



# **HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority**

**Policy and Resources Committee**

## **AGENDA**

**Tuesday, 27 January 2015**

**10:30**

**Conference Suites**

**Headquarters, 2 Kings Court, Charles Hastings Way,  
Worcester, WR5 1JR**

## **ACTION ON DISCOVERING A FIRE**

- 1 Break the glass at the nearest **FIRE ALARM POINT**.  
(This will alert Control and other Personnel)
- 2 Tackle the fire with the appliances available – **IF SAFE TO DO SO**.
- 3 Proceed to the Assembly Point for a Roll Call –

**CAR PARK OF THE OFFICE BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.**

- 4 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

## **ACTION ON HEARING THE ALARM**

- 1 Proceed immediately to the Assembly Point

**CAR PARK OF THE OFFICE BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.**

- 2 Close all doors en route. The senior person present will ensure all personnel have left the room.
- 3 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

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**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.



Tel: 0845 122 4454





# Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

## Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 27 January 2015, 10:30

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### Agenda

#### Councillors

Mr C B Taylor (Chairman), Mr R C Adams (Vice Chairman), Mr A Fry, Mr W P Gretton, Mr A I Hardman, Ms R E Jenkins, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mr J L V Kenyon, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr D C Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall,

| No. | Item  | Pages  |
|-----|---|--------|
| 1   | <b>Apologies for Absence</b><br><br>To receive any apologies for absence.   |        |
| 2   | <b>Named Substitutes</b><br><br>To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.          |        |
| 3   | <b>Declarations of Interest (if any)</b><br><br>This item allows the Chairman to invite any Councillor to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda. |        |
| 4   | <b>Confirmation of Minutes</b><br><br>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014.   | 7 - 10 |

|           |   |                |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Budget 2015/16 and Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)</b>   | <b>11 - 20</b> |
|           | To review the current position in relation to budgets for 2015/16 and beyond, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority (FRA).  |                |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Asset Management Strategy: Hereford Fire Station</b>   | <b>21 - 24</b> |
|           | To report progress to the Committee regarding the provision of a new fire station in Hereford.  |                |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Asset Management Strategy: Evesham Fire Station</b>  | <b>25 - 29</b> |
|           | To update Members on negotiations with Wychavon District Council for the redevelopment of the existing site and provision of a new fire station in Evesham.   |                |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Protective Security</b>  | <b>30 - 33</b> |
|           | To inform the Committee of the intention to drive forward and resource the protective security agenda noting the organisational impact and benefits of this, in particular the Public Services Network (PSN) accreditation. |                |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Pensions Appeals Panel</b>   | <b>34 - 37</b> |
|           | To recommend that the Committee establishes a Panel to consider and determine disputes in relation to Pensions Schemes.   |                |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Health and Safety Committee Update</b>   | <b>38 - 41</b> |
|           | To provide an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.  |                |



## **Minutes**

### **Members Present:**

Mr K Taylor (Chairman)

Mr A Fry, Mr P Gretton, Mr A Hardman, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mr J Kenyon, Mrs F Oborski, Mr D Prodger MBE, Mr D Taylor, Mr P Tuthill and Mr R Udall.

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Item</b> |
|------------|-------------|
|------------|-------------|

|           |                              |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b> |
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Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Adams (Vice-Chairman) and Mrs R Jenkins.

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|-----------|--------------------------|
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Named Substitutes</b> |
|-----------|--------------------------|

Mr Yarranton substituted for Mr Adams.

|           |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Declaration of Interests</b> |
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None.

|           |                                |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Confirmation of Minutes</b> |
|-----------|--------------------------------|

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

|           |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Chairman's Announcements</b> |
|-----------|---------------------------------|

1. The Chairman announced that Fair Trade tea, coffee and sugar was now available at meetings, following Members' request.
2. Mr Prodger MBE, Chairman of the Authority, announced the forthcoming Members' Visit scheduled for Thursday 27 November 2014 and urged all Members to attend.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>6.</b> | <b>2014/15 Budget Monitoring – 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter</b> |
|-----------|---|

The Treasurer presented a report on the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2014/15. Members' attention was drawn to the planned

underspend of £0.705m.

On the subject of capital expenditure, the Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the Service had withdrawn the current Hereford Fire Station planning application due to significant objections with regard to conservation. However, the Service will continue looking at whether any alternative suitable sites are likely to become available in the immediate future or if the objections raised can be overcome and will provide regular updates to the Committee.

*(Mr Hardman entered the meeting at 10.38am.)*

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

## **7. Revision to Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Treasurer presented Members with an update on the approved Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) following decisions made at the October meeting of the Fire Authority. Members' attention was drawn to the information on the core funding elements, which will not be confirmed until the end of the year and also changes that have been identified and that are now factored into the revised projection.

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

## **8. Transformation Bids**

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report to inform Members that the Authority had been successful in attracting a total of £4.27 million from the Government's Fire Transformation Fund that was made available to fire and rescue authorities to help ensure better and more efficient front-line services for the public. Members were also provided with details of the Transformation Bids to develop a new Wyre Forest blue light hub and to relocate the Fire Authority Headquarters to join West Mercia Police at Hindlip. The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the two schemes were independent of each other and did not need to be completed together. Both schemes are subject to formal Member approval and in the case of the Wyre Forest Hub, public consultation.

***RESOLVED that:***

- i) officers be authorised to carry out the necessary work (including incurring professional fees, where necessary) to prepare detailed schemes and proposals for implementation of the Transformation Bids in relation to:***
  - a) the development of a new Wyre Forest blue light hub; and***
  - b) the relocation of Fire Authority Headquarters to join West***



***Mercia Police at Hindlip; and***

- ii) a further report be submitted to the Authority for approval prior to undertaking public consultation or entering into any contractual arrangements for land purchase or building construction.***

**9. Closer Working with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service**

Area Commander Mark Preece presented a report for Members to note the progress made to date and, prior to consideration by the full Authority, discussed the recommendations which represent the detailed findings of the Project Arrow Team as supported by the Joint Project Board and the Member Reference Group. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed to Members that the reserve set aside for additional costs during the review had not been used.

***RECOMMENDED that:***

- iii) an operational collaboration between the two Fire and Rescue Services be progressed under the direction of the two Chief Fire Officers and the Strategic Director of Resources, Warwickshire County Council;***
- iv) Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority and Warwickshire County Council continue exploring greater collaboration between the two Fire and Rescue Services, working towards a strategic alliance light by late 2015 under the direction of the Joint Project Board;***
- v) a further report be submitted to the Joint Project Board in the summer of 2015 detailing the progress made;***
- vi) the Joint Project Board continue to meet biannually;***
- vii) work to date is shared with other key partners, notably Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police with the aim of stimulating interest in wider collaboration; and***
- viii) no further work on Options 4 (strategic alliance contractual) and 5 (full combination) in the options appraisal attached at Appendix 1 be progressed until the report submitted in the summer of 2015 has been considered.***

**10. Quarter 1 and 2 Performance 2015-15**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a summary of annual performance against the Fire Authority Annual Plan 2014-15 using the set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed by Senior Management Board.

