have the right assets available at the right time

Competence

Ensuring we have suitably trained and competent staff to respond safely and effectively

Intelligence

Having the right level of accurate information available to deal with any foreseeable risk

Protection

Promoting Fire Safety

Promoting fire safety in commercial and other public premises through guidance and consultation

Increasing Compliance

Carrying out fire safety inspections and giving advice to businesses to help them meet fire safety regulations

Investigating and Enforcing

Investigating the causes of fire and enforcing compliance where breaches of fire safety regulations are found

Prevention

Reducing Risk

Developing our understanding of risk and targeting our prevention work at those people and areas most at risk of fire and other emergencies

Awareness and Education

Providing our communities with advice and guidance to help to increase awareness of the potential dangers of fire and other risks, and supporting education initiatives to promote risk reduction among vulnerable groups

Other Highlights and Events 1

COVID-19 RESPONSE



The year saw the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the virus, though, with the increase in vaccinations and greater awareness of how to stay safe and protect others, the lockdown restrictions across England have been gradually removed. This has enabled an opening up of businesses and public spaces as people try to get used to living with Covid-19.

The Service continued to adopt a safety-first approach to Covid-19 throughout the year. With appropriate risk assessments, personal protective equipment and safe working practices, we were fully able to maintain our emergency response services. Our staff were able to start returning to the workplace with appropriate safety and security measures in place since mid-summer. We were also able to start carrying out more Home Fire Safety Visits and Fire Safety Inspections.

Living With Covid-19 – Our Commitments

- To deliver high quality, sustainable prevention, protection and response services to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- To proactively protect our communities and limit the spread of Covid-19.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff in the pursuance of their duties.
- To support the activities of others in the protection of our communities.
- To ensure effective business continuity, procurement and recovery arrangements are in place throughout the sector.
- To support a return to normality or restoration of core services within HWFRS and to the wider community.

Partnership Working

Throughout the year, the Service continued to work collaboratively with partner agencies, including West Mercia Police, local authorities and with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of our Fire Alliance.

Through partnership working we aim to add value to the work of others, realise efficiencies (for example, through joint procurement), and enhance the overall effectiveness of our services.

HMICFRS



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services published their second inspection report in December 2021.

It highlights areas of good performance, such as how we respond to major and multi-agency incidents and protect the public through fire regulation, but it also details areas where improvements can be made, such as how efficiently we use our limited resources and how we support and develop our people.

The inspectors were encouraged by all the improvements we have made since their last inspection, and we are well underway in working through new action plans to address all issues raised in the latest report.

You can read the full report by clicking here: [HMICFRS inspection report](#)

Other Highlights and Events 2

CORE CODE OF ETHICS FOR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

In addition to our own set of Values, we are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England.

The Code sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. This will help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.

The ethical principles have been produced specifically for Fire and Rescue Services by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



Putting our communities first

We put the interests of the public, the community, and service users first.



Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.



Dignity and respect

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.



Leadership

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.

We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.



Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI, both within the FRS and the wider communities in which we serve.

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

Two major fires tackled in Kidderminster

Two major fires at industrial units in Kidderminster in September and December 2021 proved to be not only a true test of our firefighting skills, but also our multi-agency working alongside West Mercia Police, the local authorities, neighbouring fire and rescue services, local residents and the media.



The first incident at Park Street involved just about every fire station in the Service attending at some point to put the fire out promptly and minimise disruption to the local area.

The second major incident at the Hoo Farm Industrial Estate created plumes of smoke and dust that could be seen for miles around. Heavy rain, strong winds and flying debris in the wake of Storm Barra added to the task of extinguishing the fire and making the remaining structures safe. This was successfully achieved over several days through the great teamwork and the professionalism of everyone involved.



The Year In Numbers: Response



7,418
Total number
of Incidents
attended

↑ 6% Increase
(400 incidents)

This is 400 incidents more than last year, largely due to a 19% increase in the number of Special Services incidents.

Calls to Fire
Control
16,212



↑ 29% Increase
(3,617 calls)

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



1,604
Fires

↓ 4% Decrease
(58 incidents)

↓ **1,117**
Accidental
fires

8% Decrease
(91 incidents)



↑ **Deliberate
fires**
487

7% Increase
(33 incidents)



535
Primary
Building fires

↑ 8% Increase
(38 incidents)



744
Outdoor
Fires

↓ 10% Decrease
(84 incidents)



↓ 45% Decrease
38
Non Fatal
casualties from
fire incidents

In 2021-22 the fire fatality rate in Herefordshire & Worcestershire remained at **0.38 per 100,000** population

↑ Increase since 2020/21
↓ Decrease since 2020/21

The Year In Numbers: Response



2,385
Special
Service
Incidents

↑ **19% Increase**
(376 incidents)



32% Increase
(162 incidents)



663
Road
Traffic
Collisions



4% Increase
(13 incidents)

355
Assisting
other agencies



**Animal
Rescues**
126 ↓

1% Decrease (1 incident)



134 **Flooding
Incidents**

22% Decrease
(37 incidents)



**Rescues
from water**
73 ↓



32% Decrease
(32 incidents)



3,429
False
Alarms

3% Increase
(84 incidents)



2,558
False Alarms
due to
Apparatus



7% Increase
(167 incidents)



811
Good Intent
False Alarms



12% Decrease
(109 incidents)



60
Malicious
False Alarms



76% Increase
(26 incidents)



Increase since 2020/21



Decrease since 2020/21

The Year In Numbers: Protection



RBIP */ Visits
Post Fires
1,086



Building Reg.
Consultations
468



Enforcement
65

Licencing
Applications.
324



Fire
Investigation
101



Twitter
46,939



Media
Campaigns
31

**RBIP = Risk-Based Inspection Programme*

The Year In Numbers: Prevention



Safe & Well
Visits
1,107



Home Fire
Safety Visits
1,392



Equipment
Only Visits
803

Signposting
Referrals
352



Safeguarding
Referrals
112



Firesetter
Referrals
39



Referrals from
External Agencies
2,245



Calls Taken By
Prevention Team
2,714

Incident Breakdown by District

North District



Population
287,300



126,600
Households

North District covers 180 square miles across northern Worcestershire with the majority of people living in the towns of Redditch, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Droitwich. It has five fire stations, the busiest of which during the year was Wyre Forest attending 1,143 incidents or 40% of incidents in the District.



2,980
Total number of
Incidents attended



673
Fires



932
Special Service
Incidents



1,375
False
Alarms

South District



Population
310,800



142,000
Households

South District covers 490 square miles with most people living in the city of Worcester and the two towns of Malvern and Evesham. It is served by six fire stations including Worcester, the busiest station in the two counties, attending 1,316 incidents or 55% of incidents in the District during the year.



