



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Full Authority

AGENDA

Tuesday, 15 February 2022

10:30

**Wyre Forest House Council Chamber
Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House,
Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 7WF**

Wyre Forest House Location Map

SAT NAV: DY11 7FB

Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF
Reception at Wyre Forest House 01562 732101

From Stourport:

Head towards Kidderminster on the A451 Minster Road, passing Stourport High School and Stourport Sports Club on your left. When you reach the traffic lights at the crossroads, turn left into Walter Nash Road West (signposted Wyre Forest House). Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.

From Kidderminster:

From Kidderminster, follow the signs for Stourport and head out of Kidderminster on the A451 Stourport Road, this road becomes a dual carriageway. You will pass 24/7 Fitness and Wyre Forest Community Housing on your left. At the crossroads with traffic lights turn right into Walter Nash Road West (there is a dedicated right hand-turn lane), signposted for Wyre Forest House. Then take your first left onto Finepoint Way. Follow the road around to your left and Wyre Forest House is at the end of the road on the left. Visitor parking is available and signposted from the mini roundabout.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 15 February 2022, 10:30

Agenda

Councillors

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

No.	Item	Pages
1	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	
2	Declarations of Interest (if any) This item allows the Chairman to invite any Councillor to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.	
3	Chairman's Announcements To update Members on recent activities.	
4	Public Participation To allow a Member of the public to present a petition, ask a question or make a statement relating to any topic concerning the duties and powers of the Authority. Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal Services in writing or by email indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation to be received no later than 2 clear working days before the meeting (in this case 10 February 2022). Further details about public participation are available on the website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone numbers/email listed below.	

5	Confirmation of Minutes	1 - 5
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021.	
6	Budget and Precept 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan	
	Details	
7	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Report and Improvement Plan	6 - 52
	To update Members on the outcome of the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report and the preparation of an improvement plan.	
8	Attendance Performance Measure	53 - 57
	This report is seeking permission from the Fire Authority to undertake public consultation on a new Service Attendance Performance Measure as outlined in the 2021-25 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).	
9	Replacement Mobilising System Reserve Budget	58 - 60
	To seek the Authority's authorisation to begin spend against the Fire Control Reserve to procure a replacement mobilising system for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).	
10	Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023	61 - 71
	To present the Pay Policy Statement for 2022-2023 for approval and publication on the Authority's website.	
11	Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23	72 - 76
	To propose an increase in the allowances paid to Members for 2022/23 and that future increases be linked to the National Joint Council annual pay award (if any) for 'Green Book' staff.	
12	Fire Authority and Committee Dates 2022/23	77 - 79
	To inform Authority Members of the meeting dates for 2022/23.	
13	Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee	80 - 84
	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022.	
14	Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee	85 - 88
	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2022.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Thursday, 16 December 2021, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright, Mr S Bowen, Mr D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Mrs E Marshall, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

335 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Brookes, Cllr K Guthrie, Cllr N McVey, Cllr R Morris and Cllr D Toynbee.

336 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book) and represented the Fire Authority as a director of Place Partnership Ltd.

337 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced to Members that he had recently attended the Medal and Award ceremonies at the Town Hall in Hereford and the Guildhall in Worcester.

The Chairman invited the Chief Fire Officer to provide an update for Members on recent key events.

The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that following the meeting there was a seminar on the attendance measures and then discussed the recent large fire at a Carpet Warehouse on the Hoo Farm industrial estate in Kidderminster. He confirmed that it was not suspicious and although

was not a major incident this time, it was still the same scale of fire as the previous one in the area. The Chief Fire Officer praised the efforts of the crews who did a superb job of controlling the fire as there was a significant high risk of other businesses being lost when the wind changed direction. It took just under 2 weeks to put the fire out completely.

Members passed their congratulations to all the crews involved and were pleased to note that the drones proved to be an asset to look at neighbouring buildings. On behalf of the residents of Kidderminster and Wyre Forest, the crews were thanked for their incredible effort on the Park Street fire and this recent fire.

338 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

339 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

340 Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – Quarter 2

The Treasurer presented Members with the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22. This report was due to be presented at the recent Policy and Resources Committee, however the meeting had been cancelled and it was agreed to provide the information to the full Authority.

Members noted the new Revised Core Revenue budget of £35.356m which took into account the temporary increase in Fire Control staffing in preparation for the replacement Fire Control project. and the net Revenue overspend of £0.026m.

With regard to the Capital budget, Members noted that the budget available to be spent at the start of 2012/22 was £5.094m of which £2.412m had occurred.

Members were pleased to note that there had been no additional long term borrowing.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) approved the revised Core Revenue Budget at £35.356m; and

ii) noted the net Revenue overspend of £0.026m.

341 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position about information available to support the 2022/23 budget and MTFP, and also sought delegated authority to enter a future Business Rates Pool.

Members were made aware that indications of council tax base changes and collection fund figures for Council Tax and Business rates were still awaited, it was hoped that there would have been an update for today's meeting. The Business rate yield information was not usually expected until mid January.

Further updates would be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee as information on the grant settlement emerged.

Members were asked to give delegated authority to enter into future Business Rates pools if appropriate, to avoid the use of the Urgent Decisions process which had been used in previous years.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) noted that the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and its impact on the emerging MTFP was still awaited;

ii) noted that the Policy and Resources Committee would receive a full report as more information was available;

iii) noted the decision taken under the urgent business procedure for the Authority to participate in the business rates pooling for 2021/22; and

iv) give delegated authority to the Treasurer to determine whether to participate in business rate pooling arrangements for future years.

342 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Cause of Concern Action Plan

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the progress in implementing the Prevention Action Plan following the Cause of Concern issued by HMICFRS after the 2021 inspection, letter dated 29 June 2021.

Members were reminded of the email they received yesterday relating to the new HMICFRS review. This report was for Members to note the progress that had been made up to October 2021 and that the overall action plan was on target to be completed by July 2022.

Members also noted that the full HMICFRS inspection report would be

published in December 2021, a full review of feedback and recommendations would be prioritised, with action plans produced as appropriate, which would be reported at the Fire Authority Meeting in February 2022.

[Cllr Hart left the meeting at 11.26am and returned at 11.28am.]

RESOLVED that the Authority notes progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Cause of Concern Action Plan.

343 2021-22 Performance Report: Q2 (1 July – 30 September 2021)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 2 2021-22.

There was a query with regard to Building fires as it was felt the information provided did not adequately reflect the scale of the Fire and Rescue Service's response to fires. It was suggested to add the scale of the fire and the number of appliances attended. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer suggested additional text could be added to further reports and the Chief Fire Officer would add further comment at meetings.

There was a query with regard to diversity in the workforce. The Chief Fire Officer reported that there was a new training programme to be issued throughout the workforce and assured Members that the Service was fully committed to increase diversity. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed to Members that they would recommend to the Audit and Standards Committee that there be two EDI Champions, rather than the current one, to assist with the ongoing work.

RESOLVED that Members note the Q2 2021-22 performance headlines set out in Section 4 of the report, with further details available in Appendix 1.

344 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 September 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 September 2021 be received and noted.

345 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 11:59

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Report of Assistant Director: Prevention

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

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the outcome of the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report and the preparation of an improvement plan.
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Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the findings of the HMICFRS inspection report and the proposed improvement plan.

Introduction and Background

2. Members will be aware that Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) was inspected by officers from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) during April and May 2021.
3. HMICFRS announced their intention to begin to re-inspect all 44 fire and rescue services in England in three tranches. HWFRS was inspected as part of the first tranche of twelve services with final reports published on 15 December 2021.
4. The inspection focused on three main questions:
 - a. How **effective** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
 - b. How **efficient** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
 - c. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its **people**?
5. The inspection involved reviewing the Service's policies, plans and procedures, the submission of a Position Statement and Self-Assessment completed by the Chief Fire Officer, and a six-week remote fieldwork phase. The fieldwork was all completed remotely via video conferencing, during which inspectors interviewed employees from six wholetime fire stations and six on-call stations, held several focus groups with members of staff across the whole organisation and conducted interviews with senior managers.
6. As you are aware the Authority received prior notice that the Inspectorate had issued a Cause of Concern in relation to prevention activity. Members have been updated on progress against the Cause of Concern Action Plan separately.

