



**Shropshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

# Fire Alliance Strategic Plan

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## 2018-2022

*'Securing a resilient and sustainable future'*

July 2018 (JC3)

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## 2 FOREWORD

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This document sets out the vision of a shared journey for the two fire and rescue services that serve the historic counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. The ambition is to create a strong alliance where both organisations can work together, often as one, to sustain and improve the high-quality prevention, protection and emergency response we currently deliver to all our local communities.

The purpose of the alliance is to build capacity and resilience in both fire and rescue services in order to achieve long-term sustainability. The alliance will do this by delivering a number of key joint priorities over the next 3-4 years. These will provide opportunities to meet on-going financial challenges at the same time as providing additional value to our local communities through working in partnership.

At the heart of this strategic alliance is a shared commitment to collaboration and a determination to work together. We will be successful in delivering change by drawing upon our collective professionalism, expertise, experience and resources; and staying focused on providing our communities with an effective, efficient and economical service that makes them safer.



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Fire Authority Chairman  
  
Hereford & Worcester  
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### 3 BACKGROUND

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The challenge of protecting our communities against ever changing risks has driven our Fire and Rescue Services to seek out collaborative opportunities that provide both value for money and enhance public safety.

To achieve this both organisations have recognised the benefits of creating an Alliance, which can provide all the advantages associated with large organisations without losing the agility of being two small, lean, and community focused fire and rescue services.

Prior to 2012 collaboration between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) had been more informal in nature, but following the Operational Assurance process of that year it became more planned. Both Services have worked together to deliver several notable successes such as: -

- a staff sharing initiative that has combined both budgetary relief for one partner and skills and expertise to address staff shortfalls in the other,
- a fire control resilience project that has brought together the control rooms of Cleveland, Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester FRSs in a resilient triangle, recognised and financially supported by central government with a £3.6 million pound government grant)
- a ground breaking initiative to train West Mercia Police Community Support Officers to become Retained Duty System (RDS) Firefighters across all three counties, and
- the design, procurement and development of a set of Incident Command Units that can provide interoperable support to major incidents across the three counties, providing each other with operational resilience.

The advent of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the statutory duty for emergency services to collaborate brought with it new energy and focus towards working together. Both Services were already actively engaged in a Blue Light Collaboration that extended beyond their borders to include both police and fire in West Mercia and Warwickshire, but we recognise the greatest benefit would be from a more planned and structured alliance between the two Services.

At the same time the idea had also been recommended within the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's business case for governance of a 'Fire Alliance' between the two Services. All stakeholders recognise that an alliance has a real potential to deliver benefits from aligning processes and procedures and sharing resources, experience and expertise.

In March 2018, both Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) also concluded that an alliance was a sensible way forward, regardless of which form of governance was ultimately in place, and instructed officers to develop a plan to form a long term and sustainable strategic alliance that would provide both Services with the capacity and resilience to remain sustainable long into the next decade.

All parties agree the future of the Alliance is one of opportunity, enabling us to provide positive outcomes for our communities for years to come.

## 4 STRATEGIC AIM

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Our core aim is to create a strong alliance between Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Services. Resources and expertise will be shared to provide long-term capacity and resilience to meet increasing pressures from budgetary restrictions and changing demands and development of both established and new risks with our communities.. In doing so, we will be able to continue delivering first class, resilient and sustainable fire and rescue services for the communities of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire.

## 5 PURPOSE

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This document aims to establish the case for change and the way forward in relation to modernising and improving the way services are planned and delivered. In doing so it will: -

- confirm the 'strategic fit' of the two Authorities, which will support a successful programme of change,
- identify options and a recommendation for change,
- facilitate strategic and collaborative planning and the setting of associated budgets,
- identify and cost key components of the strategy (programmes) and enabling deliverables (projects),
- provide the strategic context for subsequent investments, and
- facilitate the timely production of subsequent business cases for related investment.

## 6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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The approach that both organisations take in the development of a Fire Alliance Plan will be governed by a set of guiding principles. These principles will permeate all aspects of decision making, helping to add focus and direction to our strategic aim.

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | <b>Public Outcomes</b>                      | The Alliance will deliver new ways of working that will reduce risk in the communities and provide greater value for money for the public purse.  |
| 2  | <b>Culture and Leadership</b>               | The Alliance will cultivate and establish new ways of working based on openness, shared understanding, mutual respect and shared leadership to create common practices that lead to effective collaboration. The Alliance will review and align processes, structures and leadership wherever it improves capacity, resilience and sustainability.          |
| 3  | <b>Capacity</b>                             | A primary aim of the Alliance is to reduce duplication, align processes and share resources to create additional capacity. This new capacity will support areas that are currently stretched and allow the Services to cope with new demands.   |
| 4  | <b>Resilience</b>                           | The Alliance will aim to identify areas of organisational vulnerability and create opportunities, by working together, to provide additional resilience through fall back arrangements, mutual aid and by eliminating, where possible, single points of failure.  |
| 5  | <b>Sustainability</b>                       | The Alliance will work to ensure that both organisations remain sustainable and are able to meet the needs of their communities through effective use of resources.   |
| 6  | <b>Technology</b>                           | Technology will be a key enabler in the way we deliver our services and how we support our staff. The Alliance will exploit and harness new technologies to ensure both Services are correctly positioned to support an increasingly mobile workforce, whilst being agile enough to adapt to future changes in business requirements and working practices. |
| 7  | <b>Partner Strategies</b>                   | The Alliance will be aligned to, and supportive of, the strategies of other key partners; including the PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan. This will ensure the coordinated delivery of services focused on local priorities and a clear demonstration of how the Services meet their duty to collaborate.   |
| 8  | <b>Intelligence Driven and Evidence Led</b> | The Alliance will seek to ensure that service delivery is targeted and focused through the effective use of data and any business changes are intelligence led relying on a strong evidence base.   |
| 9  | <b>Security and Governance</b>              | Strong security controls and governance processes will ensure continuous compliance with local and national legislation.  |
| 10 | <b>Innovation</b>                           | The Alliance will promote creativity from within and will recognise and encourage new ideas that have the potential to lead to meaningful improvements.   |

# 7 DEVELOPMENT STRANDS

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In order to move forward, we have identified five Development Strands to help us deliver first class, resilient and sustainable fire and rescue services for the communities of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire.

Each Development Strand has a number of key priorities followed by a number of strategic targets. These targets will become key deliverables and actions in our Programme Plan.



# 1. Reassuring our communities

## Priorities

- Continue to develop the Services' prevention and protection activities aligned to the needs of local areas. This will include a strategic assessment of prevention and protection activities and their relationship with health and wellbeing across all three counties. This will add more value to communities particularly those most vulnerable.
- Provide a standardised and consistent response to Safeguarding across the Alliance area.
- Maintain current Service-level Integrated / Community Risk Management Plans, and align data analysis and methodology to ensure a consistent approach to evidence-based decision making.



## STRAND 1

Reassuring  
our  
communities

## Key Deliverables

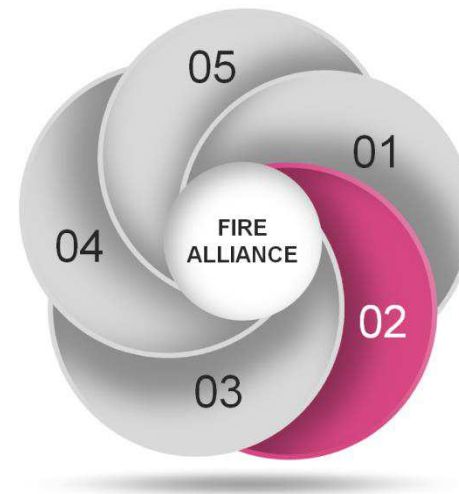
- A unified Alliance Prevention Strategy to deliver against local needs and in support of partners' agendas.
- Review of the Safeguarding process, policy and training to ensure a consistent approach.
- Review of the Integrated / Community Risk Management Plan process to establish a standardised methodology.



## 2. Making our communities more resilient

### Priorities

- Deliver an aligned Command & Control function that takes advantage of the opportunity to work closely with West Mercia Police. This will improve operational resilience, resulting in better support to both operational personnel and the public. It will also ensure a more effective and efficient use of the public purse.
- Support and nurture the On-Call Duty Systems such as RDS to maintain and improve operational availability, engagement and competence across both urban and rural areas; and develop this resource to provide proactive prevention, protection and support to local communities.
- Continue to improve Local Resilience Forum (LRF) capabilities and ways of working to provide more effective, efficient and co-ordinated use of people and resources from across partner agencies.



### STRAND 2

**Making our  
communities  
more  
resilient**

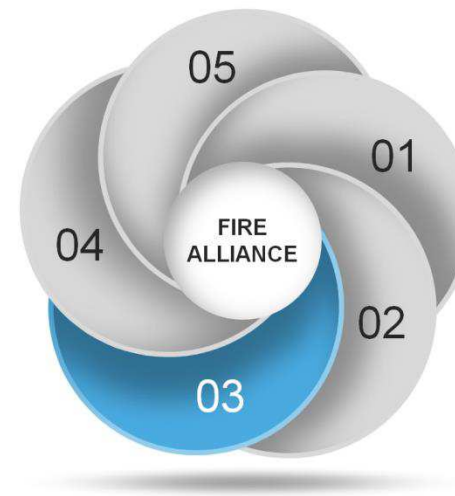
### Key Deliverables

- Review and scope future requirements for a 5-year vision for Command & Control.
- Review and scope future requirements of the On-Call Duty Systems.
- Enhance support to LRF by reviewing how training and exercising can be expanded and developed.

### 3. Building safe and secure communities

#### Priorities

- Expand the Safe and Well concept to Safe, Well and Secure. This will support Police and other partners' objectives by harnessing the power of prevention expertise and capacity.
- Continue to develop the work of the Blue Light Collaboration Group which has identified; Community Safety and Harm Reduction, Operational Deployment, Supporting Infrastructure, Estates and Training as its key work streams.
- Review and align Technical Fire Safety resources, policies and procedures to support resilience across the Alliance and to ensure appropriate capacity, including multi-agency enforcement, is available and complies with current and future legislative requirements.



#### STRAND 3

**Building safe  
and secure  
communities**

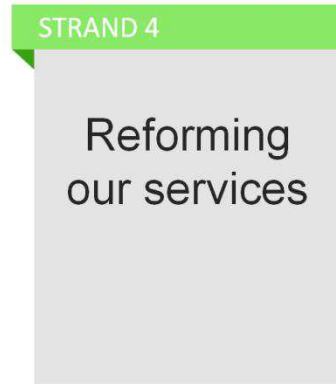
#### Key Deliverables

- Review Community Safety provision including systems, skills, capacity and legislation.
- Support the Blue Light Collaboration Group by developing the five key work streams into the Programme Plan.
- Review Technical Fire Safety provision including systems, skills, capacity and legislation.

## 4. Reforming our services

### Priorities

- Support and nurture a shared culture and values that will promote and champion cultural change and workforce reform across both Services. This will provide the foundation block for delivering better ways of working in complex environments, for our teams and improving engagement in diverse communities during difficult and uncertain times.
- Unify strategies including operational and training policies to enable the alignment of procurement practices and key Fire-specific contracts.



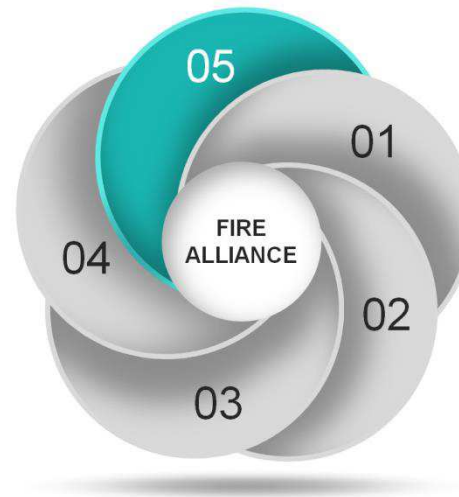
### Key Deliverables

- Review management and workforce policies and practices to support Service reform, including measures to: -:
  - continue positive engagement in the National Fire and Rescue Service Reform programme,
  - review and align senior leadership teams,
  - develop operating rules and governance arrangements for the Fire Alliance,
  - establish recruitment processes that meet the varied needs of the Alliance as well as challenging inequality,
  - review organisational development and future planning for the provision of ICT and Human Resources functions,
  - review the delivery and future planning of internal, external and corporate communications provision, and
  - reinvest savings, where appropriate, to support service reform.
- Review and align operational and training policies, procedures, team resources and processes, including measures to: -:
  - review and align operational training to deliver a single training framework,
  - review contracts to be delivered, and
  - design and implement a single procurement process, including developing ethical options such as 'whole life costings'.

## 5. Managing our performance

### Priorities

- Drive improvement through performance management.
- Where possible provide standardised performance data to the public, partners and employees.
- Ensure the Alliance provides transparency for communities and staff, including the development of appropriate feedback mechanisms for our communities.