2,522
Total number of
Incidents attended



478
Fires



810
Special Service
Incidents



1,234
False
Alarms

West District



Population
193,600



87,000
Households

West District covers the whole of Herefordshire. About a third of the population live in the city of Hereford, with most people living in smaller communities across the rural county. It has 13 fire stations, the busiest of which was Hereford attending 983 incidents or 56% of incidents in the District.



1,916
Total number of
Incidents attended



453
Fires



643
Special Service
Incidents



820
False
Alarms

Service highlights - 1

Prevention



Safe & Well Visits

Despite Covid-19 restrictions over the year, the Prevention team and operational crews carried out over 2,500 face-to-face [Safe & Well](#) visits and 100 phone consultations with those who are most vulnerable to fire.



More than 3,000 Year 11 students attended our road safety scheme held at local Fire Stations this year. **Dying 2 Drive** is aimed at reducing death and serious injury among young road users and soon-to-be young drivers.

Community Safety Events

Our Prevention directorate supported many local events to promote fire safety throughout the year, including working with local GPs to generate Safe and Well Check referrals for vulnerable people.



PREVENTION

Protection

Fire Safety Training

We have trained a further 40 staff to increase the number of fire safety inspections of commercial premises and created a 24/7 response model to deal with fire safety matters.

Fire Safety Premises Database

Collaborative work has enabled us to increase our commercial premises database to over 40,000 premises, improving our targeted guidance and inspection programmes.



Response

Despite the pressures of the Covid-19 pandemic, we maintained our frontline emergency response services throughout the year, including tackling two of the largest fire incidents in recent memory: both at industrial estates in Kidderminster (see page 8).

We also hosted a High Volume Pump (HVP) training event on behalf of National Resilience at the Wyre Forest Hub. HVPs are essential for moving large volumes of water at incidents such as flooding following intense periods of rain.

Other highlights include:

- continued growth of the Firefighters Apprenticeship programme
- introduction of a second Incident Command vehicle and increased drone capability



- planning underway for a new joint Fire and Police Hub at Redditch
- Worcester fire station provided a base for the British Transport Police

Service highlights - 2

Training

Essential training across the whole Service continued despite Covid-19 restrictions, including compartment fire behaviour and recruit training.

We have also:

- introduced a comprehensive induction programme to support staff recently promoted.
- explored opportunities to recruit qualified paramedics to lead and develop our First Responder Emergency Care and trauma training, which will also enhance our collaborative work with ambulance crews at incidents.

Fire Investigation

We have invested in fire investigation training for our frontline Commanders and specialist fire scene investigators. This is an important area of our work, helping to reduce the human and financial costs of fires, reducing arson and educating against accidental fires. Over the year, our investigations have supported numerous successful prosecutions following deliberate fires.



Fleet & Equipment

Over the year, we introduced 4 new fire engines and a new restricted access vehicle – total cost: £1.4 m.

We also purchased £180,000 worth of new equipment including:

- 8 new ladders,
- new 22mm hose reels,
- new high-pressure airbags,
- New fitness equipment, and
- 4 light portable pumps



Incident Command Training Centre

Based at Worcester fire station, our new Incident Command suite offers state-of-the-art training facilities. With the aid of dedicated simulation software, the Centre provides an immersive experience for firefighters at all levels to develop key skills, technical understanding, command confidence and team work in a safe environment. Together with work on a new

training framework and competency schedule to ensure staff have access to up-to-date training aligned to [National Operational Guidance](#), the Centre will help to drive operational excellence across the Service.



Our People, Our Values

Staff Structure



The Service is led by the Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive with the support of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), made up of Directors and Assistant Directors. The Service employs 693 full-time and part-time members of staff, who work in 770 roles. Firefighters make up approximately 80% of the workforce, assisted by professional teams providing support and enabling services such as financial, human resources and legal services. The 24 Fire Control firefighters are the frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. There are also 17 active volunteers supporting community safety activities.

Our Values



Supporting our values and our people, this year we:

- implemented a hybrid working trial for office-based roles to support new ways of working,
- invested in a bespoke professional development programme for our leaders with access to online development tools, and
- launched a new personal development policy for all staff to apply for sponsorship to undertake any type of professional development.
- signed the Mental Health at Work Commitment

You can read more on the [Our Values](#) page of the Service website.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Gender Balance



This is an improvement from 16% female - 84% male ratio recorded in March 2018

Ethnic Minority Representation



This is a slight fall from 7% ethnic minority representation in the Service at March 2021

Staff Sickness



6.59 days/shifts** were lost per person in 2021-22, an increase over the 3.75 recorded in 2020-21, mainly due to a rise in days lost to surgery/recovery and mental health related issues.

* 2011 Census

** excludes Covid-19 related sickness

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

In 2020, we published our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan](#), which aims to promote equality, diversity in all aspects of our work and in our services to the wider community.

This year, we have set out our new [strategic equality objectives](#) across four key areas:

- **Our Organisation:** leadership and corporate commitment
- **Our Communities:** understand, engage and build good relationships
- **Our People:** develop, engage and understand
- **Our Partners:** working together

In addition, three Members of the Fire Authority became EDI Champions to promote, support and drive improvements; we have used our technology and individual plans to improve dyslexia support; and we held our first online event to mark International Women's Day featuring two prominent female leaders from the Police and Fire sectors.



Review of Training Performance and Culture

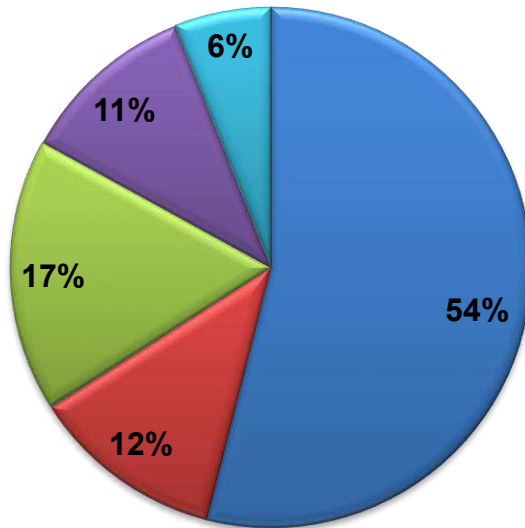
With the support of an educational consultant, surveys and focus groups involving over 250 members of staff, we have reviewed our learning requirements as part of our Digital Transformation aims.

Outcomes include:

- A new e-learning authoring tool and Learning Management System to support staff in their pursuit of operational excellence, including enhanced training material in compliance with National Operational Guidance and the Fire Standards Board,
- the launch of the Service's first ever webinar programme providing a platform for all staff to share expertise, knowledge and experience,
- increased focus on creating a learning culture that supports all staff, including anyone with neuro-diverse learning requirements.

Finance 2021-22

Fire Authority Budget 2021-22



Total: £35.3 million

- £18.9m - Uniform Staff
- £4.3m - Support Staff
- £6.1m - Fleet, Equip., ICT & Property
- £4.0m - Fixed Costs
- £2.0m - Other

How the Service was funded

H&W Council Tax	£24.5m
Funding Grants	£ 7.5m
Retained Business Rates, etc.	£ 1.9m
Special Grants	£ 1.0m
Fire Authority Reserves	£ 0.4m

£35.3m

The annual cost of the Service for the average Council Tax Band D household was £87.69 or just over £1.68 per week.

Contact us ...

We always welcome any views or comments on our reports and plans, so if you want to contact us about any issues, please visit our website at www.hwfire.org.uk where you will find full contact details along with links to further information about our services and activities.

If you have any general enquiries, please call 0345 122 4454 or email us at info@hwfire.org.uk.

You can also follow us on Twitter www.twitter.com/hwfire

or find us on

Facebook www.facebook.com/hwfire

Alternatively, you can write to us at:

Hereford & Worcester FRS Headquarters
Hindlip Park
Worcester
WR3 8SP

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

Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

Annual Service Plan 2022-23

Purpose of report

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

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fire Authority considers the draft Annual Service Plan 2022-23 and approves it for publication on the Service website.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service produces a Fire Authority Annual Service Review and Annual Service Plan as part of its corporate planning process. The Annual Service Plan is a look ahead to activities planned for the coming year, with priorities arranged against the overall aims of the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 (CRMP). The Annual Service Review is a review of the previous year's activity and performance: the Review is reported elsewhere on your agenda.
3. The two report format was introduced last year as a replacement to the Fire Authority Annual Report, reflecting a change to a more accessible, visual and engaging style suited to an increasingly online audience.

The Annual Service Plan 2022-23

4. The Annual Service Plan focuses on the key priorities for the Service in 2022-23 set out under the main CRMP headings of Response, Protection, Prevention, Valuing Our Workforce and Value for Money.
5. Some of the highlights in the coming year will be the launch of a major programme to ensure all fire stations have an enhanced ability to respond to water-related incidents, a new 'Intel' system to upgrade the availability of risk information, public consultation on a new attendance performance measure and plans to embed the National Fire Chiefs Council's Core Code of Ethics across the Service. There will also be a continuation of the ongoing programme of modernisation and efficiency improvements at fire stations.
6. The Plan is included as Appendix 1.

Conclusion/Summary

7. This report presents the Annual Service Plan 2022-23, which sets out our key priorities for the coming year arranged under the main CRMP headings of Response, Protection, Prevention, Valuing Our Workforce and Value for Money.
8. Subject to Fire Authority approval, the finalised report will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Annual Service Plan provides information on resources necessary to support the implementation of Fire Authority objectives and priorities.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The Plan highlights proposed priority actions in 2022-23 to support the delivery of CRMP 2021-25 and Core Strategy objectives.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	The Plan provides an overview of proposed priority actions. Risk implications are considered as part of the details of each activity as drawn up in departmental business plans.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Strategic Leadership Board consultation.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	When preparing projects or other activities, departments are required to consider proposed actions against the Service's equality objectives as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-25.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	No personal data is processed in the Plan.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Annual Service Plan 2022-23 – separate enclosure

Annual Service Plan

2022-2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Hereford & Worcester
Fire Authority

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Foreword

We are pleased to present our Annual Service Plan 2022-23. The Plan is a look forward over the next twelve months (April 2022– March 2023) focusing on some of the key priorities we've set for the coming year.

The Annual Service Plan sits alongside the Annual Service Review 2021-22, which looks back over the last twelve months with some of the highlights and main events of the year. You will find the Review on our [Publications](#) page.

The Service priorities for 2022-23 outline what we intend to do this year towards delivering our overall plan – the CRMP 2021-25 and the Core Strategies for Response, Protection and Prevention 2021-25, alongside the People Strategy and our financial plans.

Some of the upcoming highlights on the following pages include:

- A major programme to ensure that all our fire stations have an enhanced ability to respond to water-related incidents,
- Plans to ensure that firefighters at all our fire stations can train at height,
- Public consultation on a new Attendance Performance Measure,
- A new Intel system to upgrade information availability on risks at premises,
- Delivery of an action plan to address HMICFRS requirements, and
- Embedding the NFCC Core Code of Ethics across the Service.

You can keep in touch with our plans and our progress through our Service website or through our social media platforms. You will find the links at the end of this Plan.

We hope this Plan helps you to appreciate the wide range of work we do to keep our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire safe from fire and other emergencies.



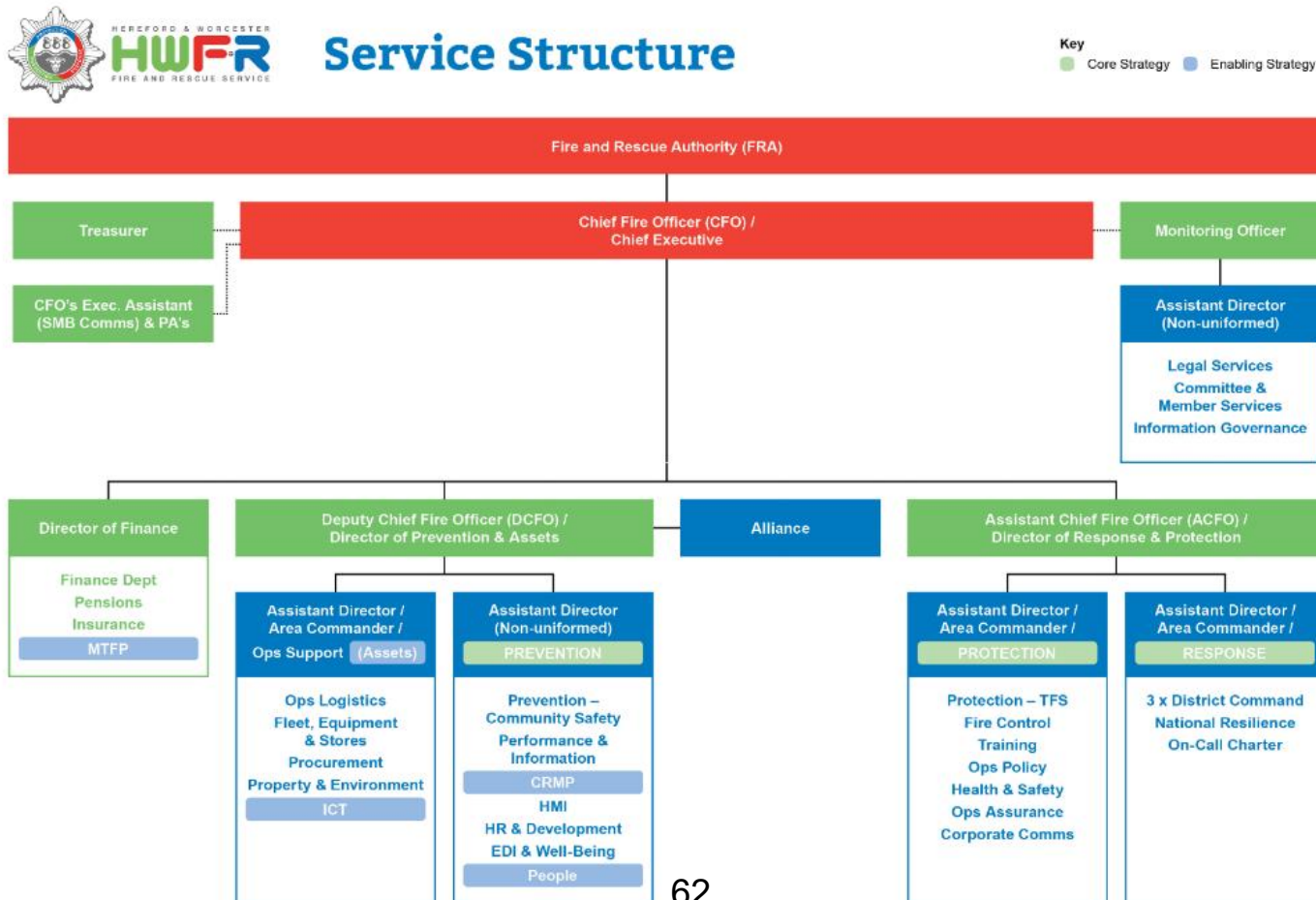
Councillor Kit Taylor,
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Jonathon Pryce, Chief Fire
Officer / Chief Executive

Service Structure

Our Service structure is designed to provide a clear and visible focus on our core functions: Response, Protection and Prevention. You can find more about each Department on the [Service website](#).



Our Purpose

Our Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values underpin everything we do, which will benefit us as individuals, the whole Service and everyone in the communities we serve.

You can find out more on our [Service website](#).



Our Values

Our Values represent everything we believe in: how we act and how we treat each other. They tell our communities and anyone we work with what standards they can expect from us.



Supporting our Values, we are also guided by the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England. The Code sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.



Putting our communities first

We put the interests of the public, the community, and service users first.



Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.



Dignity and respect

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.



Leadership

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.

We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.



Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI, both within the FRS and the wider communities in which we serve.

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

Our Priorities

Our priorities turn our overall Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values into action.

They are set out in our [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25](#) (CRMP) and our Core Strategies: [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#).

Together they represent our four-year strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe.

Supporting them are a host of enabling strategies and plans, including the [People Strategy](#) and the annual Medium Term Finance Plan.

CRMP Aims

responding to and dealing with fires and other emergencies promptly, safely and effectively

Response

protecting people, firefighters, property and the environment when fires, floods and other emergencies happen

Protection

preventing fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place

Prevention

providing a supportive environment for our workforce to develop, be confident and be empowered to make a positive difference for our communities

Valuing our Workforce

using our resources efficiently and effectively to provide quality services

Value for Money

Core Strategy Aims

- Availability
- Competence
- Intelligence

- Promoting Fire Safety
- Increasing Compliance
- Investigating and Enforcing

- Reducing Risk
- Awareness and Education

- Attract and Retain
- Develop and Train
- Recognise Success
- Health & Wellbeing
- Include and Collaborate

- Balanced Budget
- Sustainable use of Resources

Details of Strategies and Plans can be found on the [Publications](#) page of the Service website.

Service Priorities for 2022-23

Response

- ❖ **Water First Responders:** we will embark on a major three-year programme to ensure all our fire stations have a Water First Responder capability to enhance our response to water-related incidents.
- ❖ **Working at Height:** we will aim to provide more Working at Height training facilities to ensure firefighters at all fire stations have the ability to train at height.
- ❖ **Wildfire Response:** we will be enhancing the Service's wildfire response capability.
- ❖ **New Vehicles:** we aim to introduce a number of Restricted Access Vehicles and Fire Engines during the year.
- ❖ **Incident Command Project:** we will aim to provide immersive learning opportunities to develop command confidence, technical understanding and teamwork in a safe environment. Based at the Service's new simulation suite at Worcester Fire Station and using state-of-the-art simulation software and e-learning materials, the project will assist in developing skillsets at firefighter, team and command levels.
- ❖ **Attendance Performance Measure:** we will undertake public consultation on a revised Attendance Performance Measure.

Service Priorities for 2022-23

Protection

- ❖ **Fire Safety Inspections:** we aim to increase the number of Fire Safety Inspections. We will utilise additional Fire Safety Inspectors and operational staff upskilled in fire safety qualifications in 2021-22 to carry out more inspections of commercial premises.
- ❖ **New Intel System:** we aim to upgrade the Service's risk premises (Intel) database and integrate with Command and Control and Fire Safety systems to improve information available to operational crews attending incidents.
- ❖ **Fire Investigation:** we will undertake work to accredit our Incident Commanders and specialist Fire Investigation Officers to Skills for Justice standards for Fire Investigation. We will continue to work with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service to standardise our response and improve collaborative working and resilience. We will explore collaborative opportunities to support West Mercia Police to deliver their forensic Fire Investigation requirements for criminal investigations.
- ❖ **Fire Safety Continued Professional Development:** we have been granted Affiliate Organisation Membership of the Institution of Fire Engineers. This enables our fire safety staff and managers to work towards accreditation of their continued professional development to a global professional membership body to ensure that they maintain fire safety and fire engineering best practice.

Service Priorities for 2022-23

Prevention

- ❖ **Person Centred Framework:** we will adopt all elements of the National Fire Chiefs Council's [Person Centred Framework](#), which will ensure that a consistent and evidence-based approach to conducting a person-centred home safety check is developed. Areas of the Framework include a standard Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV), the collection of standard data, evaluation and feedback and a National Definition of Risk.
- ❖ **Partnership Working:** we will increase the number of HFSVs we complete on an annual basis and will collaborate with local partners to ensure we are targeting those individuals who are most at risk of fire. We will review and assess partnership activity and monitor referrals to ascertain if activities are effective and efficient. An on-line referral tool ([Safelincs/HFSC](#)) has been implemented on the Service website for members of the public and partners to make accessing our services easier.
- ❖ **Evaluation:** we will develop an evaluation system to help ascertain if all areas of Prevention activity are meeting the needs of communities. This will include feedback and evaluation from members of the public, internal staff and partner agencies on the services we deliver, with a view to reviewing and improving the approaches we take. We will work alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council and other regional Services to consider a standard evaluation framework, so that we can measure the impact of the HFSV.
- ❖ **HMICFRS Action Plan:** we will deliver a comprehensive action plan to address feedback from the 2021 inspection report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

Service Priorities for 2022-23

Valuing our Workforce

- ❖ **People Strategy 2022-25:** we will implement the [People Strategy 2022-25](#) to support the delivery of the Response, Protection and Prevention Strategies and the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25.
- ❖ **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** we will promote EDI within the Service and embed the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#).
- ❖ **Health and Resilience:** we will maintain a healthy and resilient workforce, including implementing an action plan to promote and improve mental health in the workplace.

Value for Money

- ❖ **Continue plans to modernise and improve efficiency at fire stations:** to include new fire station at Broadway, refurbishment of Pershore and Leominster fire stations, the joint Redditch Police-Fire station project, planning applications for Hereford fire station and Leominster Strategic Training Facility, and feasibility work for relocating the Training Centre to the Wyre Forest hub.
- ❖ **Continue to implement the ICT Strategy 2021-24:** complete the installation of the wide area network across all fire stations, a new ICT disaster recovery facility at Defford, and further development of connectivity and data driven intelligence including the full launch of Microsoft 365.
- ❖ **Maintain a balanced and sustainable budget:** aligning available resources with the level of identified risk, enabling us to deliver high quality services

Contact us ...

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If you have any general enquiries, please call 0345 122 4454 or email us at info@hwfire.org.uk.

You can also follow us on Twitter www.twitter.com/hwfire

or find us on

Facebook www.facebook.com/hwfire

Alternatively, you can write to us at:

Hereford & Worcester FRS Headquarters
Hindlip Park
Worcester
WR3 8SP

**If you would like this
information in an alternative
language or format such as
large print or audio, please
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Report of Head of Legal Services

Fire Reform White Paper

Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of the publication of the Home Office consultation on the white paper "Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service" and to provide an opportunity for discussion.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that a formal response on behalf of the Authority to the white paper reflecting the views expressed by Members be delegated to the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Group Leaders.

Introduction and Background

2. The Home Office consultation on the white paper 'Reforming our Fire & Rescue Service' was published on 18th May 2022. It is broken down into three broad sections dealing with People, Professionalism and Governance. There are 48 separate consultation questions and it is open to respondents to reply to all or some of these. The closing date for responses is 26th July 2022.
3. Members are invited to discuss the proposals and the views expressed will then be collated and included in a formal response on behalf of the Authority. Members are also asked to contact the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or appropriate Group Leader with any specific issues they may wish to raise for consideration. In view of the timescales involved, it is proposed that it be delegated to officers to finalise the response in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Group Leaders. Members can also submit individual responses to the white paper if they so wish.
4. The key proposals in the white paper are set out below. Where relevant, these have been cross-referenced to the appropriate consultation question:

People

- Introduction of modern working practices - Chief Fire Officers should have the flexibility to deploy resources to address current and future threats faced by the public, beyond the core fire and rescue duties, without the constraints that exist under current national negotiating mechanisms (Q1)

- Fire & Rescue Services to play an active role in supporting the wider health and public safety agenda (Q2)
- No intention to remove the freedom for staff to participate in industrial action
- Fire & Rescue Services to have robust business continuity plans that consider a range of challenges, including the impact of industrial action and which will be independently assured (Q3)
- A review of current NJC pay negotiation arrangements (Q4)
- Clearer and consistent entry requirements for fire service roles to be considered (Q6)
- Schemes for direct entry and talent management to be considered (Q8)

Professionalism

- Introduction of a (possibly mandatory) 21st Century leadership programme to provide standardised training for assistant chief fire officers and above (Q9 - 11)
- Support for fire and rescue services to make better use of data and setting expectations for data governance and for securing data-sharing agreements with national and local partners, including LRFs (Q12)
- A centralised fire and rescue research capability to ensure that research is effectively prioritised, co-ordinated, quality assured and disseminated (Q14)
- Build on the work of the Fire Standards Board in order to continue setting clear expectations for the standards required from Fire & Rescue Services
- Consideration of whether the existing core code of ethics for fire & rescue services should be placed on a statutory footing through legislation (Q16-17)
- There would be a duty of Chief Fire Officers to comply with any statutory code but this duty would not extend to elected representatives in Fire Authorities or to individual members of staff (Q18-19)
- Introduction of a mandatory, statutory fire and rescue service oath for all FRA employees. Any breaches of the oath would be dealt with as an employment matter and not as a criminal offence (Q20-24)
- Creation of a College of Fire and Rescue (CoFR) as an independent body with statutory powers to:
 - develop and maintain the Leadership Programme and direct entry schemes
 - provide a strategic centre of data excellence
 - provide the central research function
 - take over responsibility for the creation of fire standards from the Fire Standards Board
 - create and maintain the proposed statutory code of ethics and the fire & rescue service oath
 - issue statutory codes of practice with approval from the Secretary of State (Q27)

Governance

- The government's preferred model is to transfer responsibility for fire and rescue services to a single elected individual in each area, rather than have governance by committee. This could be:
 - a directly elected combined authority mayor
 - PCC
 - a designated council leader (where Fire and Rescue Services remain within a County Council)(Q29-33)
- No detail is provided as to how a transfer of governance would be achieved nor any indication of timescales
- The legal basis for Fire and Rescue Authorities and how they operate, including scrutiny and oversight functions could be strengthened and clarified either through legislation or as part of the Fire & Rescue National Framework (Q35)
- Boundary changes will be considered where fire and police boundaries do not currently align (Q37)
- Any transfer of governance, particularly where services are part of a county council or unitary authority, should assess the impact on staff, assets and revenue transferred and council tax precept. The government's aim is that council tax bills will not be adversely affected by governance proposals.
- Operational fire budgets will be ring-fenced where fire services remain with a county council or unitary authority (Q38)
- Chief Fire Officers will be given operational independence, either through statute 'when parliamentary time allows' or through the Fire & Rescue National Framework. Examples are provided of the possible demarcation of responsibility between the political leader and the chief fire officer (Q40)
- Consideration will be given whether to legislate to make chief fire officers corporations sole (Q44)
- Fire Authorities could be required to produce a new strategic fire and rescue plan setting out priorities for the service on behalf of the public. This would be distinct from an operational plan prepared by the Chief Fire Officer which would deal with how strategic priorities will be met. (Q45-47)

Conclusion/Summary

5. Members are invited to consider the proposals in the white paper. It is envisaged that a response to the consultation will be submitted on before of the Authority but Members can also submit an individual response should they wish to do so.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Minor, administrative at this stage. Future changes proposed in the white paper may have significant resource implications.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	At this time there are no direct issues, however the future white paper may raise significant strategic and political issues for Members to consider.
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)	This document is available for all interested parties and persons to consult upon. Staff have been made aware through internal communications by CFO.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	None known.

Supporting Information

Background papers –

Home Office White Paper ‘Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service’ - May 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update May 2022

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 15 December 2021.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Authority notes the actions agreed to address the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

Introduction and Background

2. At the Fire Authority meeting on 15 February 2022, Members received a paper advising that the Service were developing an Improvement Plan to address the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection report dated 15 December 2021.
3. The Improvement Plan has now been finalised to address the 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI) identified during the inspection.

HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Progress Update

4. The delivery of the Improvement Plan is overseen by members of the Performance and Information (P&I) team, who meet regularly with senior managers responsible for each Area for Improvement to prepare updates on actions proposed and completed. The P&I team also ensure that actions carried out are fully evidenced and available for evaluation and audit. The first update, covering up to May 2022, is attached to this report (see Appendix 1).
5. Since January 2022, members of the P&I team have met with each responsible senior manager to discuss the HMICFRS requirements and each manager has populated individual improvement templates with updates on actions proposed and completed.
6. Actions have now been received for all 22 specific AFIs identified by HMICFRS. The P&I team are currently working with each manager to ensure all evidence of change is robust for evaluation and audit. Once scrutiny is complete, updated versions of the templates will be publicly available on the Service website each quarter.

7. The update shows that action plans have been created to directly address areas identified within the three themes covered in the HMICFRS report: effectiveness, efficiency and people.
8. The Cause of Concern related to Prevention is being reported on separately via the Audit and Standards Committee.
9. Quarterly updates will be provided to the Senior Leadership Board and also to the Fire Authority.

Conclusion/Summary

10. Members are recommended to note the actions agreed to address the HMICFRS Improvement Plan. Further progress updates will be reported each quarter.
11. Subject to any matters arising following consideration by the Fire Authority, the update will be published on the Service website.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Improvement Plan highlights areas for improvement relating to effectiveness, efficiency and people. Actions to address these areas are likely to have resource implications, which will be identified in the Improvement Plan.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Actions proposed in the Improvement Plan are likely to have an impact on both the CRMP and the MTFP. All proposals will be assessed to ensure they meet the Service's overall Core Purpose and Vision.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through the Improvement Plan.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Proposals to deliver the Improvement Plan have the full participation of Senior Managers in relevant Service departments. The Improvement Plan is publicly available on the Service website.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? If not, why not?)	An EIA is not required for this report. EIAs will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2021-22; Update May 2022



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Appendix 1

HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2021-22

Updated: May 2022

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This report provides an update of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan up to May 2022 against the identified AFI's noted in the HMICFRS report.

Effectiveness – ES1

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure that the aims and objectives of prevention, protection and response activity are clearly defined in its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Publish Core Strategies for Protection, Prevention and Response linked to delivery of the CRMP, communicate across Service and develop understanding.	Complete
Business Planning cycle and process embedded across Service linked to delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan and three Core Strategies. Digital tracking process set up electronically to monitor progress.	Complete
CRMP Fire Standard to be analysed and a gap analysis produced and shared with the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). Learning defined and mapped into clear recommendations for implementation into the new CRMP process for launch in 2025.	Complete
Develop an evidential based resource to risk assessment. Clearly identifying areas of risk, resource and people assets that can be utilised.	Q3 2022/23
Key Performance Indicators (KPI) identified and agreed specifically linked to delivery of the CRMP and Core Strategy. An approach to be mapped out to identify trends and exception reporting.	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: DCFO & ACFO

Effectiveness – ES2

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
A risk management system procurement process to be initiated.	Q2 2022/23
Data cleanse of data in preparation for transfer to a new system to be commenced.	Q2 2022/23
Upon procurement of a new system, a comprehensive training and communication programme to support embedding of a new system to commence.	Q3 2022/23
Explore development of an internal and external audit process of the information held within the Service.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES3

Area for Improvement

The service should evaluate its prevention work so that it understands what works.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
There will be a process to ensure targeting of prevention activity meets the needs of the community.	Complete
A clear reporting framework on the performance and evaluation of prevention activity will be developed.	Complete
A quality assurance process for Home Fire Safety Visits will be agreed.	Complete
Investigate a body to conduct a peer review or external assessment of delivery against the prevention Cause of Concern Action Plan.	Complete
The University of Worcester Evaluation of Safe and Well Visit Report will be reviewed and suggested improvements to delivery / recommendations mapped out into an action plan.	Q3 2022/23
Working with the Corporate Communications department develop and publish a Prevention Communications Plan and introduce a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns to ensure continuous improvement.	Complete
The Service will undertake an annual process to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention activity utilising available appropriate methodologies.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

Effectiveness – ES4

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure that it has an effective quality assurance process in place, so that staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Performance appraisals with employees in the Technical Fire Safety team of the Protection Department are being booked in and a peer review of audits for the purposes of quality assurance to be scheduled aligned with these dates.	Q1 2022/23
Technical Fire Safety quality assurance proforma finalised.	Complete
Agree an external peer review schedule with neighbouring Services in order to quality assure processes.	Q2 2022/23
Experian data being merged with Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) data to ensure Protection Services applied equitably.	Q4 2022/23
Conduct external peer review quality assurance process, and consider recommendations.	2023/24

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES5

Area for Improvement

The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce the risk.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
HWFRS to ensure its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the premises at the highest risk.	Complete
Fully complete alignment to the NFCC competency framework for Fire Safety Regulators.	Q2 2022/23
Arrange specialist legal training for L4 Diploma staff (to include prosecution case studies)	Q4 2022/23
Finalise prosecution support agreement with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and Telford and Wrekin Council legal services	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES6

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it effectively addresses the burden of false alarms.

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Commence a review of how we respond to unwanted fire signals and act on report outcomes

Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES7

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure its Response Strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Response Strategy linked to the risks in the CRMP published.	Complete
Response annual and three-year Business Plan (linked to delivery of the Response Strategy) finalised.	Complete
Special appliances review report and evaluation finalised.	Complete
Commence the process to identify an external agency to provide risk data mapping.	Q2 2022/23
Review the previously used Fire Cover research methodology, ensuring it is adaptive enough to meet new and emerging risks.	Q4 2022/23
Review of White Paper implications on CRMP and Response Strategy.	Unknown
Prepare a report on the review of Water First Responders capability across the Service (Response)	Current

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Response*

Effectiveness – ES8

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review current policy and identify potential options to improve on scene Active Incident Monitoring (AIM) & Debrief processes.	Q2 2022/23
Identify replacement AIM & Debrief system options.	Q2 2022/23
Implement new AIM & Debrief systems.	Q3 2022/23
Implement an update monitoring process to improve on scene monitoring.	Q4 2022/23
Introduce an assurance process to assure the adoption and use of the AIM & Debrief systems and processes.	Q2 2023/24
Publish a Debrief report service wide on a quarterly basis.	Q3 2022/23
Develop robust sharing mechanisms to ensure learning is shared to multi agency and regional partners incorporating Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) & National Operational Learning (NOL) systems.	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES9