7. HMICFRS have concluded their inspections of all twelve services in the first tranche and their overall State of Fire 2021 report has now been published along with individual reports for each service. The reports were published on 15 December 2021 and are available on the [HMICFRS website](#). The report for HWFRS is attached as Appendix 1.

Summary of Feedback

8. Using graded judgements against areas explored in the inspections, HMICFRS identified four overall judgement categories:
- **outstanding** – where the service exceeds what is expected for good,
 - **good** – the expected graded judgement for all fire and rescue services,
 - **requires improvement** – where there are shortcomings, and
 - **inadequate** – where there are serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance.
9. The following table lists the distribution of gradings awarded to the twelve services inspected in tranche one 2021 with the 2018/19 scores in brackets for comparison.

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	People
Outstanding	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Good	4 (6)	2 (4)	5 (4)
Requires Improvement	8 (6)	9 (7)	7 (7)
Inadequate	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)

10. The overall summary of inspection findings for Hereford & Worcester FRS states:

“I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. And I am encouraged by the improvements the service has made in certain areas since our last inspection. However, there remain areas where it needs to improve.”

11. The individual gradings against the three areas examined were as follows:

a. Effectiveness: Requires improvement

“The service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. It is also good at responding to major and multi-agency incidents. That said, the service requires improvement in its understanding and prevention of fires and other risks. It also requires improvement in how it responds to fires and other emergencies.”

b. Efficiency: Requires improvement

“The service displays some sound financial management. But it requires improvement at making best use of resources. It needs to show a clear rationale for allocating resources between its activities, and this should be in line with the risk and priorities as described in the CRMP. The service needs a testing programme for its business continuity plans. And it needs to better monitor, review and evaluate the benefits and outcomes of future collaborations.”

c. People: Requires improvement

“Staff have a good understanding of the service’s values, which are well defined. The service should make sure that senior managers are visible and model service values.”

Improvement Plan

12. The inspection report highlighted one Cause of Concern and twenty-two Areas for Improvement (AFI) and recommended that action be taken to address them.
13. Therefore, the Service is now in the process of reviewing the feedback received and collating improvement action plans to address the findings. The Service will prepare an improvement plan for Members to consider at the next full Fire Authority meeting in May 2022.
14. The Improvement Plan will be owned by senior managers and will be regularly updated and published as progress is made. Proposals will be assessed to ensure they meet the Service’s overall Core Purpose and align to the core strategies
15. The Cause of Concern is being reported on separately via the Audit and Standards Committee.

Conclusion/Summary

16. The HMICFRS inspection report for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has been published.
17. The report highlighted a number of areas for improvement, which form the basis of an Improvement Plan to be considered by Members at the next Fire Authority Meeting in May 2022.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The report highlights areas for improvement in relation to effectiveness, efficiency and the Service workforce. Actions to address these areas are likely to have resource implications, and these will be considered through the action planning phase.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Proposals developed through the Improvement Plan are likely to have an impact on both the CRMP and the MTFP. Proposals will also be assessed to ensure they meet the Service's overall Core Purpose and align to the core strategies.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through the Improvement Plan.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None directly. Proposals developed through the Improvement Plan will consider any consultation requirements as necessary.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An EIA is not required as part of this report. EIAs will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	A DPIA is not required as part of this report. DPIA's will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – **Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22:** Effectiveness, efficiency and people:
An inspection of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22

Effectiveness, efficiency and people

An inspection of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service



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About this inspection

This is our third inspection of fire and rescue services across England. We first inspected Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service in July 2018, publishing a report with our findings in December 2018 on the service's effectiveness and efficiency and how it looks after its people. Our second inspection, in autumn 2020, considered how the service was responding to the pandemic. This inspection considers for a second time the service's effectiveness, efficiency and people.

In this round of our inspections of all 44 fire and rescue services in England, we answer three main questions:

1. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
2. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
3. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

This report sets out our inspection findings for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

What inspection judgments mean

Our categories of graded judgment are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.








Good is our expected graded judgment for all fire and rescue services. It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant [national operational guidance](#) or standards.





If the service exceeds what we expect for good, we will judge it as outstanding.







If we find shortcomings in the service, we will judge it as requires improvement.

If we find serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, we will judge it as inadequate.

Overview

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 Effectiveness	 Requires improvement	Good
Understanding fires and other risks	 Requires improvement	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Protecting the public through fire regulation	 Good	Good
Responding to fires and other emergencies	 Requires improvement	Good
Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	 Good	Good

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 Efficiency	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Making best use of resources	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Future affordability	 Requires improvement	Good

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 People	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Promoting the right values and culture	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Getting the right people with the right skills	 Requires improvement	Good
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Managing performance and developing leaders	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement

HMI summary

It was a pleasure to inspect Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service again. I want to thank the service for working with us by accommodating the virtual approach of this inspection. Inspections usually take a hybrid approach but inspecting during the pandemic meant we had to adapt. I also want to recognise the disruption caused by the pandemic. This has been considered in our findings.

I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. And I am encouraged by the improvements the service has made in certain areas since our last inspection. However, there remain areas where it needs to improve.

The service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation, and at responding to major incidents. But it needs to have a better understanding of fires and other risks. It also needs to be better at both preventing fires and responding to fires and other emergencies.

The service displays some sound financial management. And its medium-term financial plan (MTFP) takes a prudent approach to government funding, given that the full impact of the pandemic is unknown. But the service still needs to improve its use of resources. It is financially secure but could do more to plan for future financial challenges. The service is developing a plan for the use of its [reserves](#). It should regularly review its fleet and estate strategies.

We are encouraged by the improvements the service has made since our last inspection. It now actively considers the relationship between technology, future innovation and risk. Its [fire control](#) mobilising system has moved to West Mercia Police headquarters, and the service is seeking to use changes in technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. But it has limited capacity and capability to bring about sustainable future change.

The service needs to improve how it treats its people. This includes promoting the right values and culture, and getting the right people with the right skills, as well as looking at performance management and talent development. I note that the service needs to do more to make the service a fair place to work and to promote diversity, and with better communication between senior leaders and staff. The newly established senior leadership team should look to provide opportunities to improve the culture of the organisation.

Overall, I require improvements in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's effectiveness and efficiency, and in how it treats its people. I look forward to assessing progress at our next inspection.



Wendy Williams

HM Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Service in numbers



Response

Hereford and
Worcester

England

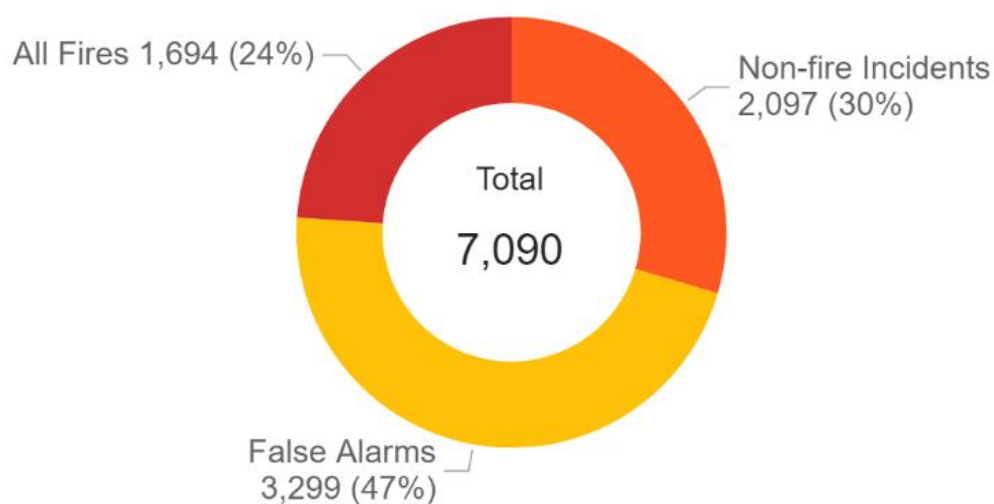
Incidents attended per 1,000 population Year ending 31 March 2021	8.96	9.16
Home fire safety checks carried out by fire and rescue service per 1,000 population Year ending 31 March 2021	2.95	4.47
Fire safety audits per 100 known premises Year ending 31 March 2020	3.41	2.55
Average availability of pumps Year ending 31 March 2020	78.70%	83.07%



Cost

Firefighter cost per person per year Year ending 31 March 2020	£22.74	£23.82
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Incidents attended in the year to 31 March 2021





Five-year change in total workforce
2015 to 2020

-8.07%

-5.30%

Number of firefighters per 1,000
population
Year ending 31 March 2020

0.75

0.63

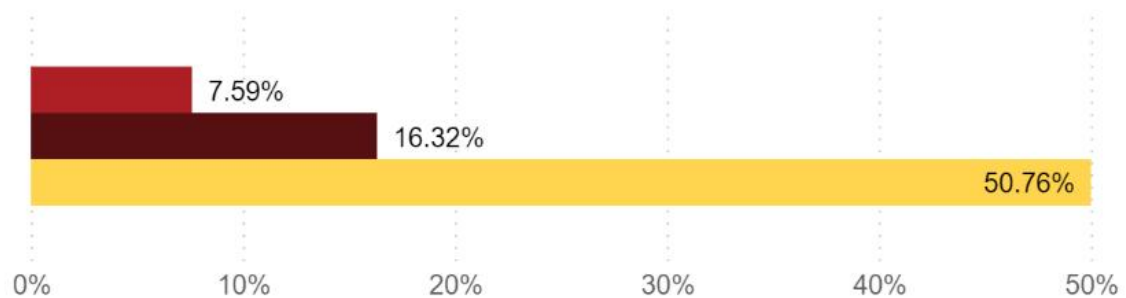
Percentage of firefighters who are
wholetime
Year ending 31 March 2020

37.97%

65.10%

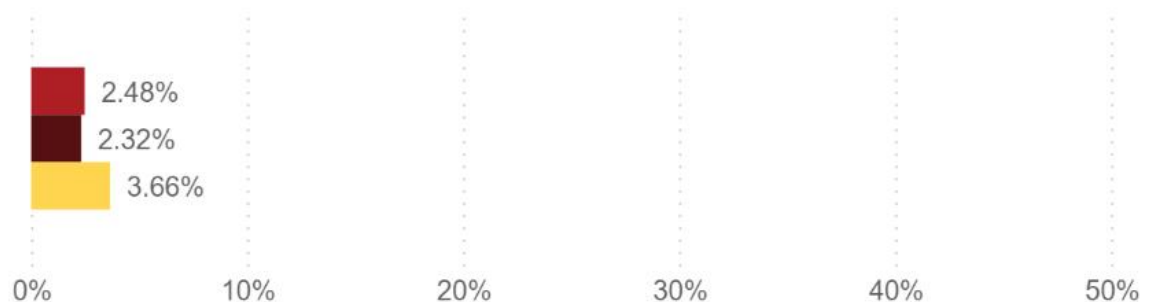
Percentage population, firefighters and workforce who are female as at 31 March 2020

Female ● Firefighters ● Workforce ● Local population



Percentage of population, firefighters, and workforce who are Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) as at 31 March 2020

BAME ● Firefighters ● Workforce ● Local population



For more information on data and analysis throughout this report, please view the [‘About the data’ section of our website](#).

Effectiveness



How effective is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Requires improvement

Summary

An effective fire and rescue service will identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks its community faces. It should target its fire prevention and protection activities to those who are at greatest risk from fire, and make sure fire safety legislation is being enforced. And when the public calls for help, respond promptly with the right skills and equipment to deal with the incident effectively. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness requires improvement.

The service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. It is also good at responding to major and multi-agency incidents. That said, the service requires improvement in its understanding and prevention of fires and other risks. It also requires improvement in how it responds to fires and other emergencies.

Specifically, the service needs to make sure its prevention, protection and response activity are better defined in its community risk management plan (CRMP). It also needs to make sure that firefighters have good access to temporary risk information.

The service needs to adequately identify those who are most at risk from fire, and effectively target its prevention activity. It should also evaluate its prevention work so that it understands what works. This is a cause of concern.

The service works well with other agencies to regulate fire safety. It is good at responding to building regulation consultations. And its staff work well with business owners. Now the service needs to make sure that it has an effective quality assurance process and makes appropriate use of its enforcement powers.

The service's response strategy needs to give the most appropriate response for the public, in line with the community risk management plan. We note that the service has yet to introduce an effective system for staff learning and debriefs. Finally, the service needs a deeper understanding of, and a plan for, adopting [national operational guidance](#), as well as improved understanding of marauding terrorist attacks (MTAs).

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies



Requires improvement (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at understanding risk.

Each fire and rescue service should identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks that could affect its communities. Arrangements should be put in place through the service's prevention, protection and response capabilities to prevent or mitigate these risks for the public.

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure that the aims and objectives of prevention, protection and response activity are clearly defined in its community risk management plan (CRMP).
- The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date temporary risk information.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service is good at identifying risk in the community, but doesn't use this information well

The service has assessed an appropriate range of risks and threats through its community risk management planning process. When assessing risk, it has considered relevant information collected from a broad range of internal and external sources and data sets. For example, it considered information from the Office for National Statistics, Worcestershire and Herefordshire councils, and socio-economic population data.

Since we last inspected, the service has made progress in how it works with the local community to build its risk profile. When appropriate, the service has consulted and undertaken a constructive dialogue with staff, communities and others including businesses, local authorities and West Mercia Police. The service made good use of a variety of ways to communicate (such as focus groups, social media, letters and videos) to reach all parts of the community. It did this to both understand the risk and explain how it intends to mitigate it.

However, we found that the service doesn't effectively use this risk profiling in its prevention, protection and response activities.

The service doesn't clearly set out how it will deliver its CRMP

After assessing relevant risks, the service has recorded its findings in the community risk management plan (CRMP). But the plan doesn't fully identify how the risks will be mitigated. It doesn't give timescales or identify the resources (such as staff or finances) needed to carry out the actions to mitigate the risks. The plan does not detail how the service intends to use its prevention, protection and response resources to mitigate or reduce the risk and threats to the community. The service doesn't have strategies that are clearly linked to the CRMP. Also, the CRMP doesn't yet specify the end results the service will use to measure the plan's success.

The service has some systems in place to identify changes to risk levels in the future. For example, it looks at themes from operational incidents and societal data. But the use of this information to inform service plans isn't yet clearly established.

The service could improve the way it manages temporary risk information

The service routinely collects and updates the information it has about the people, places and threats it has identified as being at greatest risk. Since our last inspection, the service has made progress on the area for improvement identified relating to the site-specific risk information process. The service now updates information daily on fire engine [mobile data terminals](#). Also, the service has a co-ordinated programme of re-inspections taking place. These daily updates of the terminals and regular re-inspections enable staff to identify, reduce and mitigate risk effectively.

The service has arrangements in place to gather information, such as evacuation strategies during familiarisation visits to high-rise residential flats. It is also recording risk information relating to [vulnerable](#) members of the community (including hoarders), to support its response in the event of an incident.

However, the service uses a manual system to collect and update temporary risk information (such as information about sporting events or festivals, or oxygen storage). This system needs better control and scrutiny. We found that some risk information was missing, outdated or was very limited for fire crews who may have to respond to an incident at the location.

The service doesn't consistently use emerging information from operational activity to inform its understanding of risk

We found limited evidence that the service learns from and acts on feedback from either local or national operational activity. We reviewed several significant incidents and identified that the service wasn't collecting or sharing debrief information throughout the organisation.

Likewise, we found limited evidence that this information was being used to regularly update risk assessments or inform the assumptions made in the CRMP. The service has station risk plans to support the CRMP, but staff aren't aware of the information contained within the station plans. Also, the plans aren't aligned to the latest CRMP.

As a result, the service is missing the opportunity to review risk assessments or inform the assumptions made in the CRMP.

The service has used learning from the Grenfell Tower inquiry to reduce risk

During this round of inspection, we sampled how each fire and rescue service has responded to the recommendations and learning from phase one of the Grenfell Tower fire inquiry.

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has responded to learning from this tragedy. The service has:

- assessed the risk of each high-rise building in its service area;
- carried out fire safety audits; and
- collected and passed relevant risk information to its prevention, protection and response teams about buildings identified as high risk and all high-rise buildings using cladding that is similar to the cladding installed on Grenfell Tower.

The service has developed an action plan. This is derived from a gap analysis of the inquiry recommendations, to update emergency response plans and work more closely with building owners.

Preventing fires and other risks



Requires improvement (2018: Requires improvement)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at preventing fires and other risks.

Fire and rescue services must promote fire safety, including giving fire safety advice. To identify people at greatest risk from fire, services should work closely with other organisations in the public and voluntary sector, as well as with the police and ambulance services. They should provide intelligence and risk information with these other organisations when they identify vulnerability or exploitation.

Cause of concern

Prevention activity is not a sufficiently high priority for the service and it is not adequately identifying those most at risk from fire.

Recommendations

By 31 August 2021, the service should have plans in place for:

- an effective system to define the levels of risk in the community;
- the development and delivery of a prevention strategy that prioritises the people most at risk of fire and ensures that work to reduce risk is proportionate; and
- the review of systems and processes for dealing with referrals from partner agencies. This is to make sure they are managed effectively and the backlog of [safe and well visits](#) is reduced and resourced in accordance with risk.

Area for improvement

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

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service has made no progress since our previous inspection in 2018 on how it targets its prevention activity

Since we last inspected the service in 2018, it still doesn't have a clear, risk-based approach that enables it to direct prevention activity towards the people most at risk from fire and other emergencies.

The service isn't effectively using data sources and risk profiling to target its prevention activity. There is limited monitoring of risk or partnership working to make sure it is effectively identifying risk and driving activities. The prevention department is working in isolation, rather than with operational firefighters, and therefore has limited knowledge of fire station risk profiles or what activities firefighters are doing (or could do) to target risk.

The service doesn't have a prevention strategy that clearly links to the CRMP

The service doesn't have a prevention strategy or departmental plan that sets out how it will target those most at risk from fire in its communities. Therefore, it isn't clear how prevention activity links to the risks and priorities in the community risk management plan (CRMP).

Prevention work generally happens in isolation, and we found little evidence of relevant information being shared between the service's prevention, protection and response functions. The service has a specialist prevention team, but this has

limited capacity. We found very little evidence that operational firefighters carry out prevention activity in a co-ordinated way. At the time of our inspection, operational crews had stopped doing [home fire safety checks \(HFSCs\)](#) (other than after a fire). This was due to the pandemic. The service doesn't sufficiently measure or evaluate prevention activity. Outputs for both HFSCs and safe and well visits are low compared to other similar fire and rescue services.

As a result, vulnerable people and others may not be getting the support they need.

The service has made limited progress since the COVID-19 inspection

We considered how the service had adapted its prevention work during our COVID-19 specific inspection in October 2020. At that time, we found it had adapted its public prevention work appropriately. However, the service has made limited progress to reduce the 591 outstanding HFSCs it had at the time of the inspection (in May 2021).

The service has put some mitigation measures in place. These include temporarily employing extra people to reduce the backlog, and contacting those who are awaiting HFSCs to see if their circumstances had changed. However, it will take several months for the service to complete this outstanding work. Firefighters stopped doing HFSCs in February 2020. The service will need to reinstate the training that firefighters had completed in preparation for starting safe and well visits that year if they are to do this work.

Prevention staff are confident in carrying out safe and well visits and HFSCs, but firefighters don't currently do this work

Prevention staff told us they have the right skills and confidence to undertake HFSCs and safe and well visits. These checks cover an appropriate range of hazards that can put vulnerable people at greater risk from fire and other emergencies.

The service has improved staff understanding of vulnerability

Our 2018 inspection included an area for improvement for the service to ensure staff understand how to identify vulnerability and [safeguard](#) vulnerable people. Since that inspection, the service has made improvements in its safeguarding training and procedures. When we interviewed staff for this inspection, they told us that they feel confident and have been trained to act appropriately and promptly in response to safeguarding concerns. They knew how to identify safeguarding issues and were aware of the processes to follow.

The service works well with others to reduce the number of fires and other risks

The service works with a wide range of other organisations including Baywater Healthcare, Wye Valley NHS Trust and Wychavon District Council to prevent fires and other emergencies. It routinely refers people at greatest risk to other organisations which may be better able to meet their needs. These organisations include domiciliary care services, social services, and occupational therapists.

Arrangements are in place to receive referrals from others such as telecare providers, housing services and carers associations. The service acts appropriately on the referrals it receives.

The West Mercia police and crime commissioner has commissioned the service to jointly deliver a road safety project with other organisations. The project is called #MORSE (Making Our Roads Safer for Everyone). Early evaluation of this scheme is showing positive results. We are keen to understand if this activity is successful in reducing the number of people who are killed or seriously injured on the roads in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The service is good at tackling fire-setting behaviour

The service has a range of suitable and effective interventions to target and educate people of different ages who show signs of fire-setting behaviour. This includes the service's juvenile fire-setter programme. Last year the service received 30 referrals for this scheme. It did interventions online at schools and youth clubs, as it couldn't make home visits during the pandemic.

The prevention team has an arrangement in place for arson prevention. This includes identifying derelict properties and areas of fly tipping, and monitoring incidents to identify issues, trends and hot-spot areas.

The service doesn't routinely evaluate its prevention activity

Since we last inspected the service in 2018, we are disappointed to find limited evidence that the service has improved how it evaluates the effectiveness of its activity. Similarly, there is limited evidence that the service makes sure its targeting of prevention activity meets the needs of its communities.

We did find that the service commissioned the University of Worcester to evaluate safe and well visits before the intended service-wide activity for crews. Despite limited responses from the public, some recommendations were made from the evaluation. However, the service has made few improvements in light of the recommendations.

The service doesn't have clear reporting on the performance and evaluation of prevention activity. And it should develop stronger links with the communications department to promote safety campaigns and evaluate their effectiveness. This means that the service doesn't know if the work it is doing is benefiting the public, and so it can't make continuous improvements.

Protecting the public through fire regulation



Good (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation.

All fire and rescue services should assess fire risks in certain buildings and, when necessary, require building owners to comply with fire safety legislation. Each service decides how many assessments it does each year. But it must have a locally determined, risk-based inspection programme for enforcing the legislation.

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure that it has an effective quality assurance process in place, so that staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.
- The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce the risk.
- The service should ensure it effectively addresses the burden of false alarms.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service aligns protection activity to risk, but doesn't clearly link to the CRMP

The service's risk-based inspection programme is focused on the service's highest-risk buildings. The audits we reviewed were completed in the timescales the service has set itself.

The amount of unsatisfactory fire safety audits completed by the service, which is higher than the England average, suggests that it is targeting effectively. Unsatisfactory audits are those requiring some form of intervention to improve fire safety compliance in premises. The completion of these audits and required remedial action should make buildings safer for the people who use them. However, the service doesn't have a protection plan that clearly sets out how it assesses risks, or how it targets its enforcement and inspection activity. The service has defined 'high risk', has set annual targets for audits, and is targeting premises through its risk-based inspection programme. But it doesn't have a protection plan clearly linked to the risks identified in its CRMP.

COVID-19 impact on protection

We considered how the service had adapted its protection activity during our COVID-19 specific inspection in October 2020. At that time, we found it was slow to suitably adapt its protection work for the public. The service suspended its risk-based inspection programme, but didn't replace it with a suitable alternative risk-based approach (such as introducing desktop reviews).

During this inspection, we are encouraged to see that the service has developed a remote desktop audit process, based on national guidance. It has also completed the audits that were deferred during the pandemic. It completed them using desktop and face-to-face audits.

The service has increased its levels of protection resources

Our 2018 inspection included an area for improvement for the service to ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised, risk-based inspection programme.

The service has made good progress with increased staff numbers and competency levels. Further improvements are underway: 32 [watch](#) commanders are studying for level 3 fire safety qualifications; and a further 11 members of staff are studying for a

[level 4 diploma](#). We will be interested to see how effectively the service uses this additional capacity in the future.

The service is meeting its annual revisit for the 340 premises in Herefordshire and Worcestershire that it has determined to be high risk. The service has set a target of 750 audits per year from 2020 onwards.

The service has taken appropriate action to inspect aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding and other high-rise buildings

The service has carried out inspections at all ten high-rise buildings within its service area. It identified one building as having ACM cladding, similar to the cladding installed on Grenfell Tower. The service gathered information during these inspections, and has made the information available to response teams and control operators. This will enable them to respond more effectively in an emergency. The service has also developed a computer-based training simulation of the building with ACM cladding, so that incident commanders can carry out training.

The service works closely with other agencies to regulate fire safety

The service works closely with other enforcement agencies to regulate fire safety and routinely exchanges risk information with them. For instance, the service:

- works as a main partner in the MATES (Multi-Agency Targeted Enforcement Scheme) partnership. This partnership aims to improve community safety and brings together a wide range of different enforcement agencies such as Herefordshire Council Trading Standards and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority;
- carries out joint fire safety inspection and enforcement activity with local authority property enforcement officers; and
- is an active and valued member of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire safety advisory groups, working together to make sure members of the public are safe at sporting and community events.

The service's response to building consultations is timely and supports its statutory responsibility

The service responds to almost all building consultations on time, so consistently meets its statutory responsibility to comment on fire safety arrangements at new and altered buildings. In 2019/20 the service responded to 99.3 percent of building consultations within the required timeframe, which is to be commended.

The service works with businesses to promote compliance with fire safety legislation

The service proactively engages with local businesses and other organisations to promote compliance with fire safety legislation. For example, it operates four [primary authority schemes](#) with businesses, to support them with their responsibilities in relation to fire safety. It also gives good advice and guidance to businesses on its website, including giving support during the pandemic.

Limited quality assurance takes place

We reviewed a range of fire safety audits carried out at different premises across the service. This included audits as part of the service's risk-based inspection programme, after fires at premises where fire safety legislation applied, where enforcement action had been taken, and at high-rise, high-risk buildings. We found that the service could improve the consistency of the audits.

Only limited quality assurance of its protection activity takes place. Managers don't routinely quality assure audits, and may only review work when enforcement action is proposed. There is little quality assurance to ensure inspecting officers are carrying out consistent inspections. We also found inconsistencies in how the service rates similar high-rise premises in terms of risk.

The service doesn't have good evaluation tools in place to measure its effectiveness or to make sure all sections of its communities get equal access to protection services that meet their needs.

The service isn't using the full range of its enforcement powers

As identified as an area for improvement in the 2018 Round 1 inspection, the service doesn't consistently use its full range of enforcement powers. We found it has a limited appetite to prosecute those who fail to comply with fire safety regulations. Since 2016/17, the service has carried out a significant amount of enforcement activity compared to other fire and rescue services. This has taken the form of alterations notices, enforcement notices and prohibition notices. However, it is noticeable that despite the significant amount of enforcement activity, the service hasn't carried out any prosecutions during this time.

In the year to 31 March 2020, the service issued 43 alteration notices, 69 enforcement notices, 75 prohibition notices and undertook no prosecutions. It has completed no prosecutions since 2013.

The service hasn't taken enough action to reduce unwanted fire signals

Only limited action is being taken to reduce the number of unwanted fire signals (false alarms due to fire alarm systems) that are received. The number of calls to the service that are unwanted fire signals has remained consistently high for more than five years. In 2019/20, there were 2,462 such calls. This is 31 percent of all calls that the service received. (All false alarms equated to 42 percent of all calls). This means that fire engines may be attending false alarms when a genuine call is received, as well as creating a risk to the public with more fire engines travelling on roads responding to these incidents.

Responding to fires and other emergencies



Requires improvement (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at responding to fires and other emergencies.

Fire and rescue services must be able to respond to a range of incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their areas.

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure its response strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its CRMP.
- The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.
- The service should ensure it understands what it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance, including joint and national learning, and put in place a plan to do so.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service's response strategy isn't clear

The service hasn't yet published a response strategy that is clearly linked to the risks identified in its CRMP. The CRMP makes a commitment to continuously review fire and emergency cover to make sure there is appropriate provision of resources (such as fire engines and equipment) and crewing arrangements. However, there was no information available to explain the rationale for the location of all its fire engines, response staff and working patterns.

The service isn't meeting its response standards

There are no national response standards against which the service can [benchmark](#) its performance for the public. But the service has set out its own response standards in its CRMP.

The service standard for building fires is for the first fire engine to be in attendance within ten minutes of receiving the call on 75 percent of occasions. The service doesn't always achieve these standards and in 2019/20 only met this on 52 percent of occasions. In the year to 31 March 2020, the service's average response time to [primary fires](#) was 11 minutes and 5 seconds. This is the slowest time compared to other fire and rescue services in the significantly rural group.

However, we were encouraged to see that the availability of fire engines increased by 7 percent between 2019/20 and 2020/21. If the service sustains this improvement, it could meet its response standards to fires and other incidents.

Staff have a good understanding of how to command incidents safely

The service has trained incident commanders who are assessed regularly and properly. This includes an assessment every two years; an annual health check; and active incident monitoring at least once a year, where the service reviews a person's command competence at an operational incident. This enables the service to safely, assertively, and effectively manage the whole range of incidents that it could face, from small and routine ones to complex multi-agency incidents.

As part of our inspection, we interviewed incident commanders from across the service. The incident commanders we interviewed are familiar with risk assessing, decision making and recording information at incidents in line with national best practice, as well as [Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles \(JESIP\)](#).

However, we did find that [operational discretion](#) (this allows them to use their professional judgment to make decisions in an unforeseen situation at an incident) wasn't clearly understood within the service.

Control staff regularly get involved in operational learning and debriefing

We are pleased to see the service's control staff integrated into some of the service's command, training, exercise and debrief activity. Control staff have participated in several multi-agency exercises. They can contribute fully in debriefs. And they take part in command training (such as the high-rise exercises in the West Midlands).

The service can give fire survival guidance to multiple callers

The control room staff we interviewed are confident they could provide fire survival guidance to many callers simultaneously. This was identified as learning for fire services after the Grenfell Tower fire. We also learnt that [fire control](#) has arrangements in place both to communicate with other control rooms and for calls to be diverted if the need arises.

Fire control has good systems in place to exchange real-time risk information with incident commanders, other responding partners, and other supporting fire and rescue services. This includes communicating in a timely way with crews and making sure all staff in the control room are kept up to date with the latest information. Maintaining good situational awareness enables the service to communicate effectively with the public, providing them with accurate and tailored advice.

Staff have good access to risk information within the service

We sampled a range of risk information. This included what information is in place for firefighters responding to incidents at high-risk, high-rise buildings, and what information is held by fire control.

We found that the service sends regular bulletins to give updates on risk information. The service also updates the mobile data terminals on fire engines promptly, which

wasn't the case when we inspected the service in 2018. The information we reviewed was up to date and detailed. Staff could access it easily and understand it.

The service should improve the way it evaluates operational performance and national operational guidance

As part of our inspection, we reviewed a range of emergency incidents and training events.

We are disappointed to find that the service doesn't consistently follow its policies to assure itself that staff command incidents in line with operational guidance. As a result, the service doesn't always update internal risk information after an incident.

The service doesn't always act on learning it has, or should have, identified from incidents. This means it isn't routinely improving its service to the public. We found that the service's debrief process was ineffective and hadn't been improved following our inspection in 2018. We reviewed several significant incidents and found that the service hadn't identified learning and hadn't debriefed the incidents in line with its policy. Moreover, the service isn't following its policy in using structured debriefs for larger incidents or exercises.

The service is carrying out cross-border exercises with some neighbouring fire and rescue services. However, the quality of the exercises varies. It would be advantageous for the service to carry out a review to improve effectiveness.

The service has adopted some [National Operational Guidance](#) products. But it has carried out limited and insufficient training for staff on these new procedures. The service will implement further National Operational Guidance in the future and should improve its information, instruction and training for staff.

The service has good measures to keep the public informed during incidents

The service has good systems in place to inform the public about ongoing incidents and help keep them safe during and after incidents. This includes social and local media; the service's website; and effective measures for joint communication with other organisations, including the [local resilience forum \(LRF\)](#). The service continues to chair the fortnightly LRF COVID-19 Communications Cell. And it takes part in regular exercises as part of the LRF Warn and Inform Group.

Responding to major and multi-agency incidents



Good (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is good at responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

All fire and rescue services must be able to respond effectively to multi-agency and cross-border incidents. This means working with other fire and rescue services (known as intraoperability) and emergency services (known as interoperability).

Area for improvement

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

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service is well-prepared for major and multi-agency incidents

The service has effectively anticipated and considered the reasonably foreseeable risks and threats it may face. These risks are listed in both local and national risk registers as part of its CRMP. Examples include flooding, flu pandemics and fires at large industrial premises.

It is also familiar with the significant risks that could be faced by neighbouring fire and rescue services that it might reasonably be asked to respond to in an emergency. These include the canal tunnel at Wast Hills, a water bottling plant in Mid and West Wales, and a historic boarding school in Shropshire. However, firefighters don't always have access to risk information from neighbouring services. The service shares its risk information on a secure national website called [Resilience Direct](#), but neighbouring services don't always reciprocate. The service should consider how it can review the information it exchanges with neighbouring services more frequently.

The service has the ability to respond to major and multi-agency incidents, but needs to improve understanding on (MTAs)

We reviewed the arrangements the service has in place to respond to different major incidents, such as high-risk building fires, wide-area flooding and a marauding terrorist attack (MTA).

The service has good arrangements in place, which are well understood by staff, for high-rise building fires and flooding. The service has trained staff at a specialised high-rise training facility in the West Midlands, and it dealt well with a major incident in February 2020 involving significant floods. The service has resources that it can offer to support a major incident; these include an [urban search and rescue](#) team, an environmental protection unit and a high-volume pump. Staff are clear on when and how to deploy these resources. However, we found that many firefighters and incident commanders had limited knowledge or training in relation to MTA procedures.

The service works effectively with other fire services

The service supports other fire and rescue services responding to emergency incidents. It carries out training with neighbouring services to share learning. Local teams train on specific risks with other organisations. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has also supported other services to respond to emergency incidents (for example, to help prevent a dam collapse in Derbyshire). It is interoperable with these services and can form part of a multi-agency response. It has

successfully deployed to other services and has used national assets (such as a high-volume pump).

Incident commanders understand JESIP

The incident commanders we interviewed had been trained in and were familiar with the JESIP.

The service gave us strong evidence that it consistently follows these principles. Staff showed a good understanding of them. Incident commanders we spoke to could effectively describe the joint decision-making principles. They could also describe the procedures for reporting information on major incidents to relevant government departments.

The service is proactively working with other partners and is an active member of the West Mercia LRF

The service has good arrangements in place to respond to emergencies with other partners that make up the West Mercia LRF. These arrangements include comprehensive plans for [control of major accident hazards \(COMAH\) sites](#). It also has a generic major incident plan, as well as site-specific risk information for sites that pose additional risks.

The service is an active member of the LRF. It vice-chairs for the business management group. And it gives representation at the forum's management board, strategic and tactical co-ordinating groups, and subgroups. It also takes part in regular training events and uses the learning to develop planning assumptions about responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

Recently, the service has started activity with West Mercia Police related to the use of drones and missing persons, and with West Midlands Ambulance Service about gaining entry to premises where medical assistance may be needed.

The service uses national learning to inform planning

The service keeps itself up to date with joint operational learning updates from other fire services and national operational learning from other blue light partners, such as the police and ambulance trusts. This learning is used to inform planning assumptions that have been made with other partners.

We are encouraged to see the service is contributing towards, and acting on, learning from other fire and rescue services or operational learning obtained from other emergency service partners. This includes the Manchester Arena attack (the [Kerslake Arena Review](#)) and five incidents (as of June 2021) that the service has submitted for national learning, such as hazards found in scrap cars.

Efficiency



How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Requires improvement

Summary

An efficient fire and rescue service will manage its budget and use its resources properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to the risks and priorities identified in its [integrated risk management plan](#). It should try to achieve value for money and keep costs down without compromising public safety. It should make the best possible use of its resources to achieve better outcomes for the public. Plans should be based on robust and realistic assumptions about income and costs. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency requires improvement.

The service displays some sound financial management. But it requires improvement at making best use of resources. It needs to show a clear rationale for allocating resources between its activities, and this should be in line with the risk and priorities as described in the CRMP. The service needs a testing programme for its business continuity plans. And it needs to better monitor, review and evaluate the benefits and outcomes of future collaborations.

The service requires improvement in making itself affordable now and in the future. It is financially secure but could do more to plan for future financial challenges. The service is developing a plan for the use of its [reserves](#). It should regularly review its fleet and estate strategies.

We are encouraged to see the improvements the service has made since our last inspection. For instance, the service now actively considers the relationship between technology, future innovation and risk. We note that it has moved its [fire control](#) mobilising system to West Mercia Police headquarters, and is seeking to use changes in technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. But at the time of writing, the service has limited capacity and capability to bring about sustainable future change.

Making best use of resources



Requires improvement (2018: Requires improvement)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at making best use of its resources.

Fire and rescue services should manage their resources properly and appropriately, aligning those resources to meet the services' risks and statutory responsibilities. They should make best possible use of their resources to achieve better outcomes for the public.

The service's budget for 2021/22 is just under £32.4m. This is around a 3.2 percent increase change (£31.4m in 2019/20) from the previous financial year.

Areas for improvement

- The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection, and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risk and priorities set out in its CRMP.
- The service should ensure there is a testing programme for its business continuity plans, particularly in high-risk areas of service.
- The service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service's plans don't effectively support its objectives

The service sometimes uses its resources well to manage risk, but there remain weaknesses that need addressing. Since our last inspection in 2018, the service has put additional staff into fire control. And it is using additional government funding to improve capacity and capability in protection. However, the service has only recently applied these investments and it is too early to identify the results.

The service doesn't have a workforce plan that is designed to make sure it has the staff to meet the risks identified in the CRMP. Also, there is no linkage between the budget and medium-term financial plan (MTFP) to provide the CRMP.

The way the service allocates resources to prevention, protection and response functions is mainly based on previous funding allocations. This is affecting the service's ability to deliver its responsibilities in these areas, as reflected in the section on effectiveness (page 7) in this report.

There is limited performance management oversight of important functions. So the service isn't evaluating activity to make sure it is sufficiently staffed to deal with the priorities in the CRMP.

The service has a suitable financial position and has made reasonable and potentially prudent assumptions in its financial planning. We found some limited financial controls in place through the monitoring and scrutiny arrangements. This reduces the risk of misusing public money.

The service isn't using its workforce in the most productive way

We are encouraged to see the improvements the service has made since our last inspection. The service has addressed areas identified for improvement in terms of clarifying the role of watch managers and managing the replacement of faulty smoke alarms. Watch managers now have clear roles on fire stations and in departments. And a new supplier has remedied the defective alarms.

The pandemic necessitated changes to working practices which are being implemented as business as usual. These include protection staff carrying out remote fire safety audits for businesses using desktop audits.

However, the service should do more to make sure its workforce is as productive as possible. For example, we found that staff on some stations were on differing contracts and shift patterns. This was affecting productivity, and there were instances of fire engines becoming unavailable due to insufficient staffing.

It was also unclear how the service measures the productivity of firefighters in terms of home safety and business safety activity. It is understandable that the pandemic has significantly affected these areas. But we don't know how the service intends to best use the capacity of operational firefighters due to the absence of strategies.

The service is collaborating with a range of partners, but isn't effectively monitoring and evaluating the benefits

We are pleased to see the service meets its statutory duty to collaborate, and routinely considers opportunities to collaborate with other emergency responders. The service now shares a headquarters with West Mercia Police, and a joint police and fire station at the Wyre Forest Hub. However, the service couldn't fully quantify the financial benefits of this collaboration work.

The service is exploring the potential for a joint-training facility with the police in North Herefordshire. It is actively working with other emergency services on operational activity, and is considering further opportunities to improve working together. And the service is working collaboratively on:

- supporting the police in the search for missing persons;
- MATES inspections with a wide range of organisations to improve community safety;
- the joint use of aerial drones with the police (Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has bought the drones and trained staff); and
- gaining entry to premises. This is to help the ambulance service to quickly access people who may need medical assistance.

The service has also committed to a strategic alliance with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. They are working together on the four main aims: procurement, fire control, information and communications technology (ICT) and joint development of the services' separate CRMPs.

The alliance has made some progress in the joint procurement of vehicles and equipment. But, again, there has been limited evaluation of the financial benefits of this collaboration. Both services worked closely together in the formulation of their new CRMPs, which were published on 1 April 2021. There has been limited improvement regarding ICT and fire control.

During our 2018 inspection, we found that the service didn't comprehensively monitor, review and evaluate the benefits and outcomes of its collaborations. Disappointingly, this is still the case.

It was also evident that although the service has done continuing work with West Mercia Police on the joint use of drones, the agreement for this work (including the terms for cost recovery of expenditure) is still awaiting formal sign off.

The service hasn't fully tested its continuity arrangements

The service has business continuity plans in place for industrial action and fire control. However, there was an absence of testing to make sure that the plans are effective. The service hasn't fully reviewed and tested the business continuity plans for fire control, with an evacuation to the secondary control in Droitwich, since autumn 2018. This means that the service isn't appropriately testing back-up arrangements in the event of a significant failure. Also, staff aren't fully aware of the arrangements and their associated responsibilities.

The service displays some sound financial management

There are regular reviews to consider all the service's expenditure, including its non-pay costs. And this scrutiny makes sure the service gets value for money. For example, the service reports finance and performance through processes that an independent external audit has reviewed. The audit found the service's finance and performance arrangements to be satisfactory. Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority also provides review and scrutiny on a quarterly basis.

The service has made savings and efficiencies, which haven't affected its operational performance and the service it provides to the public. The service is taking steps to make sure that important areas, including estates and procurement, are well placed to achieve efficiency gains through sound financial management and best working practices. For fleet procurement, the preferred method is using frameworks to make sure that the service gets best value for money. It is investing in future innovation in the form of smaller fire engines to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The service's MTFP takes a prudent approach to government funding, as the full impact of the pandemic isn't yet known.

Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future



Requires improvement (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at making itself affordable now and in the future.

Fire and rescue services should continuously look for ways to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. This includes transforming how they work and improving their value for money. Services should have robust spending plans that reflect future financial challenges and efficiency opportunities and should invest in better services for the public.

Area for improvement

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

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service understands the future financial challenges but could do more planning to address this risk

The service has a secure financial position and has developed an understanding of future financial challenges. The underpinning assumptions are relatively robust, realistic and prudent, and take account of the wider external environment.

It has some plans to mitigate its main or significant financial risks. For example, the service has acted on the pension court ruling for the [Firefighters' Pension Scheme](#), and made provision for increased employer contributions. It is also actively monitoring the implications for future judgments.

However, the service could take more action to develop and consult on the range of potential savings and investment opportunities to deal with financial uncertainties. The service makes limited use of scenario planning for future spending reductions.

The service is developing a plan for the use of its reserves

The service has maintained a robust level of reserves. It is now planning to make considerable investments in frontline services while keeping the general reserve at approximately 4 percent of its budget.

At the time of the inspection (May 2021), the service was considering bid proposals for funding allocation from the reserves. It was not clear if the proposals to utilise the reserves have been carefully considered as part of a co-ordinated investment programme linked to the CRMP or the MTFP. We look forward to seeing how the future investment has improved the service's effectiveness and efficiency.

The service isn't maximising efficiency through its fleet and estates

The service doesn't fully exploit opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness presented by changes in fleet and estate provision. The service's investment in estates, fleet and equipment doesn't clearly align with the requirements of its latest CRMP.

The service doesn't properly assess the effect any changes in estate and fleet provision, or future innovation may have on risk. For example, since our last inspection the service has bought new smaller compact fire engines. It did this to explore any potential long-term savings (capital and revenue), but primarily to improve operational response in remote rural areas, and in narrow and congested roads. During our inspection, staff gave a variety of views about the effectiveness of these new fire engines. The service should evaluate the overall impact of these changes.

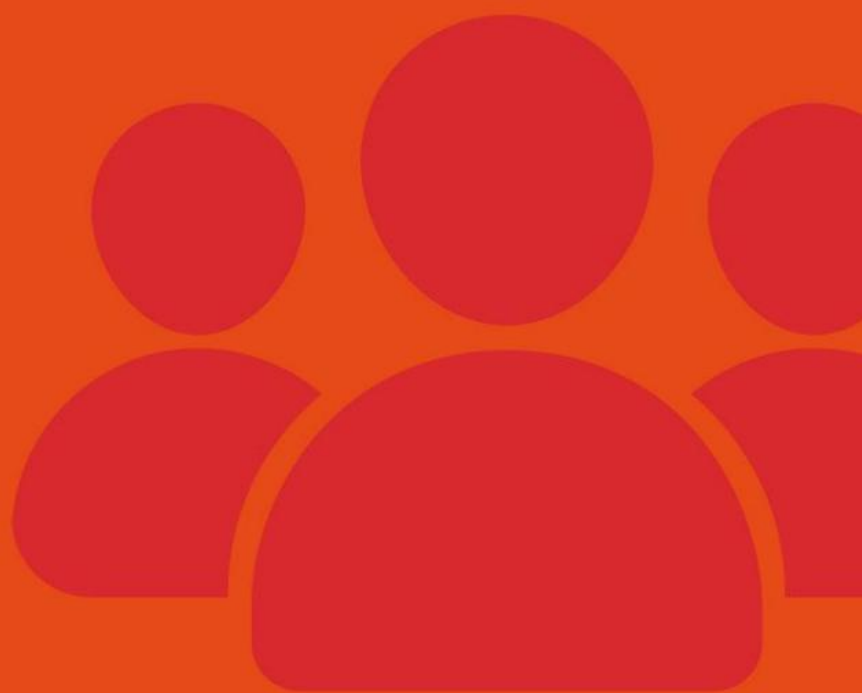
Following the end of the service's participation in the Place Partnership Project, it is to procure the services of the West Mercia police and crime commissioner for the provision of property management. The agreement was due to start on 1 April 2021. However, when we reviewed the agreement, it didn't contain key performance indicators or standards of service. The service should assure itself that it is getting best value for money and service levels from this service agreement.

The service has invested in some technologies, but needs to improve its capacity and capability

We are encouraged to see the improvements the service has made since the last inspection. The service actively considers how changes in technology and future innovation may affect risk. The service has moved its fire control mobilising system to West Mercia Police headquarters. It also seeks to exploit opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness presented by changes in technology. Since the pandemic, the service has accelerated its use of virtual technology to communicate effectively with staff. The service has installed large screens in stations so that whole teams can participate in calls or training sessions.

However, the service has limited capacity and capability to bring about lasting future change. The service has developed some in-house IT solutions (such as the debrief system). However, it doesn't have capacity to maintain and improve these systems and has procured external IT consultants to provide support. The service also wants to improve environmentally and has written a specification for electric vehicles. But it isn't yet in a position for procurement, until a charging infrastructure has been put in place in the service.

People



How well does the service look after its people?



Requires improvement

Summary

A well-led fire and rescue service develops and maintains a workforce that is supported, professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of staff at all levels. All staff should feel supported and be given opportunities to develop. Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in everything the service does and its staff understand their role in promoting it. Overall, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

Staff have a good understanding of the service's values, which are well defined. The service should make sure that senior managers are visible and model service values.

The service has a good workforce-wellbeing provision. Staff were especially positive about the support they receive from the [critical incident](#) support team following traumatic incidents. However, the service needs to talk to staff to better understand their individual needs.

The service has clear processes in place for managing staff absences. However, there has been a significant increase in long-term absence in the year to 31 March 2020 for non-operational staff.

The service does some workforce planning. But it needs a workforce plan that takes full account of the skills and capabilities it needs to effectively meet the needs of its community risk management plan (CRMP).

Some of the service's records could be more accurate and up to date. We are concerned at a lack of effective arrangements for the monitoring and recording of training completed by staff.

In terms of ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, the service should make sure that it has appropriate ways of gathering feedback from all staff. We note that the service has increased the overall percentage of [wholetime](#) female firefighters to well

above the England average. It could make more progress to improve black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) diversity throughout the organisation to make it more representative of its local community.

The service needs to have a consistent process in place for performance and development. Currently, it lacks a process for talent management and development.

Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement (2018: Requires improvement)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at promoting the right values and culture.

Fire and rescue services should have positive and inclusive cultures, modelled by the behaviours of their senior leaders. Health and safety should be effectively promoted, and staff should have access to a range of wellbeing support that can be tailored to their individual needs.

Areas for improvement

- The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviours.
- The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.
- The service should make sure it has a robust system in place to update and review its operational incident (analytical) risk assessments.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Staff understand the service's values, but senior leaders need to improve visibility and communication

The service has well-defined values that it updated in consultation with staff in autumn 2019. The results of our staff survey indicate that the values are well understood and accepted throughout the organisation, with 97 percent of respondents stating that they are aware of the service's statement of values. Those we spoke to understand the service's values and generally felt that behaviours reflective of the service's values are shown at all levels of the service.