### STRAND 5

## Managing our performance

### Key Deliverables

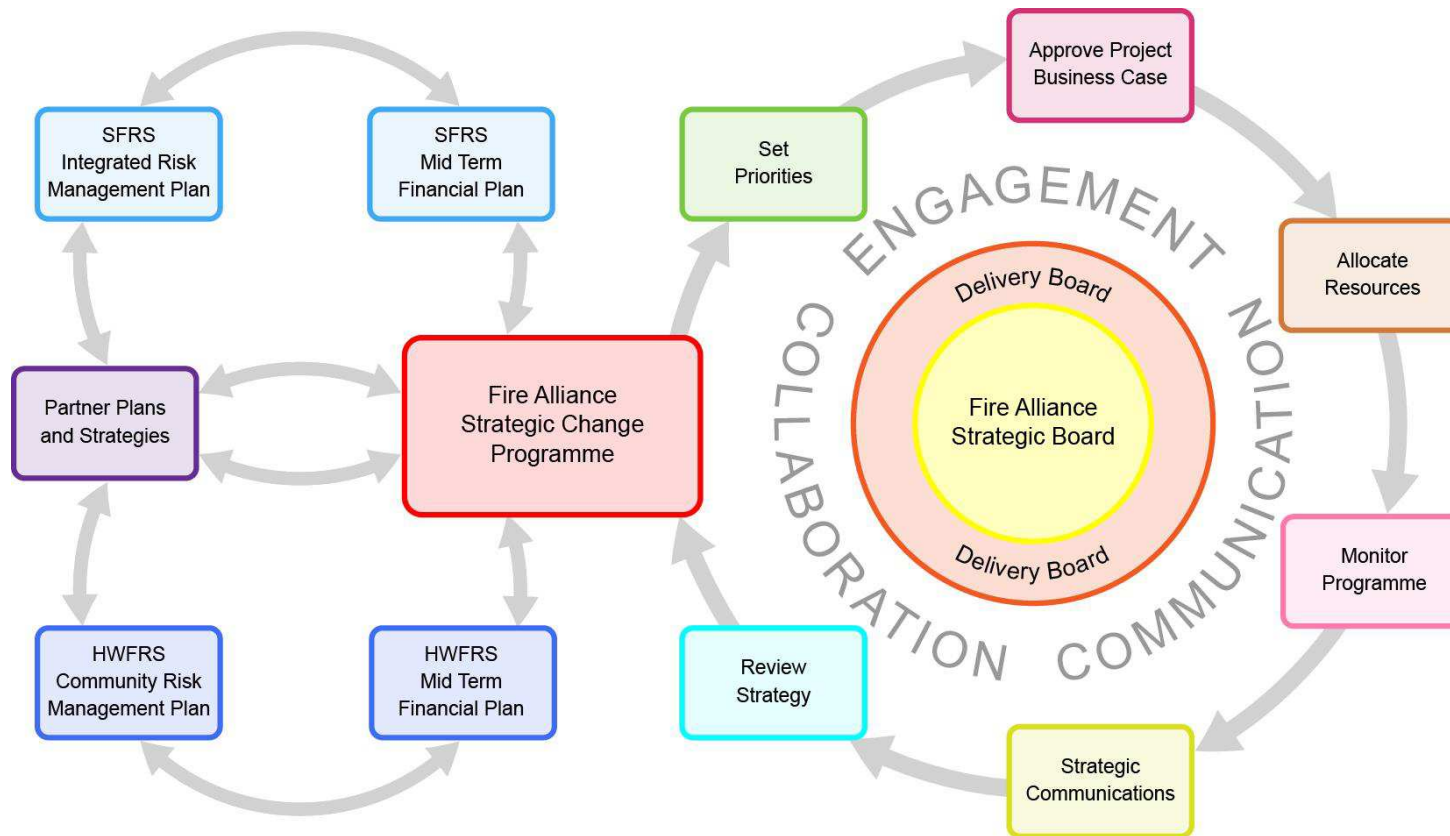
- Develop a standardised performance management framework for both governance and public understanding.
- Create a suite of shared, strategic performance indicators.
- Review of learning following HMICFRS Inspections with transparent improvement plans as necessary.

# 8 GOVERNANCE

A Governance Framework will be adopted to ensure that informed decisions can be made at a senior level, and to enable the delivery of the Fire Alliance Strategic Plan.

## Fire Alliance Governance and Planning Model

This is the business plan for delivering the strategic change programme with recognition of related planning models and their associated influence.



It is critical that the governance and programme management arrangements seek to understand the interrelationships of all projects undertaken within the Alliance, including the interdependencies and impacts of other programmes or projects, being undertaken by both Services, either individually or with other partners.

Responsibility for the management and delivery of the collaboration programme sits at three levels:

- Strategic Alliance Board
- Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board
- Strategic Alliance Projects Working Groups

## ▪ **Strategic Alliance Board**

### Membership

- Representatives of Fire and Rescue Authorities or PCC's Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Chief Fire Officer – Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS)
- Chief Fire Officer – Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)

### Key responsibilities

- Provide the high level governance for the Alliance.
- Recommend strategic priorities identified for the Alliance to the Fire Authorities.
- Support the Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board through the provision of appropriate resources.
- Hold the Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board to account for the delivery of the Alliance Programme.

The Strategic Alliance Board will meet four times a year.

## ▪ **Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board**

This group will be responsible for managing the process of change.

### Membership

- Chief Fire Officers – HWFRS and SFRS
- Deputy Chief Fire Officers – HWFRS and SFRS
- Assistant Chief Fire Officers – HWFRS and SFRS
- Treasurer – HWFRS
- Head of Finance – SFRS

### Key responsibilities

- Delivery of the Alliance Programme.
- Identify and agree the strategic priorities with the Strategic Alliance Board.
- Recommend the scope for Business Justification Cases (BJCs).
- Analyse and approve submitted BJCs.
- Consider the impacts and interdependencies of the programme on individual organisational priorities.
- Delegate authority to the Strategic Alliance Project Working Groups for the delivery of agreed projects.
- Support the Strategic Alliance Project Working Groups through the provision of appropriate resources and appointment of strategic leads.
- Hold the strategic leads responsible for delivery of individual Alliance projects to account.

The Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board will meet four times a year.

## ▪ **Strategic Alliance Project Working Groups**

### Membership

- Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board Lead Officer (Chair)
- Executive Sponsor
- Designated project lead (Vice Chair)
- Subject matter experts (as determined by the Chair) – HWFRS and SFRS
- Independent external advisor (as determined by the Chair)

### Key Responsibilities

- The Strategic Alliance Project Working Groups will act under delegated authority from the Strategic Alliance Programme Delivery Board.
- Develop and deliver projects to meet the requirements set out within approved BJs.
- Adhere to the three key principles of project management; cost, quality and time.
- Manage the interdependencies with other programmes and projects.
- Effectively manage capacity and secure resources for planned activities.
- Manage identified and emerging risks and issues, escalating where necessary.
- Ensure the effective day-to-day delivery of projects.
- Take accountability for the delivery of project benefits.
- Report progress of projects, quarterly, to the Strategic Alliance Programme Board.

The Strategic Alliance Project Working Groups will meet monthly or as required.



## 9. APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF FIRE ALLIANCE ACTIONS

|   | <b>Development Strand</b>             | <b>Key Deliverables</b>  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Reassuring our communities            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A unified Alliance Prevention Strategy to deliver against local needs and in support of partners' agendas.</li> <li>▪ Review of the Safeguarding process, policy and training to ensure a consistent approach.</li> <li>▪ Review of the Integrated / Community Risk Management Plan process to establish a standardised methodology.</li> </ul>   |
| 2 | Making our communities more resilient | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and scope future requirements for a 5 year vision for Command &amp; Control.</li> <li>▪ On-Call Duty Systems project review with position statement.</li> <li>▪ Enhance support to LRF by reviewing how training and exercising can be expanded and developed.</li> </ul>  |
| 3 | Building safe and secure communities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review Community Safety provision including systems, skills, capacity and legislation.</li> <li>▪ Support the Blue Light Collaboration Group by developing the five key work streams into the Programme Plan.</li> <li>▪ Review Technical Fire Safety provision including systems, skills, capacity and legislation.</li> </ul>   |
| 4 | Reforming our services                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review management and workforce policies and practices to support Service reform, including measures to: -:</li> <li>▪ continue positive engagement in the National Fire and Rescue Service Reform programme,</li> <li>▪ review and align senior leadership teams,</li> <li>▪ develop operating rules and governance arrangements for the Fire Alliance,</li> <li>▪ establish recruitment processes that meet the varied needs of the Alliance as well as challenging inequality,</li> <li>▪ review organisational development and future planning for the provision of ICT and Human Resources functions,</li> <li>▪ review the delivery and future planning of internal, external and corporate communications provision, and</li> <li>▪ reinvest savings, where appropriate, to support service reform.</li> <li>▪ Review and align operational and training policies, procedures, team resources and processes, including measures to: -</li> <li>▪ review and align operational training to deliver a single training framework,</li> <li>▪ review contracts to be delivered, and</li> <li>▪ design and implement a single procurement process, including developing ethical options such as 'whole life costings'.</li> </ul> |
| 5 | Managing our performance              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a standardised performance management framework for both governance and public understanding.</li> <li>▪ Create a suite of shared, strategic performance indicators.</li> <li>▪ Review of learning following HMICFRS Inspections with transparent improvement plans as necessary.</li> </ul>  |