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it understands what it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance, including joint and national learning, and put in place a plan to do so.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Enrol Digital Training Project Team	Q2 2022/23
Integrate new Learning Management System (LMS)	Q3 2022/23
Integrate the National Operational Guidance's Service Integration Tool (SIT)	Q3 2022/23
Develop eLearning suite referenced to National Operational Learning (NOG)	Q3 2024/25

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES10

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist incident, and its procedures for responding are understood by all staff and are well tested.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Develop presentation covering responsibilities of FRS' and specifically non-specialist responders when attending potential Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTA) incidents. To include overview of statutory responsibilities	Q1 2022/23
Review of Pre-Determined Attendances (PDA's) for MTAs and other like incidents	Q2 2022/23
National Inter-Agency Liaison Officer (NILO) Cadre to deliver presentation to all operational staff including Fire Control and Officer Groups	Q3 2022/23
As part of Regional Group establish exercising programme with other Fire & Rescue Services' and responding agencies (Police/ Ambulance)	Q3 2022/23
Test knowledge and understanding through District exercising and assurance programme	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Response*

Efficiency – EY1

Area for Improvement

The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection, and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risk and priorities set out in its CRMP.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Identify good/outstanding practice and conduct a gap analysis	Q1 2022/23
Identify how we currently allocate resources to Prevention, Protection and Response	Q2 2022/23
Apply the outcomes to the review of the previously used Fire Cover methodology	Q4 2022/23
Identify organisational leads/key stakeholders for workforce resources across the three core strategies.	Q1 2022/23
Conduct a supply analysis to understand current workforce headcount, skills and budget.	Q1 2022/23
Conduct a demand analysis to project resources needed (headcount, skills, budget).	Q2 2022/23
Conduct a gap analysis and identify top priority gaps based on skills, staffing levels and budget.	Q3 2022/23
Identify interventions to close priority gaps by developing a workforce plan up to 2025.	Q4 2022/23
Develop mechanism to monitor and evaluate workforce plan to include regular supply/demand analysis and positioning of appropriate interventions as required.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Finance Director and Assistant Director: Prevention*

Efficiency – EY2

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure there is a testing programme for its business continuity plans, particularly in high-risk areas of service.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Testing of fall-back arrangements for Fire Control involving all watches.	Complete
Incorporate business continuity questions into the station assurance process for 2022/23.	Q1 2022/23
Develop an exercise program for station and department fall-back plans.	Q2 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

Efficiency – EY3

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Work with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) implementation officer to investigate what national good practice looks like.	Ongoing
Review and define collaboration with other Fire & Rescue Services' and other emergency services	Q2 2022/23
Evaluate benefits of Fire Control Project – to procure a system with Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service	Q3 2022/23
Establish a process within areas of business planning to ensure collaboration is a key factor in planning and projects	Q4 2022/23
Establish an evaluation process/tool for reviewing the effectiveness of collaboration on business planning, programmes and projects.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

Efficiency – EY4

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure that its fleet and estate strategies are regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiencies.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Provide draft / re-format existing Fleet Strategy to new format, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish.	Next P&R Committee 13/09/2022
Provide updated draft / re-format of existing Property Strategy dated 2018-23, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish	Next P&R Committee 13/09/2022

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Assets*

People – P1

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Strategic Leadership Board visits for the year have been programmed with every watch and department	Complete
The Service will commission an external organisation to undertake a review of internal communications and provide recommendations for improvement.	Q1 2022/23
Whole leadership meetings scheduled for the year every quarter.	Complete
The Service will commission a service wide inclusion training programme to further embed understanding of inclusion as a core element linked to values.	Q2 2023/24
The Service will carry out a full staff survey and review the feedback received and implement changes as required.	Q3 2022/23
The Service will fully implement the FRS Core Code of Ethics (CCoE).	Q4 2022/23
The Service will develop a more regular method of surveying staff opinion and gathering feedback.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

People – P2

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review Appraisal template to include discussion prompt on secondary contracts and/or additional roles within the Service.	Q2 2022/23
Set out a process to monitor compliance with the Secondary Employment policy.	Q2 2022/23
Establish a method to monitor total working hours of those with secondary contracts and/or additional roles, to highlight when working hours are excessive.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

People – P3

Area for Improvement

The service should make sure it has a robust system in place to update and review its operational incident (analytical) risk assessments.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review current guidance for the completion of Analytical Risk Assessments (ARA).	Q2 2022/23
Review training levels and provided training to crews to carry out ARA and the associated reviews.	Q2 2022/23
Develop and introduce an assurance process to assure the completion of ARA's.	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

People – P4

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Complete audit of assurance processes.	Q2 2022/23
Review fire control training to ensure recording of training is up to date.	Q2 2022/23
Integrate a new learning management system to improve recording and monitoring of skills.	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Protection*

People – P5

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Develop a Workforce Planning Policy.	Q3 2022/23
Review and evaluate workforce planning process to strengthen links with business planning cycle.	Q3 2022/23
Develop Workforce Planning Toolkit for managers to support workforce planning at a departmental level.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

People – P6

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Refer to P1 actions.

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

Q2 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

People – P7

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review current appraisal process (link with Training).	Q1 2022/23
Establish completion rate reporting mechanism to monitor appraisal completion rates.	Q1 2022/23
Implement identified amendments to appraisals process.	Q2 2022/23
Publish refreshed appraisal toolkit for managers.	Q2 2022/23
Develop appraisal training for managers.	Q3 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

People – P8

Area for Improvement

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

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Establish clear links to appraisal process (career conversations) – links to P7.	Q2 2022/23
Develop a talent management strategy.	Q2 2022/23
Develop a framework for managers to use to identify and develop high-performing staff (appraisal) in line with NFCC talent management toolkit.	Q2 2022/23
Review Promotion process.	Q2 2022/23
Develop and implement temporary promotion toolkit for managers.	Q2 2022/23
Complete interim review of Aspiring Executive Leaders programme.	Q3 2022/23
Scope out “Aspiring Leaders” programme for Middle Managers.	Q4 2022/23

Strategic lead: *Assistant Director: Prevention*

Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer: Director of Prevention and Assets

Property 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. The Fire Authority entered into an agreement for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to deliver our property management functions from 1st April 2021. This agreement is now well established and delivering against our planned property programme.

Budgets

3. Recent reports to the Policy and Resources Committee have referenced the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Taking this into account the Treasurer is building in contingency funds in anticipation of our current capital build programme. We will update Members as projects develop, notably Broadway, Redditch and Hereford fire station builds.

Property Update

4. **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.
5. A detailed planning application was submitted in May 2021, and planning approval has now been granted by the local authority. The project team advertised the approved plans and detailed designs via the Bluelight procurement portal. Evaluation of tenders and interviews with prospective contractors took place in January, and a preferred contractor has been selected. Detailed costs are currently being reviewed, and a construction programme is being developed.

6. **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 has developed plans to provide a joint Fire and Police facility, building upon the concept of the Bromsgrove joint Fire / Police station.
7. The property update to the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2022 noted that a detailed planning application was submitted on the 17th December 2021 to the local authority, these proposals will be considered by Redditch Borough Council at planning committee on the 8th June 2022. Interviews were completed with four potential contractors in January via a construction procurement framework, and a preferred contractor is currently working with the design team to develop the detailed designs and specifications, as we await a decision on the submitted application. Due to some environmental issues found on the site it is likely this project will be delayed by up to nine months.
8. **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.
9. It was reported to Committee in May that following a tender process architects have been selected, and have commenced the next design stage to enable a detailed planning application to be submitted to the local authority in September 2022. Their work includes consultation with staff, and the appointment of specialist consultants where required.
10. **North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility (STF):** At the last Policy & Resources Committee it was reported that architects have been selected to progress the project feasibility plans. Their work includes consultation with staff and the completion of additional surveys on-site to enable a full planning application submission to the local authority in September for both the STF and proposals to relocate the fire station to the same site.
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 this year and we will update the Authority on progress and feasibility options.
12. **Planned and reactive property maintenance:** General maintenance and building works continue across the Service's estate. Notably, refurbishment of Tenbury Wells, Whitchurch and Fownhope fire stations have been completed. Other upgrades to Pershore, Ledbury and Leominster fire stations are on-going. The estates team are currently planning upgrades and refurbishment at Kingsland, Eardisley, Ewyas Harold, and Ross-on-Wye fire stations this year. Architectural designs are progressing for a proposed extension at

Leintwardine fire station, and options are being considered for refurbishment / extension at Bromyard fire station.

13. The contract for routine repair and maintenance works has recently been re-tendered and has been awarded to CBRE, who are a major property services company.

Site Disposals

Windsor Street, Bromsgrove

14. 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. We previously reported that a sale with Bromsgrove District Council was being negotiated, and can now confirm that a sale was completed on the 31st March 2022.

Former Bewdley Fire Station

15. Contracts were exchanged in August 2020, subject to planning permission for a mixed retail and residential use. We can now report that the sale was completed in February 2022.

Former Kidderminster Fire Station

16. 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. It now looks unlikely that sale will proceed in its current form and officers are taking further advice with regard to the possible remarketing of the site.

Former Stourport Fire Station

17. The former fire station is adjacent to the County Buildings which are due to become vacant later this year. We previously reported that discussions with the County Council regarding the possibility of them purchasing the site were on-going. We can report that a sale was completed in March 2022, and the site has now been handed over.

Conclusion

18. The Fire Authority entered into an agreement for the PCC to deliver our property management functions from 1st April 2021, this is well established and delivering against our property programme.
19. 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, and

Stourport have been completed, and Kidderminster continues to be progressed.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Noted increases to the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector.
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.



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Wednesday, 20 April 2022, 10:30

Chairman: Mr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Clayton, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey

234 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

235 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

236 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

237 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

238 Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with an update in regards to the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan 2021/22.

Members noted that the four core financial reviews had been completed and no high priority recommendations had been reported. The final two areas would be brought to the Committee upon completion.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

239 Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

The Head of Legal Services presented Members with the draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 for approval.

Members were informed that the Authority has to review its governance arrangements once a year via self assessment. Members were pleased to note that the Authority had provided evidence of compliance with all the core and supporting principles of good governance. There were no areas where immediate action was required and there were no areas where the direction of travel had decreased during 2021/22 where the status was less than satisfactory.

Members were pleased to note that this was the first time that all areas were 'green' which gave the assurance necessary to approve the draft annual statement.

RESOLVED that the draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 be approved.

240 Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress to implement the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services and to make a recommendation to the Authority that the Constitution be amended to reflect a commitment by Members to champion the Core Code throughout the Service.

Members noted the five ethical principles of the Core Code of Ethics set out to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity of FRSs, ensuring that communities were supported in the best way.

Members were asked to endorse the implementation of the Core Code and approve the proposed amendment to Part 2 of the Articles of the Constitution.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The implementation of the Core Code of Ethics be endorsed; and***
- ii) The Authority be recommended to amend the key roles of all Members, as set out in Article 2.3(a) of the Authority's constitution, by the addition of:***

All Members will

- (ix) commit to following the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services and championing its use throughout the***

Service.

241 Prevention Cause of Concern – Action Plan Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the action plan created to discharge the Cause of Concern issued by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in relation to Prevention Activity.

Members noted the update on the action plan and the key work streams identified still to be completed to make the necessary improvements.

Members also noted that HMICFRS were returning at the end of July to do a short revisit to look at evidence provided to them.

A Member requested further details on the response from the engagement of home fire safety promotions. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed he would provide statistics out of the meeting.

RESOLVED that progress against the action plan created to discharge the cause of concern in relation to Prevention activity be noted.

242 Annual Compliments, Complaints, Concerns and Requests for Information 2021/22

The Head of Legal Services presented a report on compliments, complaints, concerns and requests for information made by the public to the Service over the past 12 months.

Members were informed that there were slightly fewer complaints over the past 12 months compared to last year and were assured that officers were satisfied that there were no recurring themes or trends in the concerns and complaints to give any cause for concern.

Members noted that there continues to be a high volume of FOI requests, which takes up a considerable amount of staff time. Where possible the Service is putting as much information on the website as possible for the public. The Service was also looking at how they can also put a summary of incident reports on the website to be more proactive.

Members also noted that although there were only a small number of Subject Access Requests, these were also extremely time consuming.

Members were assured that all complaints are investigated by duty officers, draft responses are sent to Legal Services to be reviewed and all complainants can ask for a further review by the Assistant Chief Fire

Officer or make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

A Member requested further details on the poor response/service complaint and the Head of Legal Services would provide this information out of the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes that during the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:

- i) a total of 270 requests for information containing 830 queries about the Service were received. No requests were passed to the Information Commissioners Office for review.***
- ii) a total of 40 compliments were received from the public;***
- iii) 28 complaints about Service activities were made;***
- iv) 15 complaints or concerns were received about activities carried out by other organisations or individuals; and***
- v) One of the complainants appealed the response provided and none were passed to the Local Government Ombudsman for further investigation.***

**243 Health and Safety Committee Update: October – December 2021
(Quarter 3)**

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

Members were pleased to note that the number of safety events recorded in Quarter 3 had decreased by 10 compared to the previous quarter.

Members also noted that the Health and Safety Advisor had worked with the Training Centre to ensure 10 response staff received the manual handling 'Train the Trainer' course to improve manual handling training across the Service to help reduce personal injury incidents.

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

- (i) The involvement of the Service in Health and Safety initiatives; and***
- (ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during October to December 2021 (Quarter 3).***

The Meeting ended at: 11:25

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman