



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Thursday, 30 September 2021, 10:30

**Chairman: Mr M Hart**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr B Brookes, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Ms N McVey

### **212 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos and Cllr R Morris.

### **213 Named Substitutes**

There were no named substitutes.

### **214 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

There were no interests declared.

### **215 Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

### **216 External Audit Progress Report**

The External Auditor updated Members on the progress of the external audit of the Authority's 2020/21 financial statements.

The External Auditor and the Treasurer made Members aware that the delay was not caused by any material issues with the financial statements, simply lack of resources.

It was noted that the Committee was unhappy with the external auditors' failure to provide sign off by 30 September.

The Treasurer assured Members that no issues had been identified which would fundamentally change the Draft Accounts that the Committee had sight of in July 2021.

***RESOLVED that the External Audit Progress Report be noted.***

**217 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 were pleased to note that the assurances had been significant or above and there were no high priority recommendations to report. Members noted the progress with the 2021/22 plan and that the 2 reviews rolled over, namely Safeguarding and Young Firefighters had now been completed.

Summary findings would be provided at the next committee for the 2 reviews that were rolled over.

***RESOLVED that the report be noted.***

**218 Statement of Assurance Update 2020-21**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the Statement of Assurance Update 2020-21 for approval for publication.

Members were informed that the finalised version would be published on the Service website. Members congratulated officers and expressed their thanks to staff who had put this together as a good example of modern practice.

***RESOLVED that the Committee approved the Statement of Assurance Update 2020-21 for publication.***

**219 Prevention Cause of Concern – Action Plan**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an action plan 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 were pleased to note that plans had already been developed within the Service to address some of the key areas that had been raised prior to receiving the Cause of Concern.

The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that the Service would be more focussed on evaluating and targeting the risk groups and was confident

that the Service had the right people and strategies in place for both HMIFRS and the organisation's needs.

***RESOLVED that the action plan created to discharge the Cause of Concern in relation to our Prevention activity be noted.***

**220 Health and Safety Committee Update: April – June 2021 (Quarter 1)**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an update on Health and Safety activities and items of significance for the reporting period.

Members were informed that there were a total of 46 Health and Safety events reported during April to June 2021, with personal injuries and vehicle collisions, although commensurate with the mileage over the quarter, being the most frequent.

It was noted that due to the large proportion of manual handling incidents reported, the Service was tasked with providing additional internal training to reduce the number of incidents.

Members were pleased to note that all injuries, whether minor or not, were reported to allow the Service to look for any particular trends.

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

***(i) The involvement of the Service in Health and Safety initiatives;***

***(ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during April to June 2021 (Quarter 1).***

Following the close of the meeting Members expressed their thanks to the Chief Fire Officer for the work undertaken on 8 September for the large fire in the area. The local Community were very grateful for the response by the Fire Service.

The Meeting ended at: 11:18

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman