



# **HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority**

## **AGENDA**

**Wednesday 11 December 2013  
10.30am**

Conference Suites 1, 2 and 3  
Headquarters,  
2 Kings Court,  
Charles Hastings Way,  
Worcester  
WR5 1JR



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

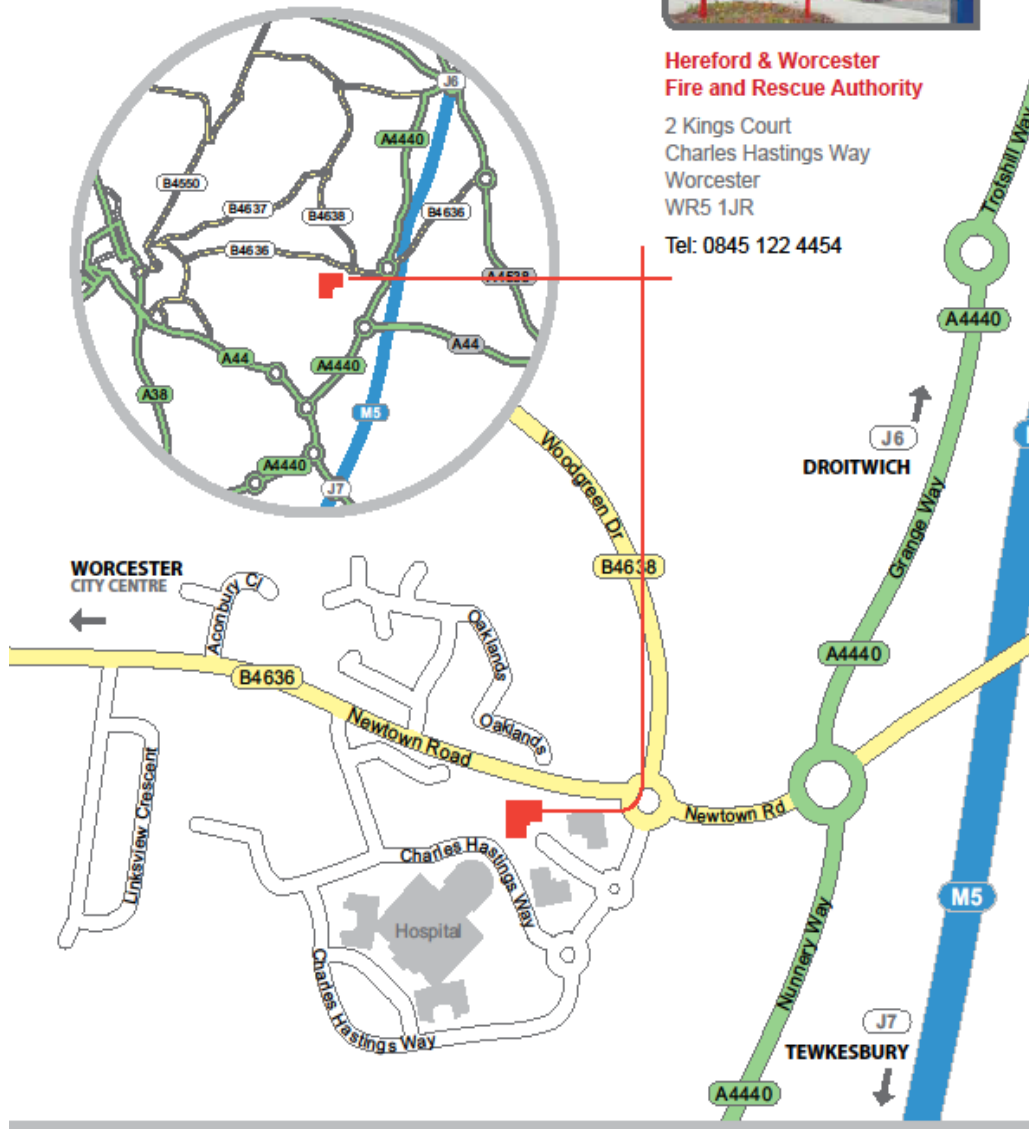
## Service Headquarters



### Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

2 Kings Court  
Charles Hastings Way  
Worcester  
WR5 1JR

Tel: 0845 122 4454



## **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 OPTIMUM 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 OPTIMUM 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.

## Agenda

### Councillors:

#### Herefordshire:

Brigadier P Jones CBE (Vice-Chairman), Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Mr B Matthews, Mr P Sinclair-Knipe, Mr D C Taylor and Mr P J Watts.

#### Worcestershire:

Mr R Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Mr M Broomfield, Mr S Cross, Mrs L Duffy, Mr A Fry, Mr P Gretton, Mr P Grove, Mr A Hardman, Mrs A Hingley, Ms R E Jenkins, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr S R Peters, Mr D W Prodger MBE (Chairman), Prof J W Raine, Mr C Taylor, Mr P Tuthill and Mr R Udall.

	Pages
<b>1. Apologies for Absence</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest (if any)</b>	
<b>3. Confirmation of Minutes</b> To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 3 October 2013.	<b>1 - 5</b>
<b>4. Chairman's Announcements</b>	
<b>5. Public Participation</b> To allow a Member of the public to present a petition, ask a question or make a statement relating to any topic concerning the duties and powers of the Authority. <i>Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal Services in writing or by email indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 2 clear working days before the meeting (in this case Monday 9 December 2013). Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed in the footnote below.</i>	
<b>6. Presentation – Kath Stanley – Ethical Framework</b> To receive a presentation from Kath Stanley, Senior Human Resources Advisor, on the ethical framework.	

<b>7. Financial Prospects 2014/15</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
To provide Members with a further update on developments on the funding position for 2014/15 and beyond.	
<b>8. Collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service</b>	<b>10 - 14</b>
To seek approval for the Chief Fire Officer to progress discussions with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding further options for collaboration.	
<b>9. Chief Fire Officer's Service Report</b>	<b>15 - 18</b>
To inform the Authority of recent key developments and activities.	
<b>10. FRA and Committee Dates 2014/15</b>	<b>19 - 21</b>
To inform Authority Members of the meeting dates for 2014/15.	
<b>11. Report from the Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>22 - 25</b>
To advise the Fire Authority of the proceedings of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 19 November 2013.	



## **Minutes**

### **Members present:**

#### **Herefordshire:**

Brigadier P Jones CBE, (Vice-Chair), Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Mr B Matthews, Mr D C Taylor and Mr P Watts.

#### **Worcestershire:**

(Chair) Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr R Adams, Mr M Broomfield, Mr S Cross, Mrs L Duffy, Mr A Fry, Mr P Gretton, Mr P Grove, Mrs A Hingley, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr S R Peters, Prof J W Raine, Mr C Taylor, Mr K Taylor, Mr P Tuthill and Mr R Udall.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Agar, A Amos, A Hardman, R Jenkins and P Sinclair-Knipe.

<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
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No declarations of interest were made.

<b>3.</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b>
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**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 18 June 2013 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Chairman's Announcements</b>
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The Chairman made the following announcements:

<b>1.</b>	<b><u>Chief Fire Officer</u></b>
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Members were advised that the Chief Fire Officer had recently been suffering from a painful back complaint which had been diagnosed as a prolapsed disc which necessitated surgery being undertaken on 1 October 2013. The Chief Fire Officer had intended to attend the meeting today to lead on the important strategic issues being considered. It was anticipated that the Chief Fire Officer would be working from home initially and would be back at his desk in around 3

to 4 weeks. His operational role was currently being covered by the Deputy and Assistant Chief Fire Officers and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer would be deputising for the Chief Fire Officer at the meeting today.

The Chairman would convey Members' best wishes to the Chief Fire Officer.

## 2. Strike Action

Members were updated on the current strike action that was affecting the Fire & Rescue Service as a result of the firefighters' pension dispute between the Government and the Fire Brigades Union. Members were advised that at agenda item 10 the Deputy Chief Fire Officer would provide Members with an overview of the contingency arrangements that were in place across the two counties. The Chairman commended all members of staff for the way in which they had handled the strike.

## 3. Worcestershire Medals and Awards Ceremony

The Worcestershire Medals and Awards Ceremony had been held on Friday 20 September 2013 at the Guildhall in Worcester. Members were advised that it had been a very positive event where members of staff were recognized for long service and meritorious acts. The Service had also given awards to members of the public who had put others' safety ahead of their own. The event had been attended by local dignitaries including the Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff and the Mayor of Worcester.

## 4 Communication – Members

Members were reminded to check emails regularly as this was the main form of communication used by the Authority. Members were also reminded that if they had changed their email address to let Committee Services know so that their records could be updated.

## **5 Public Participation**

No applications to participate in the meeting had been received from members of the public.

## **6 Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a report that gave details of the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2014-2020. An addendum to Appendix 1 of the report was circulated around the table.

The report recommended that the CRMP be issued for consultation for a period of 12 weeks, subject to approval by the Fire and Rescue Authority.



An amendment to the recommendation contained within the report was proposed by Councillor R Udall, Leader of the Labour Group as follows:

“Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority requests the Chief Fire Officer to write to all Members of Parliament for the two counties seeking their support to urge the Secretary of State to reverse the funding cuts to the Fire Authority which are having such a harmful and damaging impact on our ability to provide operational fire cover within the two counties.”

Upon a vote the amendment was not supported.

**RESOLVED that the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020 be approved for consultation.**

## **7 Potential Combination with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a report that sought approval for the Chief Fire Officer to progress discussions with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding future options for combination.

A lengthy debate ensued on the merits of the proposal to enter into discussions with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service. However Members perceived that they required further information before they could support Officers entering into such discussions.

**RESOLVED that the matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority.**

## **8 Appointment of Chair of Young Firefighters' Association (YFA) Executive Committee**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report that asked the Fire and Rescue Authority to appoint a Member of the Authority to be Chair of the Young Firefighters' Association (YFA) Executive Committee.

The Leader of the Labour Group proposed that Councillor A Fry be appointed and the Vice-Chairman of the Authority proposed that Councillor A Hingley be appointed.

Upon a vote the proposal that Councillor A Hingley be appointed as Chair of the YFA Executive Committee was supported by a majority of Members present.

**RESOLVED that Councillor Anne Hingley be appointed to be the Chair of the Young Firefighters' Association Executive Committee.**

## **9 Annual Statement of Assurance**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report that asked the Authority to adopt the draft Statement of Assurance 2013-14 and approve it for publication.

**RESOLVED that the Authority adopts the draft Statement of Assurance 2013-14 and approves it for publication.**

**10 Chief Fire Officer's Service Report**

Prior to considering the Chief Fire Officer's report the Deputy Chief Fire Officer gave members an update on the recent strike action which had taken place. Members were advised that the situation was ongoing and the dispute between the Government and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) was continuing. It was noted that during the four hours of strike action on 25 September 2013 there were only 4 fire calls of which two calls were challenged and two were attended. Relationships with staff and the local community however remained positive.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the Chief Fire Officer's Service report that informed the Authority of recent key developments and activities. The report also proposed that in the future Members be provided with more timely and appropriate Service information and that the details provided in the report should instead be provided via the Members' Bulletin with enhanced notification of any significant operational matters.

Members discussed the merits of receiving information via the Members' Bulletin and preferred instead that they continue to receive a Chief Fire Officer's Service report at meetings of the Authority.

**RESOLVED that: (i) the report be noted.**

**(ii) Chief Fire Officer's Service Reports to continue to be reported to Authority Meetings.**

**11 Amendment to Scheme of Delegation to Officers**

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that advised the Authority of a proposed change to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

A Member requested that all delegated decisions be reported back to the Authority in the Chief Fire Officer's Service Report. Following discussion on this matter it was agreed that this would be an item for discussion at a future Group Leaders' meeting.

**RESOLVED that the Scheme of Delegations to Officers be amended to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to approve early retirements, in consultation with the Chairman and Treasurer in the case of employees whose salary is less than £45,000 and where the pension costs do not exceed £45,000.**

**12 Report from Policy and Resources Committee**

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee presented a report that advised the Fire Authority of the proceedings of the Policy and

Resources Committee meeting held on 4 September 2013.

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

**13 Report from Audit and Standards Committee**

The Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee presented a report that advised the Fire Authority of the proceedings of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 26 September 2013.

Members' attention was drawn to the fact that the Authority's external auditors had issued an unqualified opinion on the accounts which had been approved. The improvement made by officers in the paperwork submitted for approval of the accounts was noted and Members were advised that the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2012/13 had also been approved.

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

The meeting finished at 12.45 pm

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

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

Chairman

## **Report of the Treasurer**

### **7. Financial Prospects 2014/15**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To provide Members with a further update on developments on the funding position for 2014/15 and beyond.
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#### **Recommendation**

***The Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer recommend that the report be noted.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. This report provides all Members with information provided to the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee on 19 November 2013 and takes an initial look beyond the current Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period.
3. The Authority approved a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in February 2013, which identified future gaps in budget due to the reductions in funding from grant and restrictions on Council Tax increases.
4. This position was modified in July following the publication of revised figures for 2014/15 and indicative figures for 2015/16. This formed the basis of the detailed context for the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) consultation proposals.
5. There are no further updates on figures until:
  - a. Final grant figures – expected 22/23 December 2013
  - b. Indicative Council Tax-base and Business Rate Yield – late December 2013
  - c. CRMP decision – February 2014
  - d. Updated Authority view on Council Tax increases
6. As a consequence this is a holding report pending receipt of this key data and a full update at the next Policy and Resources Committee on 28 January 2014, and a Seminar for all Members on the 30 January 2014.

#### **Current Medium Term Financial Plan**

7. The current position is summarised below, but it should be noted that the items listed under Actions already taken, in the table below, form part of the £2.7m non-front line savings envisaged in the CRMP document and are not additional savings. This still leaves £1.9m savings to be identified.

	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
<b>Budget Gap – Feb 2013</b>	<b>1.102</b>	<b>3.085</b>	<b>4.099</b>
<b>Updated Budget Gap – CRMP Oct 2013</b>	<b>1.375</b>	<b>3.227</b>	<b>4.725</b>
<u>Actions already taken:</u>			
Merger of USAR/Droitwich	(0.300)	(0.300)	(0.300)
Support Staff Reviews	(0.249)	(0.249)	(0.249)
2013/14 Expenditure budget savings	(0.278)	(0.278)	(0.278)
Other Support Staff reviews	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)
<b>Residual Gap</b>	<b>0.521</b>	<b>2.373</b>	<b>3.871</b>

8. For information the Budget gap sensitivity for key assumptions is summarised below. This is the increase/ (reduction) in the gap from changing assumptions.

	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
Increase Council Tax by 2% instead of freezing	(0.371)	(0.749)	(0.798)
Consequential loss of freeze grant #	0.210	0.420	0.420
<b>Net Reduction in GAP</b>	<b>(0.161)</b>	<b>(0.329)</b>	<b>(0.378)</b>
Provision for Pay Awards at 1% instead of 2%	(0.180)	(0.640)	(0.760)
1% greater grant cut each year	0.100	0.205	0.295

# The freeze grant is lost if the Authority makes any increase in precept

9. The risks associated with the assumptions were discussed by the Policy and Resources Committee in recommending the MTFP to the Authority.

### Beyond the current MTFP

10. Whilst it is very likely that there will be continuing grant cuts and Council Tax restraint beyond the current (extended) CSR period, i.e. after 2016/17, no firm information is available on how grant will move

11. Indications from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) are for reductions continuing on the same scale, as in this CSR period. The latest indicative figures from DCLG for 2015/16 show a net grant reduction of just over 8% for this Authority, and this has been used as the assumption for future years.
12. Based on the following assumptions a projection for the next 3 years is given in the table below:
- a. 8% per year net grant cut
  - b. Pay Awards at 2% per year
  - c. Council Tax increasing by 2% per year
  - d. No further major buildings projects

	2016/17 Budget £m	2017/18 Forecast £m	2018/19 Forecast £m	2019/20 Forecast £m
<b>Forecast Resources</b>	<b>(30.597)</b>	<b>(30.196)</b>	<b>(29.871)</b>	<b>(29.616)</b>
<b>2016/17 Core Budget</b>	<b>30.597</b>	<b>30.597</b>	<b>30.597</b>	<b>30.597</b>
<b><u>Cost Pressures</u></b>				
Pay Awards		0.454	0.918	1.392
General Inflation Contingency		0.250	0.500	0.750
LGPS Back Funding		0.042	0.057	0.072
Removal of Pensions Contracting Out		0.360	0.360	0.360
Capital Programme		0.036	(0.031)	(0.042)
<b>EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>30.597</b>	<b>31.739</b>	<b>32.401</b>	<b>33.129</b>
<b>RAW GAP</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.543</b>	<b>2.530</b>	<b>3.513</b>

13. This projection assumes also that the £4.7m savings required in the current MTFP are made. I.e. the £3.5m saving projected to be required by 2019/20 is a further £3.5m in addition to the £4.7m in the current MTFP.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	None

## Supporting Information

None

## Contact Officer

Martin Reohorn  
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(01905 368205)  
Email: mreohorn@hwfire.org.uk

## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

### 8. Collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

#### Purpose of report

1. To seek approval for the Chief Fire Officer to progress discussions with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding future options for collaboration.
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#### Recommendations

##### *It is recommended that:*

- i) A joint officer project team be established with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service to examine the feasibility and potential benefits of collaboration; and*
- ii) The Chief Fire Officer makes recommendations to the Authority based upon the project team's work.*

#### Background

2. A previous report on this matter was deferred at the last meeting of the Authority because Members required further information. At the time, the Authority was also awaiting the outcome of a Government grant application to the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) towards the costs of the proposed project team. Further to this matter being discussed and deferred at the FRA's previous meeting FRA Group Leaders have been consulted to establish the required information to allow Members to reconsider the matter; this paper reflects that information.

#### Reasons for the proposal

3. As Members are aware, due to cuts in government funding and the effects of Council tax freezes, the Authority faces an extremely challenging financial situation. We have already made savings of approximately £2.5m over the last two years, including significant amounts from back office and support functions. However, it is projected that the Authority will need to reduce its annual expenditure by a further £4.7m by 2016/17. It is estimated that approximately £2m of this can be found from further reductions in back office and support services and the proposals in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for changes to fire cover, if fully implemented, would generate a further £2m of savings. However, this still leaves a shortfall on the anticipated funding gap.



4. Furthermore the above figures only cover the period to 2016/17. We know from Government announcements that restrictions on public sector funding are likely to continue until at least 2020, and even if this Authority receives what could be considered a favourable grant settlement for the next two years it therefore appears inevitable that the Authority will need to find further significant savings beyond those currently envisaged in the CRMP. Unless alternatives are identified, those savings will almost certainly impact on front line service delivery. This report is about exploring one of those alternatives.

## **Collaboration**

5. Collaboration with other services has proven beneficial in terms of standardising procedures, improving interoperability and improving operational resilience and can generate modest savings in areas such as joint procurement or limited sharing of back office services.
6. Following an initial approach from Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding the potential for collaboration, our Treasurer and the Finance officer from Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service have carried out a preliminary review of the cost options should any further investigations indicate the FRA may wish to consider a combination. Any further investigative work would of course include the benefits of collaboration short of a combination.
7. A key principle that has been adopted for this consideration is that there would be no increase in Council Tax for either set of tax-payers.
8. As Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is an integral part of the County Council there is no separate council tax for fire. Some costs attributable to the Fire and Rescue Service are budgeted elsewhere within the County Council's budget, and it will be necessary to fully extract these to get a full picture. The information available to date together from an initial desk-top exercise, suggests that annual savings of £2 - £2.5m could be achieved through closer collaboration but this would be dependent on the scale and manner of collaboration.
9. The proposed review will establish the actual level and practicality of these savings.
10. It is believed at this stage that closer collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service may benefit both Authorities through:
  - reduction in the number of Principal Officers and other senior positions;
  - reorganisation of command structures;
  - improved operational resilience;
  - greater efficiency in the use of training facilities;
  - further economies of scale in back office and support service functions; and
  - joint procurement.
11. Clearly there are a number of key areas that would need to be investigated and the degree to which collaboration between the two Services could be

recommended would depend upon satisfactory answers to these investigations.

### **Arrangements with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service**

12. Collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service need not affect existing collaborative arrangements with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, which would continue and indeed be expanded to be a three service collaboration. However, an assessment of the possibility for combination with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service suggests that this is not currently feasible because their Council tax precept for 2013/14 is £15.02 (20%) more than that of this Authority. Savings of approximately £2.1m would therefore be needed from any new Authority to equalise the Council tax before even addressing any potential savings. However, this would not preclude future joint collaborative working, short of combination, either between Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service or between Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Shropshire and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service.

### **Working with Warwickshire**

13. Members will be aware from the report to the last meeting that work on possible collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service was previously undertaken in 2007-9 but it was decided not to proceed with the project at that time.
14. A number of factors appear to have changed since 2009:
  - Initial investigation suggests that finances are now better aligned than in 2009 and that the council tax elements relating to the each of the two services are now very similar;
  - there has been considerable organisational development and improvement within Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service since the Atherstone-on-Stour incident;
  - both Authorities now face more pressing financial imperatives to identify further savings to allow both Services to be sustainable into the medium term future; and
  - The 'Sir Ken Knight Review' earlier this year recommended that where Fire and Rescue Authorities can provide business cases for local collaborative solutions showing clear, achievable efficiencies, central government should step forward to provide financial support for transition.

## **Proposed Way Forward**

15. In order to properly investigate and assess the opportunities for collaboration with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service it is proposed to establish a joint project team with officers drawn from each Service. As previously reported, an application was made to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for Government grant to fund this project. Since the last meeting of the FRA the Service has been notified that the grant application was not successful. Feedback has been received from DCLG officials that over 100 bids were made for the fund which would have been over-subscribed many times over and although our bid was of merit, on this occasion, there were no funds to support it. Officers have therefore reappraised how best to undertake the investigative work.
16. Should Members approve the recommendations contained in this paper it is proposed that the Project Team of three seconded officers from this Service would carry out investigations with a similar team from Warwickshire. An invitation would also be given to Shropshire should that service wish to be part of collaborative investigations. Dependent on the skills within the overall team an independent team leader may be sought.
17. It is anticipated that the work would be completed within 12 months and the cost would be contained within existing budgets. An alternative to containing within existing budgets would be to fund the work from the existing £400,000 'Development Reserve' which Members have previously identified and set aside for capacity building and 'invest to save' type initiatives such as this. Should this reserve be utilised it is anticipated that the figure would be approximately £75,000.

## **Conclusion/Summary**

18. This report is about undertaking the work necessary to identify whether closer collaboration would be in the best interests of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, in order to maintain the best possible Fire and Rescue Services across our two counties and if so, what form that might take.
19. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority faces a challenging financial environment and will need to make future savings beyond those currently envisaged in the CRMP. Collaboration with Warwickshire and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services is a potential means of achieving some of those savings. However, a detailed assessment of operational feasibility and costs would be necessary. This work can be undertaken using funds previously identified and set aside by Members for such purposes or if necessary containing the costs within existing budgets.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	If the outcome of further discussions leads to future recommendations for collaboration resource implications will be fully scoped and reported back to the Authority.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The recommendation contained within this report directly links to the Authority's Core Purpose 'providing our communities with sustainable high quality firefighting, rescue and preventative services'.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Not applicable at this stage.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Not applicable at this stage but if a more formal collaboration with Warwickshire FRA were to be recommended then public consultation may be required depending upon the nature of the proposals.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Not applicable at this stage.

## Supporting Information

### Background papers

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority Agenda, Papers and Minutes:  
27 September 2007, 13 December 2007, 16 June 2008, 19 December 2008, 18 February 2009, 3 October 2013.

### Contact Officer

Mark Yates, Chief Fire Officer  
(Tel. 01905 368201)  
Email: myates@hwfire.org.uk

## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

### 9. Chief Fire Officer's Service Report

#### Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Authority of recent key developments and activities.
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#### Recommendation

***The Chief Fire Officer recommends that the report be noted.***

#### Items of Interest

##### Croft Farm Leisure Park

2. At 00:57 hours on Sunday 24 November, crews from Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service were called to a large fire at Croft Farm Leisure Park, Bredons Hardwick, Tewkesbury. The fire involved approximately 50 towing caravans and mobile homes in storage. No persons needed rescuing in the incident, but several propane cylinders stored within the caravans were involved. Crews prevented fire spreading to a 2000 litre LPG storage vessel using water jets and a ground monitor. At the height of the fire, 10 pumping appliances were in attendance as well as a Water Carrier, Environmental Protection Unit and Command Support Unit. The fire was contained on site and was not a risk to the surrounding local population. Crews remained on scene through the night damping down and turning over.

##### New Firehouse Training Facilities at Peterchurch Fire Station

3. A demonstration of the new Firehouse and training facilities at Peterchurch fire station was held on Saturday 9 November and was attended by various Herefordshire Councillors and Parish Councillors including FRA Members and Jesse Norman MP. The event started with a brief introduction to the history and purpose of the facility and practical demonstration that was supported by Training Centre instructors and crews, both wholetime and retained fire fighters from Hereford and Peterchurch stations. This firehouse allows the burning of real wood and provides realistic conditions for fire fighters in which to train. Attendees had the opportunity to tour the firehouse before the fires were lit, and observe first-hand the conditions produced. Jesse Norman MP then took the opportunity to wear fire kit and breathing apparatus and enter the firehouse whilst the fires were burning to witness the conditions from inside the building at close quarters.

4. The demonstration provided an opportunity to witness the range and quality of training that can be provided by this type of facility, which does not only provide training in hot fire scenarios, but also road traffic collisions (RTC), sewers, confined spaces and rescues from heights. Those who attended gained a real insight into how this significant investment by the Authority in our training facilities provides an efficient and effective training model and leads to providing our communities with well trained, safe and highly skilled staff.

#### Award Ceremonies

5. The Annual Medal and Award Ceremonies were again split this year between Hereford and Worcester. The Worcestershire Medal and Award Ceremony took place at Worcester Guildhall on Friday 20 September 2013. The Herefordshire Medal and Award Ceremony took place on Friday 22 November 2013 at Hereford Town Hall.
6. Various awards were presented to Service personnel including Long Service and Good Conduct Medals, 30 Year Awards, Outstanding Service Medals, Silver Axe for the Top Recruit and the High Sheriff Awards for the YFA and community volunteer. Chief Fire Officer Commendations and Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to both members of the Service and members of the community who had performed brave and meritorious acts. The events were attended by a range of dignitaries including the Lord Lieutenants and High Sheriffs of both counties, the Chairman on the FRA as well as representatives from partner agencies and the Mayors of both Hereford and Worcester.

#### Wiseman Dairies

7. The Service attended a significant incident at approximately 10.00pm on Monday 14 October 2013. This was a major fire at Wiseman Dairies milk processing plant in Hampton Lovett near Droitwich Spa and was brought under control at approximately 2.00am on 15 October. The Wiseman plant is an extremely large operation employing over 700 people and operating a large fleet of delivery vehicles
8. The fire was both large in scale and complexity as a number of on-site hazards impacted on firefighting operations. There was also quite difficult access to the fire compartments. The fire originated in an electrical switch room on the second floor but spread to adjacent compartments on either side and below.
9. In all 10 fire engines were required to fight the fire along with specialist foam units, the Command Support Unit and an Aerial Ladder Platform. Overall around 75 firefighters attended this serious fire. Crews in breathing apparatus were committed to the building to extinguish the fire which was contained to areas of the second and first floor. Crews worked in very arduous conditions and through their excellent and professional work prevented the fire spreading to the main building which is over 200 metres long. The highly professional and tenacious firefighting actions of our crews and officers ensured that this large and extremely challenging fire was tackled successfully and ultimately saved the significant majority of this building.

10. Members may be aware that the Service actively gathers risk information for premises across our two Counties to assist fire fighters in their tactical decisions and to ensure they can be aware of building layouts and hazards prior to arrival and during actual operations. As a result of this risk intelligence process the Service has well documented information for the Wiseman site which is readily available to attending crews and this was used to good effect to assist dealing with the fire and to prevent a more catastrophic escalation that could have impacted on the local area.

#### BA Challenge

11. On Saturday 12 October 2013 two teams from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service competed in the National BA Challenge at the Fire Service College. In total, 19 teams from around the country took part in the challenge which tested members on their ability to resolve 30 minutes time scenarios involving building fires with multiple persons reported.
12. The standard was extremely high and resulted in a very close result with teams being split by a matter of a handful of points from the hundreds available.
13. I am pleased to report that this year the HWFRS teams achieved good results both in terms of finishing positions as well as Worcester RDS team being awarded the Best BA Wearers & the Best Entry Control Officer of the whole competition. Worcester RDS achieved 7th place overall. This is without doubt great recognition of the skills and professional abilities demonstrated by our crews on a daily basis.
14. Events such as the BA challenge are an excellent way of developing knowledge and skills and also showcasing the professionalism of our personnel to the wider fire service community.
15. I would like to congratulate both teams and all of the organisers/assessors on their performances and thank them for representing the Service at this event.

#### Animal Rescue Stations

16. HWFRS has historically responded to large animal rescue incidents utilising existing equipment. In 2008 the Chief Fire Officers Association National Animal Rescue Practitioners Forum was established in recognition that fire and rescue services were becoming increasingly involved in such rescues. HWFRA considered large animal rescue incidents as part of the cost recovery review in 2011 and agreed to continue to carry out this function at no cost to animal owners.
17. A recent project has reviewed existing HWFRS policies, training and mobilising criteria for large animal rescue incidents and as a result the Service now has two stations (Pershore and Bromyard) specifically trained and equipped to deal with rescues involving large animals. In addition to these animal rescue teams, all operational staff are receiving a basic level of refresher training in the subject and there are a number of personnel who have become animal rescue instructors.

18. The animal rescue stations went live in September 2013 and have already improved the safety of firefighters and members of the public involved in such incidents whilst reducing the number of resources initially required to be sent to the scene

#### Improving Efficiency, Interoperability and Resilience of our Blue Light Services

19. A national report was published in June 2013 entitled “Improving Efficiency, Interoperability and Resilience of Our Blue Light Services” which was authored by Tobias Ellwood MP and Mark Philips on behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Homeland Security.
20. It is unclear how much influence the report will have on government policy and strategy and therefore it is difficult to predict the exact implications for this Authority. Some of the recommendations in the report are radical and would require a complete change in direction from the government. There would also be a need to amend primary legislation for some of the recommendations to be implemented.
21. The report covers six main areas:
- Emergency Services Landscape;
  - Emergencies and the Role of Central Government;
  - Increasing Tri-service Cooperation;
  - Improving Local Resilience;
  - Merging the Fire and Ambulance Services; and
  - Protecting Critical Sectors.
22. The report states that improving the interoperability of the country’s resilience capability is long overdue and that over the past decade incidents of all scales have demonstrated persistent policy, cultural and technical shortcomings in the ability of different departments and agencies to work together despite the professionalism and dedication of individual staff.
23. This report is brought to Members’ attention as it is part of a widespread debate on the future of emergency services and the Fire and Rescue Service.
24. It is anticipated that the Government will produce a white paper which will outline their response to the “Facing the Future” report (which has previously been reported to the FRA) and it is likely that this paper will indicate how much weight government has given to “Improving Efficiency, Interoperability and Resilience of Our Blue Light Services”
25. The full report can be viewed at [http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Blue-light-Report\\_LR.pdf](http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Blue-light-Report_LR.pdf).

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## Report of Head of Legal Services

### 10. FRA and Committee Dates 2014/15

#### Purpose of report

1. To inform Authority Members of the meeting dates for 2014/15.
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#### Recommendation

***It is recommended that the attached dates are noted.***

#### Introduction and Background

2. The Authority sets its meeting dates in December.
3. These meeting dates have been checked with Worcestershire County Council and at the time of writing this report there are no clashes.
4. However, as Herefordshire Council have not as yet confirmed their meeting dates we have requested that they take our dates into account when setting the dates of their meetings.

#### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None

<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation with Senior Management Board Members
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Not applicable

### **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 –Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue 2014/15 dates.

Background papers - None

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**2014-15 Meeting Dates for the Fire Authority**

<b><u>Meetings 2014-15</u></b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>P &amp; R</b>	<b>2 June 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>9 June 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>Audit &amp; Standards</b>	<b>30 June 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>P &amp; R</b>	<b>10 September 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>Audit &amp; Standards</b>	<b>24 September 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>1 October 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>Brockington</b>
<b>P &amp; R</b>	<b>19 November 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>10 December 2014</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>Audit &amp; Standards</b>	<b>21 January 2015</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>18 February 2015</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>P &amp; R</b>	<b>25 March 2015</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>
<b>Audit &amp; Standards</b>	<b>15 April 2015</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>HQ</b>

## **11. Report from the Policy and Resources Committee**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To advise the Fire Authority of the proceedings of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 19 November 2013.
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### **Recommendation**

***The Policy and Resources Committee recommends that the contents of the report be noted.***

### **Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) – External Consultation**

2. The Committee met in scrutiny mode to hear representations from Town and Parish Councils affected by the CRMP proposals.
3. Representatives of the following Councils attended:  
  
Bewdley Town Council  
Evesham Town Council  
Ross on Wye Town Council  
Ledbury Town Council  
Tenbury Town Council
4. The Chamber of Commerce was also invited but did not attend.
5. The Policy and Resources Committee resolved that a summary of the representations made by the invited speakers be submitted as part of the Community Risk Management Plan consultation process.

### **Asset Management Strategy**

6. A report was presented by the Treasurer that updated the Fire Authority on the progress made in the delivery of the Service's Asset Management Strategy to replace five fire stations and build four strategic training facilities.
7. Members were advised that when the Policy and Resources Committee approved the indicative budget allocations for the programme of capital building schemes in March 2011 a funding gap of £4.4m had been highlighted. The Treasurer advised that the funding gap had now been closed.
8. The Committee resolved that the progress in the delivery of the Asset Management Strategy be noted.

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

9. The Treasurer presented a report that informed Members of an option to replace Hereford Fire Station and gain approval to proceed up to planning approval stage with the project, at which time final approval to complete the project would be requested from the Policy and Resources Committee.
10. The Policy and Resources Committee noted the progress made in potentially securing a project to deliver a new fire station in Hereford at Herefordshire Council's Bath Street offices site in Hereford. Officers were authorised to enter into further negotiations with Herefordshire Council and the Chief Fire Officer was authorised in consultation with Chair of the Authority and the Treasurer to spend the allocated budget on work to take the project to planning approval stage. It was also agreed that a further papers, including a detailed cost feasibility would be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee for final approval before entering into a contract for acquisition of the site.

## **2013/14 Budget Monitoring – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter**

11. The Treasurer presented a report that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2013/14.
12. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## **Financial Prospects 2014/15**

13. The Treasurer presented a report that provided Members with a further update on developments on the funding position for 2014/15 and beyond.
14. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## **Employment Monitoring Data 2012/13**

15. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report that outlined the Employment Monitoring data that had been prepared for publication on the Service website.
16. Members' attention was drawn to one concern which related to the number of retained duty staff (RDS) leaving the Service. Members were advised that this situation would be closely monitored.
17. The Committee approved the Employment Monitoring Data Report 2012/13 and approved publication on the Service's website.

## **Progress of the Retained Duty System (On Call Implementation Plan)**

18. The Head of Community Risk and Training presented a report that provided the Policy and Resources Committee with a report on the progress and delivery of the third and final year of the Retained Duty System (RDS) Implementation Plan.
19. Members were advised that as a result of the Implementation Plan a better structure was in place that was better managed and supported.

20. The Committee noted the progress of the Retained Duty System (On Call) Implementation Plan.

### **Quarters 1 and 2 Performance and Health and Safety Reports 2013-14**

21. The Head of Corporate Services presented a report which summarised Quarters 1 and 2 performance against the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2013-14 and a summary of health and safety incidents occurring within Quarters 1 and 2.
22. The Committee noted the following headlines taken from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarters 1 and 2 2013-14 and Appendix 2 relating to health and safety events in Quarters 1 and 2 2013-14:
- (i) the total number of incidents attended in Quarters 1 and 2 2013-14 is the lowest Quarter 1 and 2 total in the seven years that the current data set has been collected;
  - (ii) the Service also attended the lowest Quarters 1 and 2 totals of special service (non-fire emergencies) and False alarms in the last seven years;
  - (iii) although the number of fires attended in Quarters 1 and 2 2013-14 have increased when compared to the same quarters last year, the total is still less than the average number of fires attended in Quarters 1 and 2 of the last five years; and
  - (iv) the Service has also seen reductions in the number of injuries from primary fires and injuries from accidental dwelling fires with no injuries reported from accidental dwelling fires in May and June 2013. There were three fatalities from primary fires in Quarters 1 and 2 2013-14.

### **Primary Authority Scheme (PAS)**

23. The Head of Community Risk and Training presented a report that provided Members with details of the Primary Authority Scheme.
24. The PAS was introduced under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 to provide a statutory platform for partnerships between enforcement authorities and business trading across local authority boundaries. The scheme offered local authorities and businesses a framework for a partnership arrangement, thereby delivering reliable, coordinated and consistent advice, from a single point of contact, reducing the regulatory burden. Importantly the scheme provided for new funding arrangements, allowing local authorities to consider recovering costs from partner businesses.
25. The Committee noted the contents of the report and it was noted that a further update would be received in early 2014.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

## Supporting Information

Background papers – Agenda and Papers Policy and Resources Committee 19 November 2013

## Contact Officer

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