**RESOLVED that the Committee noted the following headlines taken from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarter 1 and 2 2014-15:**

- i) the total number of Incidents attended in Quarter 1 and 2 2014-15 is the lowest total in the nine years that the current data set has been collected;***
- ii) the Service attended the lowest Quarter 1 and 2 totals of Fire and False Alarm incidents in the last nine years but the number of Special Service incidents attended in Quarter 1 and 2 2014-15 have increased when compared to the same period last year;***
- iii) although Sickness levels for all staff continue to remain within tolerance levels for the year so far, sickness levels are beginning to rise again since dropping from a peak in October 2013;***
- iv) the Service saw a reduction in the percentage of attendances at building fires that met the 10 minutes attendance standard compared with the same period last year, and has investigated the reasons behind reductions in the number of building fires attended by the first appliance within 10 minutes; and***
- v) retained appliances were available for operational duty 90.5% of the time.***

#### **11. Health and Safety Committee Update**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

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

- (i) the involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives at national level;***
- (ii) Health and Safety performance for Quarter 2 (July – September 2014)***

The meeting concluded at 12.06pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Report of the Treasurer

### 5. Budget 2015/16 and Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

#### Purpose of Report

1. To review the current position in relation to budgets for 2015/16 and beyond, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority (FRA).
- 

#### Recommendations

*The Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer recommend that the Committee:*

- *recommends to the FRA to increase council tax by £1.44 per year (1.94%) for 2015/16;*
- *agrees the budget assumptions to be recommended to the FRA;*
- *approves the recommendation to be made to the FRA of the consequential budget and precept requirements for 2015/16;*
- *recommends to the FRA the precept policy for the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period; and*
- *notes the consequential future budget gaps arising.*

#### Background

2. In February 2014 the FRA agreed a MTFP for 2014/15 to 2016/17 (with an indicative forecast to 2019/20), which identified annual cumulative savings of £0.999m and £2.137m for 2015/16 and 2016/17 respectively. In September 2014 the FRA agreed details of Fire Cover changes to be included in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which, as anticipated, had a significant impact on these budget gaps.
3. The November 2014 meeting of this Committee and the December 2014 meeting of the FRA considered these changes along with estimates of the potential effect of other changes. This report updates these estimates with the latest available (but not yet final) information.
4. Provisional information has now been received to finalise some of the figures in the resourcing side of the budget equation, specifically:
  - i. share of government grant totals;
  - ii. special grants; and
  - iii. government estimates of business rate yield.

5. Final Information on the following is expected towards mid/end of January (and may be available for a verbal update to the Committee on 27 January 2015):
  - i. final council tax-base - from billing authorities;
  - ii. estimate of business rate income - from billing authorities; and
  - iii. Confirmation of grants - from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
6. The MTFP is always based on a set of assumptions about the future. Given the continued period of significant financial constraint, and in order to provide more openness to our communities, continued emphasis is being placed on the reasoning behind the assumptions now being made.
7. The year 2016/17 is beyond the current (extended) Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period and after a general election, although it is expected that the general direction of funding will be unaffected.
8. The assumptions for future years (2017/18 onwards) are slightly less critical at this point in terms of setting the budget for next year, but it should be noted that the timescales for making major changes to expenditure levels within the Fire and Rescue Service are significant, and therefore decisions taken now will have an impact for future budget setting processes.

## **Review of Available Resources**

9. The review of future resources can be split between “base-line” (i.e. grant and business rates retention) and precept.

## **Base-line and Formula Grant**

10. As Members will be aware, the government implemented significant changes in local government finance from April 2013.
11. Government now calculates a base-line figure and an estimate of our business rate yield (1% of the rates collected in Herefordshire and Worcestershire). The difference is paid as various elements of revenue support grant.
12. The current MTFP assumptions for 2015/16 are based on the indicative figures given by government in December 2013, and for 2016/17 are based on a continuation of the grant reduction trend seen over the last 3 years.
13. In late December the provisional figures for 2015/16 were announced, but there was no corresponding indicative figure for 2016/17, therefore 2016/17 projections have been proportionately adjusted.
14. It is unfortunate that in spite of meetings with the Fire Minister (including with local MPs) the provisional settlement is fundamentally unchanged.
15. Indicative base-line figures are 0.6% lower in 2015/16, resulting in a grant figure that is also 0.6% lower. Although this is within the reasonable limits of accurate forecasting, it still represents £0.047m less resource than expected.

16. Of this reduction, a proportion relates to the government's estimate of savings to be made in FRA pension contributions as a result of the pensions reforms commencing in April 2015. Details of the exact contribution rates and the impact on this Authority are still awaited (*see Paragraph 37(ii) below*), but an initial estimate suggests savings of around £0.030m.
17. Additionally the government's estimate of the amount of 2015/16 freeze grant payable has increased by £0.008m, so the net effect of the grant settlement is less than 0.1%.
18. Finally there has been reductions in Special Grant in respect of USAR (as previously highlighted), and the transfer of an IRU vehicle to Gloucestershire.
19. The expected reduction in Firelink grant is now unlikely before 2017/18.

### **Retained Business Rates**

20. The Fire Authority now retains 1% of the Business Rates collected in the two counties, and there are two sources of estimated yield information:
  - i. Government's baseline assessment – available now.
  - ii. Estimates provided by the Billing Authorities (known as NNDR1), which will be provided at the end of January.
21. The Billing Authorities' estimation is complicated by two further factors:
  - i. The necessity to make provision for backdated Appeals going back 5 years before the introduction of the retention scheme.
  - ii. The late introduction by government of rate relief which reduced the amount of rate collectable, but which resulted in additional special grant being paid to Authorities.
22. In the first year of the arrangements (2013/14) NNDR1 data was not passed to the FRA in time for the budget setting process and therefore the budget was set based on the baseline estimate. Subsequently, however, it was identified that the NNDR1 estimates were 3% higher.
23. For 2014/15 the baseline figure rose by 2.0%, but the NNDR1 estimate (including the special grants to offset the additional reliefs) rose by 6.5%, and this additional funding was taken into the base in 2014/15.
24. The MTFP assumed an increase of 2.5% for 2015/16, in line with the indicative baseline change. The latter has now reduced to 1.9% and the estimate is currently amended accordingly.
25. Although there is close liaison with the Billing Authorities (and the County Council) on this matter, it is not yet clear what the NNDR1 estimates for 2015/16 will be.
26. It is possible that there may have to be some downward adjustment in this figure when final information is available.

## **Precept**

27. In approving the current MTFP in February 2014 the FRA recommended precept increase assumptions of 0% for 2015/16 and 2% per year thereafter.
28. In respect of the tax-base an annual overall increase of 0.5% has been assumed based on the long term average.
29. Final tax-base figures are not yet available from billing authorities, but indicative data suggests that for the second year running there will be a significant overall increase of around 1.5% (2.0% in 2014/15) compared to an average of 0.7%, with a maximum of 0.9% for the previous 8 years.
30. This increase will come from 4 main sources:
  - i. Improvement in the estimate of actual collection from tax-payers who had previously not paid any council tax.
  - ii. Changes to council tax benefit schemes increasing the amount of council tax payable.
  - iii. A review of (and reduction in) the granting of Single person discounts.
  - iv. New properties.
31. The net effect of this is to increase the council tax yield by around £0.200m, and may result in one-off collection fund surpluses.
32. Whilst the MTFP assumes a 0% precept increase, the FRA could choose to increase council tax in 2015/16 (to meet expenditure pressures in year and to secure future years funding) up to the referendum threshold.
33. To assist local authority financial planning for 2015/16 this limit has now been given early and will be 2%.
34. An increase just below the threshold would increase net resources by around £0.160m, after the loss of the assumed freeze grant.
35. For information, Worcestershire County Council is proposing an increase at this level and the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner is consulting on such an increase.

## **Expenditure Requirement**

36. The MTFP identified budget gaps of £0.999m and £2.137m for 2015/16 and 2016/17 (*see Appendix 1: Line 3*), reducing to £0.200m and £ 0.443m after the CRMP decisions (*see Appendix 1: Line 9*).
37. There are now further forecast changes in respect of:
  - i. 2014 Pay Awards
  - ii. The implementation of the Property JPV, including one-off set up costs

- iii. Potential reduction in employers pension contributions (*see paragraph 16 above*). Although the grant settlement makes an assumption about a small net saving, the reality of the impact on each FRA will only be apparent when the new rates for the 3 schemes are announced. The impact being dependent on how the local mix of membership compares to the national picture. The new rates are not expected until late February. For the moment a nil impact is assumed

38. These have the impact of reducing the gaps to £0.120m and £0.237m respectively as detailed In Appendix 1 Line 22 and summarised below:

|                                   | 2015/16      | 2016/17      | 2017/18      | 2018/19      | 2019/20      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                   | £m           | £m           | £m           | £m           | £m           |
| <u>MTFP Budget Gap (Feb 2014)</u> |              |              |              |              |              |
| Savings to 2016/17                | 0.999        | 2.137        | 2.137        | 2.137        | 2.137        |
| Savings 2017/18 on                |              |              | 1.446        | 2.380        | 3.322        |
|                                   | <b>0.999</b> | <b>2.137</b> | <b>3.583</b> | <b>4.517</b> | <b>5.459</b> |
| CRMP as approved                  | -0.799       | -1.694       | -1.694       | -1.694       | -1.694       |
| Provision for DCP trial           | 0.164        | 0.164        |              |              |              |
|                                   | <b>0.364</b> | <b>0.607</b> | <b>1.889</b> | <b>2.823</b> | <b>3.765</b> |
| 2014 Pay Award Savings            | -0.200       | -0.200       | -0.200       | -0.200       | -0.200       |
| JPV Impact                        | 0.114        | -0.025       | -0.063       | -0.095       | -0.156       |
|                                   | <b>0.278</b> | <b>0.382</b> | <b>1.626</b> | <b>2.528</b> | <b>3.409</b> |
| Net Grant Changes                 | 0.039        | 0.053        | 0.066        | 0.079        | 0.091        |
| Special Grant Reductions          | 0.150        | 0.150        | 0.150        | 0.150        | 0.150        |
| Business Rate assumptions         | 0.017        | 0.020        | 0.023        | 0.026        | 0.029        |
| tax-base increases                | -0.200       | -0.204       | -0.208       | -0.212       | -0.216       |
|                                   | <b>0.284</b> | <b>0.401</b> | <b>1.657</b> | <b>2.571</b> | <b>3.463</b> |

39. A precept increase of just under 2% would largely close the 2015/16 gap.
40. The expenditure requirement has continued to be refined and the key assumptions around pay, inflation and interest rates are outlined in the paragraphs below.
41. An average 2.5% figure for general inflation has been used.
42. In addition it has been thought prudent to include an additional inflation provision for two key areas of expenditure that are projected to individually increase above the average Consumer Price Index (CPI)/Retail Price Index (RPI) level. These areas are utilities (gas and electricity) and diesel fuel.
43. Although the Chancellor has made the government's policy on public sector pay increases for the CSR period very clear at a maximum of 1%, it is not entirely clear how this will translate to the fire sector as pay awards are negotiated independently of central government.

44. It has been considered prudent to provide a higher figure of 2% to reflect that after two years of pay freeze and three years at 1% there may be pressure for a significantly higher award.
45. The relevant assumptions are summarised below for ease of reference. (The diesel fuel provision represents around £0.014m, and although in the last few months local prices have fallen by around 11% representing a potential £0.030m saving the long term position is not certain):

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| General Inflation       | 2.50% |
| Utilities - Gas         | 5.00% |
| Utilities - Electricity | 5.00% |
| Diesel Fuel             | 5.00% |
| Pay Awards              | 2.00% |
| Long Term Interest      | 4.00% |

### **Other Issues**

46. Following the implementation of the CRMP reductions there will be a surplus of uniformed staff in post above that required for the approved level of fire cover, until normal retirement within the next few years.
47. The FRA has already approved the use of £0.800m of reserves (including £0.300m from general balances) to provide a higher level of fire cover as often as possible for a two year period, which absorbs some of the excess cost.
48. In anticipation of the need to reduce staff numbers significantly to meet the known budget pressures, and to try to meet the Authority's desire not to instigate redundancies of uniformed staff, Members will be aware that a budget reduction reserve has been created over the last few years to meet this potential costs.
49. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 the budget reduction reserve stood at £2.511m and with the addition of the previously reported planned under-spending in 2014/15 of £0.705m brings the total available up to £3.216m.
50. In addition Senior Officers have identified and pursued options for staff to be temporarily seconded to neighbouring services to reduce cost pressures. With the active co-operation of the Authority's staff this is forecast to deliver £1.8m net saving for the period 2014/15 – 2016/17.
51. The table below shows that, taking into account all these factors, it is possible to meet the costs of excess staff in accordance with the Authority's wishes by utilising £2.193m of the budget reduction reserve, leaving £1.023m available for future needs.



|                                 | 2015/16       | 2016/17      | 2017/18      | 2018/19      | 2019/20      |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                 | £m            | £m           | £m           | £m           | £m           |
| <b>Current Gap</b>              | <b>0.284</b>  | <b>0.401</b> | <b>1.657</b> | <b>2.571</b> | <b>3.463</b> |
| Excess Staff Employment Cost    | 0.603         | 1.332        | 1.101        | 0.626        | 0.111        |
| Net Secondment Income           | -1.273        | -0.007       | 0.000        | 0.000        | 0.000        |
|                                 | <b>-0.386</b> | <b>1.726</b> | <b>2.758</b> | <b>3.197</b> | <b>3.574</b> |
| Use of budget Reduction Reserve | 0.670         | -1.025       | -1.101       | -0.626       | -0.111       |
| Use of General Balances         |               | -0.300       |              |              |              |
| <b>Remaining Gap</b>            | <b>0.284</b>  | <b>0.401</b> | <b>1.657</b> | <b>2.571</b> | <b>3.463</b> |

52. Although the budget gaps for 2017/18 and beyond are, by definition, speculative, all major political parties see public sector austerity continuing to the end of the decade, so the FRA needs to consider how it would meet future savings requirements of this magnitude.
53. There is potential for savings, whilst continuing to protect front-line services, to come from the current transformational funding projects and Project Arrow and spinoffs, but it is prudent to hold a balance in the budget reduction reserve to meet any short term transitional costs.

### General Balances

54. As indicated at paragraph 49, it has been assumed that planned and controlled under-spending for 2014/15 will transfer to the budget reduction reserve, so there will be no transfer to general balances in 2014/15.
55. The table below shows the projected position in the general reserve in relation to the revenue budget requirement over the new MTFP period. The budget requirement is based on the limiting factor of available resources.

|                               | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                               | £m      | £m      | £m      | £m      | £m      |
| General Balances at 1 April   | 1.838   | 1.838   | 1.538   | 1.538   | 1.538   |
| Approved Use                  |         | (0.300) |         |         |         |
| General Balances at 31 Mar    | 1.838   | 1.538   | 1.538   | 1.538   | 1.538   |
| Indicative Budget Requirement | 32.023  | 31.650  | 31.355  | 31.141  | 30.997  |
| % of Budget Requirement       | 5.7%    | 4.9%    | 4.9%    | 4.9%    | 5.0%    |

56. Allowing for the planned use in 2016/17 this is broadly in line with the previous MTFP.
57. Relative to other FRAs this level of balance is not high, and it should be noted that the FRA now bears a risk in relation to council tax benefit and business rate yield, and so is more directly connected to local economic conditions.

58. Whilst this level of balances remains prudent there is an opportunity cost of holding reserves. They could be used to finance one off expenditure or to temporarily reduce the council tax precept. The risk, of course, is that if reserves are reduced there is less capacity to meet unforeseen or unexpected expenditure pressures, and a temporary reduction in council tax cannot be readily recovered.

### Future Progress

59. Officers will continue to refine the budget figures and will receive final tax-base, collection fund figures and estimated business rate income.
60. The FRA will meet on 18 February 2015 to agree a budget and precept for 2015/16.

### Corporate Considerations

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   | Yes – whole report |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). | Yes – whole report |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).  | No                 |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  | No                 |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  | n/a                |

## **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1: MTFP Review

## **Background Papers**

FRA 19 February 2014: Budget and Precept 2014/15 and MTFP  
P&R Committee 19 November 2014: Revision to MTFP  
FRA 10 December 2014: Revision to MTFP

## **Contact Officer**

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# Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

## Policy & Resources Committee: MTFP Review

| Col<br>Row | 1   | 2                     | 3                         | 4                         | 5                         | 6                         |
|------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|            |   | 2015/16<br>Prov<br>£m | 2016/17<br>Forecast<br>£m | 2017/18<br>Forecast<br>£m | 2018/19<br>Forecast<br>£m | 2019/20<br>Forecast<br>£m |
|            | <b><u>MTFP Budget Gap (Feb 2014)</u></b>      |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 1          | Savings to 2016/17                            | 0.999                 | 2.137                     | 2.137                     | 2.137                     | 2.137                     |
| 2          | Savings 2017/18 on                            |                       |                           | 1.446                     | 2.380                     | 3.322                     |
| 3          |   | <b>0.999</b>          | <b>2.137</b>              | <b>3.583</b>              | <b>4.517</b>              | <b>5.459</b>              |
|            | <b><u>CRMP Decisions (Sep 2014)</u></b>       |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 4          | removal of 2nd Pumps - Tenbury/Ledbury        |                       | (0.090)                   | (0.090)                   | (0.090)                   | (0.090)                   |
| 5          | conversion to DS - Hereford/Worcester (4+4)   | (0.469)               | (0.944)                   | (0.944)                   | (0.944)                   | (0.944)                   |
| 6          | standard crewing at 4 - all other WT/DC/DCP   | (0.330)               | (0.660)                   | (0.660)                   | (0.660)                   | (0.660)                   |
| 7          |   | <b>(0.799)</b>        | <b>(1.694)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            |
| 8          | Provision for DCP trial                       | 0.164                 | 0.164                     |                           |                           |                           |
| 9          |   | <b>(0.635)</b>        | <b>(1.530)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            | <b>(1.694)</b>            |
|            | <b><u>Remaining Budget Gap (Sep 2014)</u></b> |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 10         | Savings to 2016/17                            | 0.364                 | 0.607                     | 0.443                     | 0.443                     | 0.443                     |
| 11         | Savings 2017/18 on                            |                       |                           | 1.446                     | 2.380                     | 3.322                     |
| 12         |   | <b>0.364</b>          | <b>0.607</b>              | <b>1.889</b>              | <b>2.823</b>              | <b>3.765</b>              |
|            | <b><u>Expenditure Changes</u></b>             |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 13         | 2014 Pay Award Savings                        | (0.200)               | (0.200)                   | (0.200)                   | (0.200)                   | (0.200)                   |
| 14         | Firefighter Pensions Contribution Rates       |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 15         | Impact of JPV                                 | 0.014                 | (0.025)                   | (0.063)                   | (0.095)                   | (0.156)                   |
| 16         | JPV set up Costs                              | 0.100                 |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 17         |   | <b>(0.086)</b>        | <b>(0.225)</b>            | <b>(0.263)</b>            | <b>(0.295)</b>            | <b>(0.356)</b>            |
|            | <b><u>Funding Changes</u></b>                 |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 18         | Formula Grant Changes                         | 0.047                 | 0.060                     | 0.073                     | 0.085                     | 0.096                     |
| 19         | Fire Revenue Grant                            | 0.150                 | 0.150                     | 0.150                     | 0.150                     | 0.150                     |
| 20         | Revised 15/16 CT Freeze Grant Calculation     | (0.008)               | (0.008)                   | (0.007)                   | (0.006)                   | (0.005)                   |
| 21         | 15/16 Council Tax-base increase               | (0.200)               | (0.204)                   | (0.208)                   | (0.212)                   | (0.216)                   |
| 22         | Business Rate Yield Changes                   | 0.017                 | 0.020                     | 0.023                     | 0.026                     | 0.029                     |
| 23         |   | <b>0.006</b>          | <b>0.019</b>              | <b>0.031</b>              | <b>0.043</b>              | <b>0.054</b>              |
| 24         |   | <b>(0.080)</b>        | <b>(0.206)</b>            | <b>(0.232)</b>            | <b>(0.252)</b>            | <b>(0.302)</b>            |
| 25         |   | <b>0.284</b>          | <b>0.401</b>              | <b>1.657</b>              | <b>2.571</b>              | <b>3.463</b>              |
|            | <b><u>Excess Uniformed Staff</u></b>          |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 26         | Employment Cost                               | 0.603                 | 1.332                     | 1.101                     | 0.626                     | 0.111                     |
| 27         | Net Secondment Income                         | (1.273)               | (0.007)                   | 0.000                     | 0.000                     | 0.000                     |
| 28         |   | <b>(0.670)</b>        | <b>1.325</b>              | <b>1.101</b>              | <b>0.626</b>              | <b>0.111</b>              |
| 29         | <b>UNDERLYING GAP</b>                         | <b>(0.386)</b>        | <b>1.726</b>              | <b>2.758</b>              | <b>3.197</b>              | <b>3.574</b>              |
|            | <b><u>Proposed Use of Reserves</u></b>        |                       |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| 30         | Use of budget Reduction Reserve               | 0.670                 | (1.025)                   | (1.101)                   | (0.626)                   | (0.111)                   |
| 31         | Use of General Balances                       |                       | (0.300)                   |                           |                           |                           |
| 32         |   | <b>0.670</b>          | <b>(1.325)</b>            | <b>(1.101)</b>            | <b>(0.626)</b>            | <b>(0.111)</b>            |
| 33         | <b>REMAINING GAP</b>                          | <b>0.284</b>          | <b>0.401</b>              | <b>1.657</b>              | <b>2.571</b>              | <b>3.463</b>              |

## **Report of Head of Asset Management**

### **6. Asset Management Strategy: Hereford Fire Station**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To report progress to the Committee regarding the provision of a new fire station in Hereford.
- 

#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the progress towards identifying a site for a replacement fire station in Hereford be noted.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. Members will be aware that in March 2014, the Policy and Resources Committee gave approval for a proposed arrangement between Herefordshire Council and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service to provide a new fire station on the site of the Council's Bath Street offices in Hereford. The proposal suggested a land swap of the current fire station site in exchange for a proportion of the Council's Bath Street site. However, when considering the objections raised and following extensive discussions with Officers of Herefordshire Council, it is clear that the Bath Street site is not as viable as was originally believed.
3. At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 19 November 2014, Members requested updates regarding the progress of providing a replacement for the existing Fire Station in St. Owen Street, Hereford. This paper outlines the criteria applied to the on-going detailed search for a potential new location for a replacement fire station, explains why some options have been rejected and updates the Policy and Resources Committee about on-going examination of other options. Finally, in the time period since the original proposal, new potential sites are now available and this paper explains how these options will be examined.

#### **The Existing Site and Search Criteria**

4. The current fire station site is located within the city in a location that has good access to the main road network and reasonable access for responding on-call Retained Duty System firefighters. A survey has been undertaken to ascertain whether it would be viable to refurbish the existing building. It is estimated that refurbishment would cost in the region of £5.5 million including temporary fire station set up and relocation costs. These temporary measures are significant, cannot be incurred as capital costs and would impact the Authority's revenue

budget, where funding does not exist. However a refurbishment scheme would not address the fact that the site is restricted by its size and does not provide suitable training facilities for modern firefighters. It is more economical for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service to secure a new larger site and build a purpose built, modern facility. In addition there is insufficient space on the existing site to support a temporary fire station which would then necessitate sourcing, and rental of, a suitable site for the duration of the refurbishment works. The survey also identified that a refurbishment of the building was unlikely to extend the life of the current building for a further 30 years and therefore the most economical route in the medium and long term, would be to provide a new building at a different location. A new site would provide space for on-site training facilities and space for community groups such as the Young Fire Fighter Association.

5. Any proposed site for a new fire station would need to be within the Primary Risk area. The Primary Risk area is based on a number of factors including fires in buildings and Road Traffic Collision activity data over a four year period (April 2009 to March 2013). This analysis creates a “hotspot” map indicating the search area for a new fire. Any site outside this Primary Risk area (such as the Rotherwas estate) would not be considered an appropriate location as it wouldn’t satisfy the main criteria of giving good fire cover access across the city and beyond and be a reasonable turn in location for existing on-call firefighters.
6. Using this Primary Risk area as a guide, sites have been identified through a local commercial land agent in association with Officers from Herefordshire Council and other partner organisations such as the Police.
7. Access and egress are equally important to minimise delays in response and provide the optimum service to the community and therefore consideration must be given to enable attendance and recruitment of Retained Duty System firefighters into a new fire station site within appropriate timescales. To determine a short-list of potential sites, the location, size, and access to the site and the sites availability were deemed the most important criteria for assessing the potential of any location. The full criteria can be summarised as follows:
  - Location
  - Site size
  - Site access
  - Flood zones
  - Ownership/availability
  - Neighbouring land use
8. Each attribute was given a score between 1 and 10, with the most important search site criteria having extra weighting to their scores. Flood zones are given special consideration given the historic flood risk data in Hereford as a site with potential flood risk would be unacceptable. Finally, the station footprint and required vehicle turning circles need to be mapped on potential site plans to confirm the site is suitable for consideration.

## **Current Position**

9. Following discussions with Herefordshire Council, it has become clear that there are now other parties interested in the Bath Street site that are able to utilise the facade of the existing building. In undertaking public consultation work for the Bath Street location it has been suggested locally that other sites would make acceptable locations for a new fire station. Unfortunately the alternative sites suggested do not comply with our assessment criteria. For example, the reason why the Rotherwas estate is not acceptable has already been given. The current bus station site in Commercial Road has also been suggested, but Officers from Herefordshire Council have indicated that there are no developed plans to make this location available in the near future. Council owned land as part of the new link road project in the Edgar Street area is not large enough to accommodate a fire station, and an additional site currently owned by the Police in the same area is also too small. As part of the link-road project these areas will have flood alleviation measures proposed to mitigate an existing flood risk in this area, but these would not support fire service mobilisation from a site in the event of flooding and there are known specific issues with the site that may make a development as a fire station cost-prohibitive. As has already been indicated, the Bath Street location is unlikely to proceed any further.
10. There are also sites which were considered as part of the original site search which may still provide an acceptable location. These include privately owned locations and others owned by partners. Discussions with Officers of Herefordshire Council have suggested several new sites for consideration, with detailed investigation being undertaken from January 2015. The Service is fostering a close working relationship with Herefordshire Council: for example, ACFO John Hodges has taken a tour of potential sites with Geoff Hughes, Herefordshire Council's Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate. Finally, Officers of the Service are also liaising closely with a local land agent to identify new potential commercial opportunities. It is hoped that progress will continue positively and that a preferred site will be identified by the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

## **Conclusion/Summary**

11. Significant work is currently being undertaken to locate an acceptable site for a new fire station in Hereford City but unlike many other developments a site for a fire station has some very specific criteria to ensure it would be fit for purpose and that the fire engines can be crewed properly and respond in an effective manner.
12. It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee note the content of this paper.

## Corporate Considerations

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   | Whole document relates to property. Proposals will require legal and financial input at the appropriate time. |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). | The Asset Management Strategy supports 'Our Strategy' on the foundations of 'Buildings and Infrastructure'.   |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).  | All capital projects are managed within the CDM 2007 regulations.   |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  | Consultation is undertaken as part of the planning approval process.  |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  | No – this will be considered at the appropriate time.   |

## Supporting Information

Background papers – Policy and Resources Committee 26 March 2014 and Policy and Resources Committee 19 November 2014.

## Contact Officer

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## Report of Head of Legal Services

### 7. Asset Management Strategy: Evesham Fire Station

#### Purpose of report

1. To update Members on negotiations with Wychavon District Council for the redevelopment of the existing site and provision of a new fire station in Evesham.
- 

#### Recommendation

***It is RECOMMENDED that the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and Director of Finance, be authorised to enter into an agreement with Wychavon District Council for the sale and replacement of Evesham Fire Station on the terms set out in the report***

#### Background

2. Following an approach from Wychavon District Council, the Committee agreed in principle at the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2013 to sell the site of existing Evesham Fire Station in Merstow Green to the Council in order to facilitate the development of a Waitrose supermarket in the Town, on terms that would allow for the provision of a replacement fire station and strategic training facility (STF) on other land currently owned by the Council. It was agreed that the terms of the transaction would be reported back to this committee for approval following negotiation.
3. The proposed site for the replacement fire station and STF is adjacent to the Evesham leisure centre on land off Abbey Road. From a locational point of view this is an excellent site for the Fire Authority's purposes, being relatively close to the existing Fire Station site and with good access to the main highway network (see map at Appendix 1).
4. However it is a challenging site from a development perspective due to its former uses, which have included a sewage treatment works (there are subterranean concrete structures remaining that may need to be removed), land fill and a Council depot. The site has also previously suffered from Japanese Knotweed and measures will be required to protect against any reoccurrence of this. We are currently awaiting the results of ground investigation surveys which will then be discussed with the Environment Agency to establish their requirements with regard to the removal of any contaminants and the design of the foundations. Until that process is complete, it is not possible to make an accurate estimate of the costs of developing the site but as indicated below, the

financial risk associated with this is being borne by Wychavon District Council rather than the Fire Authority.

5. A planning application for the new fire station and STF has been submitted and a decision is expected in February 2015.

## **Negotiation**

6. Negotiations with Wychavon District Council have taken longer than expected, not least because the Council also had to reach agreement with Waitrose over the new supermarket at the same time. The principle terms that have now been agreed are as follows:

(a) Contracts will be conditional upon:

- (i) satisfactory ground investigation results and approval of remediation strategy, to include Environment Agency requirements
- (ii) grant of satisfactory planning permission for both the new fire station and the redevelopment of the existing site at Merstow Green

(b) The Council will buy the site at Merstow Green for £740,000 and the Fire Authority will buy the site at Abbey Road for £80,000. The net payment to the Fire Authority of £660,000 will be applied towards the cost of developing the new fire station and STF.

(c) The contracts for building the new fire station will be subject to tender, once details of the foundations and ground remediation requirements have been finalised. The risk of any additional above ground costs over and above the tender price will be met by the Fire Authority.

(d) The Fire Authority will contribute £150,000 - £250,000 towards the cost of the new build, depending upon the final cost, to reflect the benefits of having a new building with lower maintenance and running costs. All other costs (including professional fees) will be paid by Wychavon District Council on a monthly basis as they are incurred (subject to the point C above). The contracts will be let and managed by our own Property Services team and their costs will also be paid by the Council.

(e) Following tender, the Fire Authority responsible for any cost overrun in respect of the above ground works. The risk of any unexpected below ground costs will remain with Wychavon District Council.

(f) Subject to planning, groundworks for the new site are scheduled to start in April 2015. The main build contract is scheduled to start in July 2015 and is due for completion in April 2016.

(g) The Fire Authority will be required to give vacant possession of the existing Merstow Green site no later than 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016. This is perfectly achievable on the present timetable but in the event of unexpected delays, a site has been identified for a temporary fire station which could be utilised if

necessary. The costs of this would again be met by Wychavon District Council.

## Conclusion/Summary

7. Wychavon District Council wish to redevelop the existing Evesham Fire Station site as a Waitrose supermarket in order to improve the economic vitality of the Town. In exchange, they will pay most of the costs for the construction of a new Fire Station and replacement STF, which will then belong to the Fire Authority. The Fire Authority will contribute £150,000 - £250,000 towards the total costs.
8. This is an excellent proposition for the Fire Authority and will result a new fire station, in a good location and at minimal cost to this Authority.

## Corporate Considerations

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   | The Fire Authority's contribution to the scheme will be funded from the existing minor capital works programme.<br><br>This is a major capital project that has already involved significant Officer time, particularly within the Property Services Team and will continue to do so as we move towards the JPV. |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). | The proposal supports the Authority's commitment to provide appropriate premises in the right locations to enable our staff to carry out their roles effectively.  |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).  | These will be managed as part of the new build contracts   |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  | The proposal is subject to planning permission and as such involves public consultation.<br><br>Personnel at Evesham Fire Station have been consulted in relation to the design of the new fire station  |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  | There are none   |

## **Supporting Information**

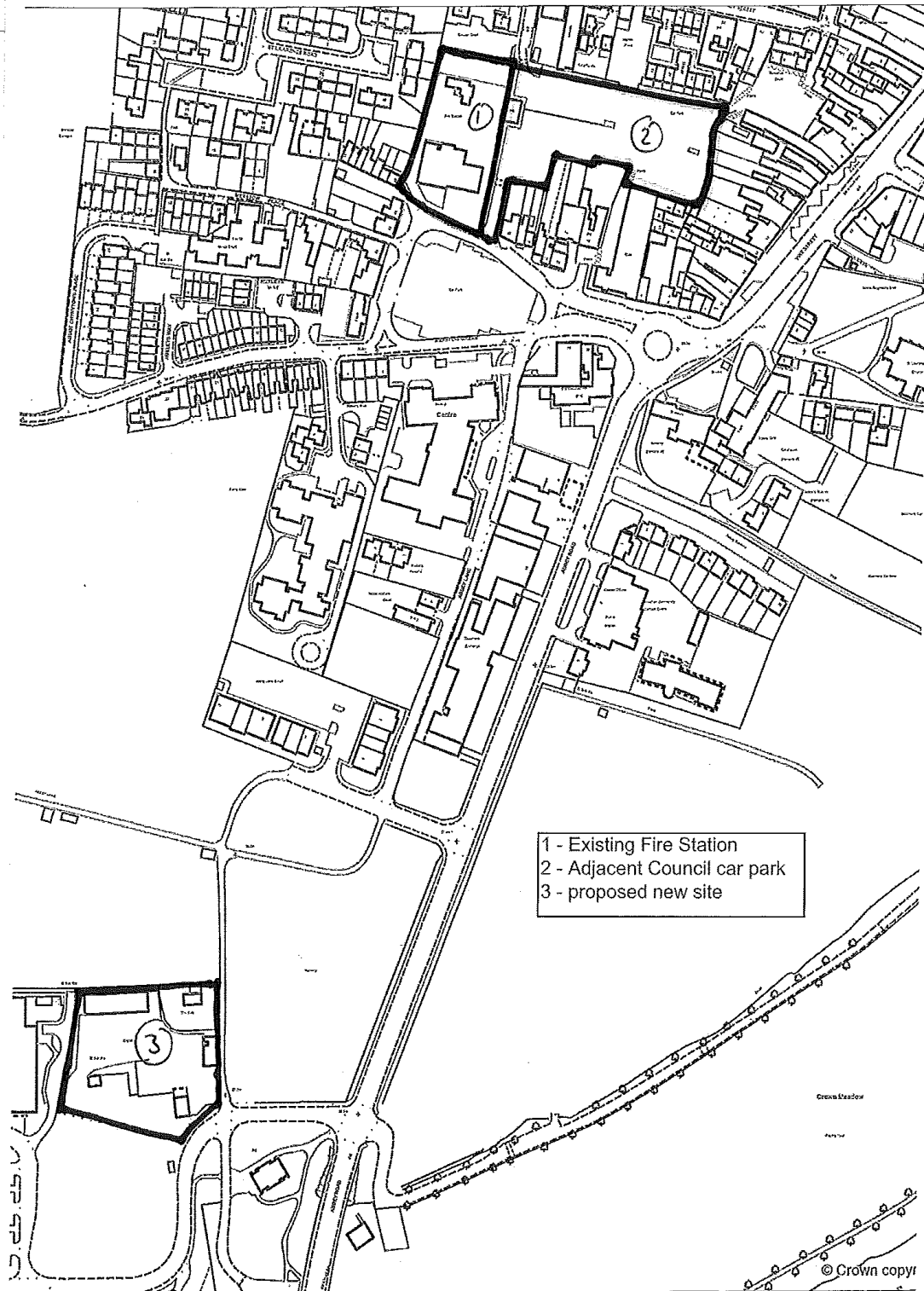
Appendix 1 – Location Map

Background papers – Minutes and report to Policy & Resources Committee 27.03.13

## **Contact Officer**

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## Report of Director of Service Delivery

### 8. Protective Security

#### Purpose of report

1. To inform the Committee of the intention to drive forward and resource the protective security agenda noting the organisational impact and benefits of this, in particular the Public Services Network (PSN) accreditation.
- 

#### Recommendations

*It is recommended it be noted that:*

- (i) ***a Service-wide programme is being undertaken to raise awareness of Protective Security issues; and***
- (ii) ***a scheme of capital improvements to enhance building security is to be undertaken and will be funded from the existing approved minor capital works budget.***

#### Introduction and Background

2. 'Protective Security' is the generic term used to describe the mitigating actions and policies required to meet a broad range of criminal and terrorist threats to an organisation. Across the UK every Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is involved in the protective security arena, both nationally and on an inter-agency basis locally.
3. The term Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) comprises of the facilities, systems, sites and networks necessary for the delivery of essential services upon which daily life in the UK depends. This is divided into nine national infrastructure sectors which provide these essential services: Communications, Government, Health, Energy, Transport, Finance, Water, Food and *the Emergency Services*
4. There are broadly 3 main categories of protective security into which an organisation can be divided and which capture the majority of our infrastructure related threats:
  - **Information Security:** such as ICT systems, data and paper systems.
  - **Personnel Security:** including HR related issues, contractor management, staff oversight and access by staff to critical systems and finance.
  - **Physical Security:** including not only assets such as building and vehicles, but clothing uniform, disposal of equipment and security of infrastructure and hardware from comms equipment to mobile phones.

5. A significant amount of guidance and policy has now been issued on these subjects including primarily the HMG Security Policy Framework, which was adopted and issued by CFA in 2013. The Service has been increasingly engaged with this agenda since 2007 including a well-established provision of nationally engaged Interagency Liaison Officers (ILOs or NIOs).

### **Interagency Liaison Officers (ILOs)**

6. This team of four Flexible Duty System (FDS) Officers is led by AC Jon Pryce who is also the Service nominated Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO). The SIRO is a board level nominated person to lead and account for the Service's compliance with protective security arrangements. The Service is engaged in the CFA national protective security forum.
7. The Service's four ILOs are all security cleared and can facilitate any matters or concerns regarding security related issues and the handling of sensitive information both during the early intelligence gathering stages of any operation and following any live incident.
8. Since 2008 the Service ILOs have been involved in a number of incidents – recent activities include:
  - West Midlands nail bomb attack
  - Essex flooding security related issue
  - Hostage situation
  - Illegal distillery
  - Land mines discovered
  - Bomb threats and IEDs discovered
  - Bomb making in domestic residences
  - Missing persons
  - Badger cull in Gloucestershire
  - Liaison with Police regularly at many operational incidents on security concerns.
  - Implemented regular program of training with West Mercia Police (WMP) Duty Inspectors
  - ILOs have developed good working relationships with WMP, Special Branch, Shropshire and Warwickshire FRS ILOs.
  - Training and exercising with WMP, Special Branch, Firearms teams etc.
  - Working with the UK Border Agency when raiding premises within our counties.
9. Alongside some of the excellent work and relationships built through the multi-agency ILO network, most recently within West Mercia Police, the Service has also made progress in many other areas of protective security.
10. For example, supported by the West Mercia Special Branch Security Advisor, a sample of the Service's Fire Stations were risk assessed for vulnerabilities which highlighted some areas of improvement. A programme of improvements to ensure compliance against the mandatory requirements of HMG's Security Policy Frameworks is now in place.

## **Protective Security for the Whole Service**

### **Areas of Good Practice**

- ICT have reviewed a number of practices and steadily improved the Service's security measures for the management of ICT resources. ICT have been proactive in aligning its working practices to industry best practice, security protocols and risk assessments.
- On fire stations key safes have been fitted in all appliance bays to remove the custom of leaving keys in the ignitions of appliances.
- Operational awareness in Fire Control (and HQ), and with FDS officers is high in regard to the role of the ILO and early involvement and consideration of protective security and associated risks. Significant work has taken place to 'flag' certain risks and incident types and this is well embedded.
- The Service has taken a proportionate and restrained approach to protective security and resisted expensive and time consuming measures that would be of little real benefit within HWFRS.

### **Areas Identified for Improvement**

11. The following areas have been identified where there is scope for sustained improvement:
  - Ongoing control and improvement of ICT hardware and mobile devices.
  - Physical security of fire station buildings
  - Disposal of marked assets (vehicles, uniform etc)
  - Awareness and culture of staff towards criminal threats

### **Conclusion/Summary**

12. Whilst the Service can make significant improvements and begin to achieve greater compliance against protective security guidance, it can also work towards future ICT and communications compliance under the same agenda with a focus on the following areas:
  - A programme to increase staff awareness of the protective security agenda will be undertaken with a focus more on sensible precautions and crime prevention.
  - Improvements in physical security measures across the Service's entire building stock through a capital improvement scheme.



13. It is considered that this investment in time, capacity and money is focussed on sensible and proportionate crime and risk prevention. Although the likelihood of high impact terrorist and extremist activity is less likely than in many other FRSs it cannot be ignored, and evidence has shown that events of this nature can and do occur within our counties.
14. The long term revenue costs of crime, alongside the reputational issues are worthy of investment in prevention alone. This ranges from physical security, to prevent building and equipment being stolen or tampered with, to preventing costly fines through poor management of data and information.

## Corporate Considerations

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   | This paper has several resource implications, including capital revenue and capacity resource requirements.   |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(Identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). | This paper meets the strategic demands of the Service and Authority in risk management, delivering a secure and robust service to the community and in meeting the expectations of central government.<br><br>This appear also supports the necessary areas to comply with PSN accreditation. |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b><br>(identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).   | A failure to continue to develop this subject area exposes the Service to some risk regarding expected compliance and reputation.   |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  | This paper has not been extensively consulted upon.   |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  | This paper affects the entire organisation and no specific E&D issues have been identified.   |

## Supporting Information

None

## Background Papers

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/255910/HMG\\_Security\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_V11.0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255910/HMG_Security_Policy_Framework_V11.0.pdf)

<http://www.cpni.gov.uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-protective-security-strategy-2012>

Guidance note issued to all staff

## Contact Officer

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## **Report of the Head of Legal Services**

### **9. Pensions Appeals Panel**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To recommend that the Committee establishes a Panel to consider and determine disputes in relation to Pensions Schemes.
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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the Committee establishes a Pensions Appeals Panel and approves the terms of reference for the Panel attached at Appendix 1.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. The Fire Authority as an employer is the 'manager' of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes 1992 and 2006 [and 2015]. As such, officers of the Authority make decisions under the pension scheme rules that may affect a member of the pension scheme, their dependents and/or beneficiaries.
3. The Fire Authority is required to have arrangements in place to resolve any disputes regarding pension scheme matters that may arise between the Authority and a person(s) with an interest in the pension scheme.

#### **Dispute Resolution**

4. The dispute process follows the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) that is relevant to the particular pension scheme. Disputes regarding the Firefighters' Pension Schemes have two stages. The first stage involves the grievance being considered by the Chief Fire Officer or his nominee. Should the person with the grievance remain dissatisfied, he or she may enter the second stage of the appeal process, which involves a hearing by Fire Authority Members. Any appeals against decisions based on medical advice would, however be considered by a board of medical referees and would not involve Authority Members.
5. Although the Authority has an IDRP in place there is no formal mechanism for the involvement of Authority Members to consider second stage complaints regarding Pensions Scheme decisions. As this Committee has responsibility to review certain matters in relation to staff, it is recommended that a Panel of 3 Members drawn from this Committee is established to consider second stage complaints under the IDRP.

## Conclusion/Summary

6. As an employer, the Fire Authority is the 'manager' of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes 1992 and 2006 [and 2015]. The Fire Authority is required to have arrangements in place to resolve any disputes regarding pension scheme matters that may arise between the Authority and a person(s) with an interest in the pension scheme.
7. The dispute process follows the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) that is relevant to the particular pension scheme. It is recommended that the Committee establishes a Panel to consider and determine disputes in relation to Pensions Schemes. This will provide a formal mechanism for the involvement of Authority Members to consider second stage complaints.

## Corporate Considerations

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   | There may be a small additional cost in relation to Members travel expenses to meetings. Any additional cost would be met within current budgets. |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). | No potential implications identified.   |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).  | N/A   |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  | Consultation is not required as the proposal is necessary to fulfil requirements under the Pensions Act 1995 s.50                                 |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  | No. The proposal does not introduce a new policy.   |

**Supporting Information**

## Appendix 1 – Pensions Appeals Panel Terms of Reference

## Background Papers

- Pensions Act 1995
- The Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulation 2008
- Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) Order 2006
- Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circular 1/2009

**Contact Officer**

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## **PENSIONS APPEALS PANEL**

### **Terms of Reference, Constitution, Rules and Procedures**

#### **Role**

1. The Panel shall consider and determine any second stage disputes regarding determinations made by the Authority under the Firefighters' Pensions Scheme Rules 1992 and 2006 [and 2015], except those relating to opinions based on medical advice.

#### **Constitution**

2. The Panel will comprise 3 Members of the Policy and Resources Committee, to include the Committee Chairman (or his nominee). The remaining two members will be selected by the Monitoring Officer by rotation.
3. Political balance will apply insofar as possible.
4. Substitution rules will not apply.

#### **Rules and Procedures**

5. The Panel Chairman shall be the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman (or his nominee).
6. The Panel will be advised by the Treasurer, Head of Legal Services and Head of Human Resources.
7. The appellant or aggrieved person(s) may attend the Panel meeting and may make any representations. The appellant or aggrieved person may be represented.
8. The Panel meetings will not be open to the public or other Members of the Authority due to the nature of the business, therefore the ordinary Access to Information Procedure Rules will not apply.

## **Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

### **10. Health and Safety Committee Update**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To provide an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the Committee note that the Health and Safety statistics indicate the Service has robust Health and Safety arrangements in place.***

#### **Introduction**

1. Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority's aim is ensure the safety and well-being of its employees and to reduce and prevent accidents and injuries at work.
2. The Health & Safety Committee (the Committee) is established to provide effective arrangements for the liaison and review of matters of a common interest in regards to health & safety (H&S), and to act as a forum for liaison on all matters relating to health & safety for key stakeholders and departments. The Committee provides the opportunity for the Service to discuss the general H&S matters on which it must consult the workforce with employee representatives.
3. The membership of the Committee has been recently reviewed and meetings are chaired by a Principal Officer (the Deputy Chief Fire Officer).
4. The Committee has the facility to task work to the Health & Safety Working Group (H&SWG), which sits beneath it and is chaired by the Area Commander Operations Support. The group meets as and when required but at least 6 monthly.
5. The Committee is due to meet again on 25 February 2015. An update of significant issues discussed will be provided in the next report.

## Corporate Considerations

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Resource Implications</b><br>(identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)   |                    |
| <b>Strategic Policy Links</b><br>(identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications). |                    |
| <b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).  | Removal of Y piece |
| <b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)  |                    |
| <b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)  |                    |

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 Health & Safety Performance Report Summary

### Contact Officer

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## Quarter 3 Health & Safety Performance Report Summary (Oct – Dec 2014)

A total of 30 H&S events were reported this quarter:

- 2 Cause for concerns (detail over page).
- 15 Vehicle accidents, none of which occurred whilst responding to incidents. All incidents caused minor damage to FRS vehicles only.
- 1 Safety critical equipment failures (detail over page)
- 2 Near hits
- 8 Personal injuries occurred:
  - 2 during training
  - 2 during operational activity
  - 1 non operational activity

## Quarter 3 Total Reported H&S Events

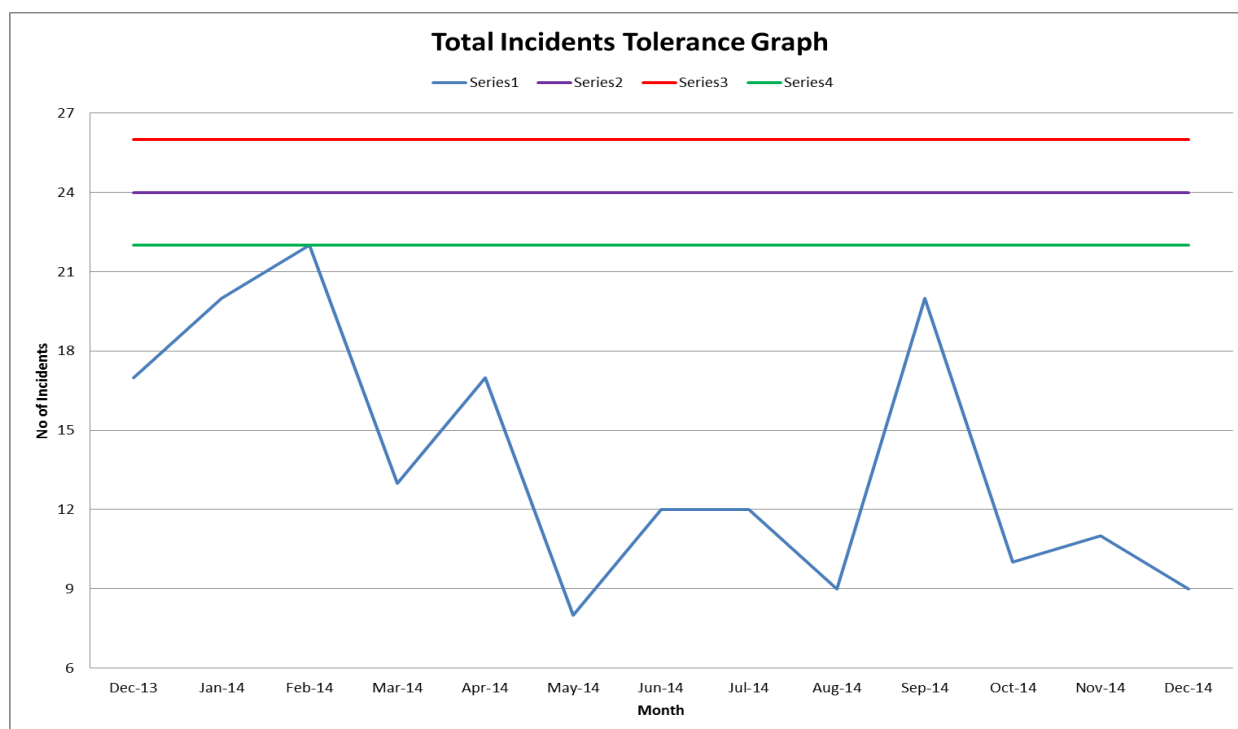


Figure 1 – Total events per month Dec 2013 to Dec 2014

**Summary** Total H&S events for this quarter show a downward trend.



## Quarter 3 Serious Events Reported

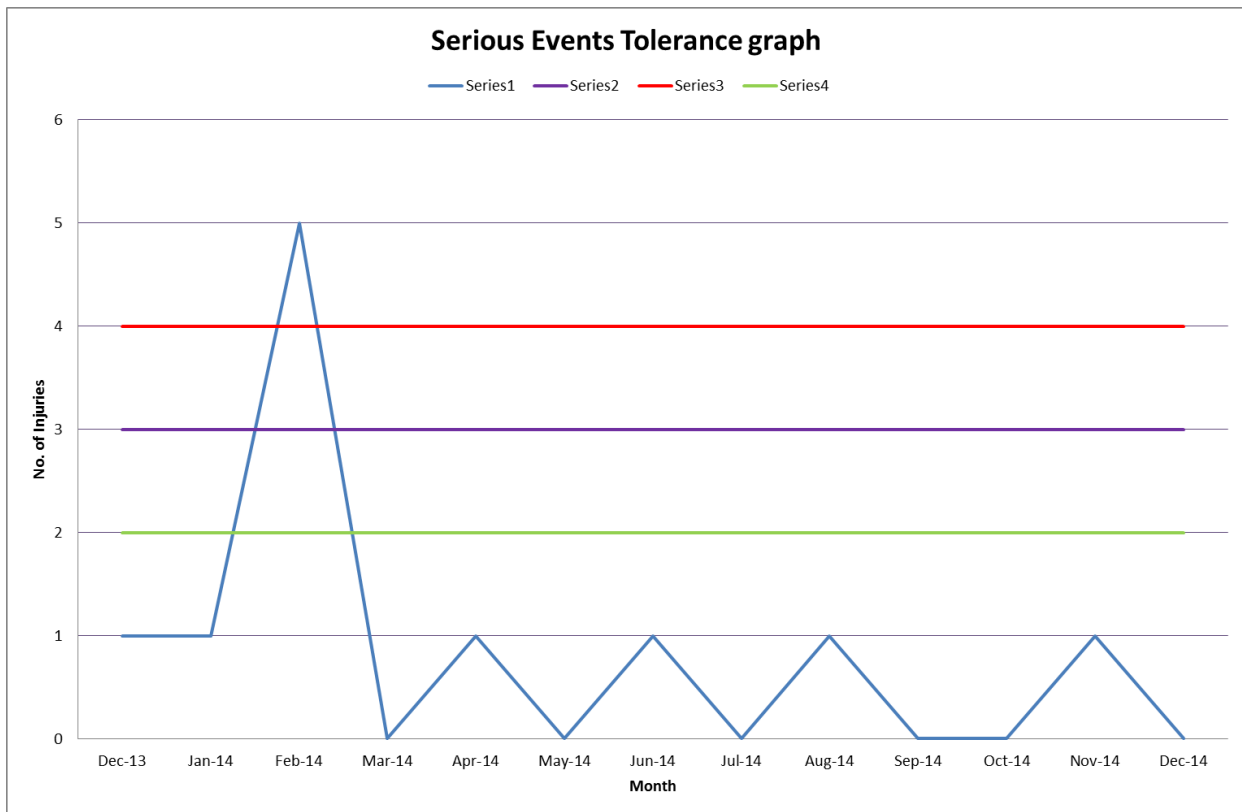


Figure 2 – Total events per month Dec 2013 to Dec 2014

**Summary** one potentially serious event this quarter (see below for details)

### **Significant/Serious Events**

*(Cause for concern)*

1. During a training event the Y piece that allows an additional mask to be fitted to a breathing apparatus set was used by a second wearer and on removal the valve remained in the open position. This resulted in an uncontrolled release of air.

**Action** – Removal of Y piece has been approved by SMB members

### **Potentially Serious Events**

*(Safety critical equipment failures)*

1. BA set 4AA1217 developed a leak from the first stage reducer. The set was impounded as per procedure and on investigation was found to have a small amount of wear on the “O” ring.

**Action** – Operational Logistics have checked all BA sets to check for similar wear and tear. The result of which was that this was a single event – no further action required.