However, during our inspection many members of staff told us of a continued lack of visibility of senior managers. This was particularly evident during the service's management of change processes. We found that there had been limited progress on the area for improvement from our last inspection in 2018, in relation to effective two-way communication between senior leaders and staff.

Senior managers in the service recognise that there is a lot more to do in terms of improving organisational culture. However, we did find staff were optimistic that the newly appointed chief fire officer (in post from 1 April 2021) will improve the culture of the service.

Workforce-wellbeing provision is good, but the service needs to engage more with its staff to understand their individual needs

The service has some wellbeing provisions to support the mental and physical health of staff. This includes occupational health, the service chaplain, and the wellbeing team who can support staff to access the help available (such as counselling or physiotherapy). Staff were really positive about the support that the critical incident support team gives following traumatic incidents.

However, staff told us that some of the mental health projects that the service has recently introduced have had limited impact to date. These include having staff wellbeing champions and signing the Time to Change Employer Pledge, a project supported by [Mind](#), the mental health charity. The service is aiming to offer mental health first aid training to some staff in the future. The service could do more to engage with its workforce and understand what else they need to support their individual needs. In our staff survey, 61 of the 225 respondents (27 percent) said they were not having wellbeing conversations with their manager at least once a year.

The service has produced its People Strategy 2020-22, which commits to “maximising the health, wellbeing and fitness of staff”. There is also a draft Wellbeing Plan 2021-23 with associated Plan Delivery Framework Year 1 2020-21.

The plans outline what the aims and objectives are, and how success will be measured in the future. However, the actions to achieve the wellbeing plan are currently at the planning and scoping stage. Also, some of these plans are behind the schedule that the service has put in place. We look forward to reviewing the progress the service has made on workforce wellbeing in the future.

Staff have confidence in health and safety policies, but some aspects of health and safety aren’t being monitored effectively by the service

The service has some effective and well-understood health and safety policies and procedures in place. These include the health and safety management policy, and accident reporting procedures.

The survey completed by staff in the service showed that 210 of 225 respondents (93 percent) feel their personal safety and welfare is treated seriously at work. Additionally, most representative bodies agree that the service manages the health and safety of its staff well. Both staff and representative bodies have confidence in the service’s approach to health and safety.

However, we found that the service doesn’t monitor staff who have secondary employment to make sure they are complying with the secondary employment policy and not working excessive hours. The service puts the onus on staff to manage their working time. And there is no oversight to check whether staff with secondary employment are fit for duty.

We also found ineffective management, monitoring and review of analytical risk assessments. (This is the process used to manage and record health and safety while staff are dealing with fires and other incidents.) We reviewed several analytical risk assessments that were inadequately completed. It was evident that there was no quality assurance during the incident, or later when debriefing or reviewing the incident.

The service has clear absence management processes that staff understand

As part of our inspection, we reviewed some case files to consider how the service manages and supports staff through absence including sickness, parental and special leave.

We found there are clear processes in place to manage absences for all staff. There are toolkits and guidance for managers, who are confident in the process. Absences are managed well and in accordance with policy. There was evidence of managers making regular contact with staff who weren't at work due to sickness. We viewed some staff referrals by managers to occupational health, who could then support the individual staff member through actions such as counselling.

However, we found that the absence management process doesn't sufficiently monitor trends. Also, the service isn't effectively reviewing and learning from long-term sickness absence cases to see how successfully they have been managed. Overall, the service has seen a decrease in long-term staff absences for wholetime firefighters (9 percent reduction) and control staff (73 percent reduction) over the 12 months between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. But for non-operational staff there was a 40 percent increase in long-term absence in the same period.

Getting the right people with the right skills



Requires improvement (2018: Good)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at getting the right people with the right skills.

Fire and rescue services should have workforce plans in place that are linked to their [integrated risk management plans](#), set out their current and future skills requirements, and address capability gaps. This should be supplemented by a culture of continuous improvement that includes appropriate learning and development across the service.

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure itself that records for risk critical competencies, such as breathing apparatus, driving fire engines and incident command are accurate and up to date.
- The service should ensure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the CRMP.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service needs to improve its workforce planning so it can fully understand the skills and capabilities of its workforce

The service does some workforce planning, but it doesn't take full account of the skills and capabilities it needs to be able to effectively meet the needs of its CRMP. We found limited evidence that the service's planning allows it to fully consider workforce skills and overcome any gaps in capability. The service has a quarterly workforce planning group meeting. However, this group has predominantly focused on retirements and wholetime-firefighter recruitment. Recently, the terms of reference for the group have been expanded to analyse wider workforce planning matters. These include trends, recruitment of [on-call](#) and support staff, and senior-officer-cover arrangements.

More is needed by the service to improve how it considers future needs and undertakes succession planning. During our inspection, we found that there were many newly-promoted officers within the service, particularly at watch commander level. This places a demand on the service in terms of developing many staff who are new in their role. The service needs to assure itself that the support for those new managers is in place.

We are concerned to find that the service doesn't have effective arrangements for the monitoring and recording of training completed by staff. The service uses an electronic computerised training recording system. Many records we reviewed for control staff weren't completed. We also found that some risk-critical training assessments for firefighters were overdue. The service didn't have suitable monitoring by managers or reporting processes in place to identify staff training requirements. A small number of firefighters were still responding to operational incidents when they were out of date for some competencies.

The service offers a range of learning and development resources

A culture of continuous improvement is promoted across the service and staff are encouraged to learn and develop. For example, the service offers a range of training and health and safety qualifications for staff throughout the organisation. These include the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health qualification for level 1 incident commanders and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health General Certificate for level 2 and 3 commanders.

During the pandemic, the service has adapted how it offers learning and development opportunities. It now includes the use of virtual platforms. However, some staff felt that the level of learning and development available to them decreased during this time. They also felt that development opportunities aren't consistent across all staff groups.

We are pleased to see that the service has a range of resources in place. These include support to achieve academic qualifications, and a fire engineering degree sponsorship programme. The service also has mandatory e-learning in place for all staff. Overall, 165 of 225 respondents to our staff survey (73 percent) said that they could access a range of learning and development resources. This allows them

to carry out their role effectively. The survey also showed that 79 percent of respondents found that learning and development conversations with their managers were useful.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



Requires improvement (2018: Requires improvement)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

Creating a more representative workforce will provide huge benefits for fire and rescue services. This includes greater access to talent and different ways of thinking, and improved understanding of and engagement with their local communities. Each service should make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion are firmly embedded and understood across the organisation. This includes successfully taking steps to remove inequality and making progress to improve fairness, diversity and inclusion at all levels within the service. It should proactively seek and respond to feedback from staff and make sure any action taken is meaningful.

Area for improvement

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

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service needs to improve the ways it seeks and acts on staff feedback and challenge

In our previous inspection, we identified that the service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback systems. The service now operates an organisational development and challenge group to work with staff and gather their feedback. The group helped to develop the service values and contributed to the approvals process in autumn 2019. But staff told us that its overall effectiveness has been limited to date, and many staff didn't know about the group's purpose. At the time of the inspection, the service was in the process of refreshing the group's terms of reference.

The service doesn't carry out an overarching staff survey. This limits its ability to identify staff concerns. It also limits the opportunity for people throughout the service to share their views confidentially about what the service is doing well and what it could improve.

Although the service does have some means of gathering staff feedback, these are inconsistent and not wide ranging. During our inspection, we found that the service had carried out some stand-alone surveys on individual topics such as [safeguarding](#), staff retention and counselling options. These surveys may well help the service with

short-term planning. But if the service were to repeat comprehensive staff surveys at regular intervals, these could help it to chart improvements.

Staff have limited confidence in the service's feedback mechanisms and don't think they are effective. As part of the inspection process, we saw surveys that representative bodies had done. The surveys supported these views. Also, some representative bodies and staff associations reported that they would like to see improved engagement from the service. The service has a Joint Consultative Committee to discuss matters and has appointed a new engagement and wellbeing officer to improve communication with staff.

EDI needs to be understood by everyone within the organisation

The service has introduced a range of new measures to improve its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). These include:

- a new EDI Plan 2020-25;
- a new EDI policy;
- a new positive action plan;
- recruitment of an EDI officer; and
- the introduction of Fire Authority member champions and a buddy scheme for new female recruits.

However, staff we spoke to throughout the service told us that plans for EDI improvement were new and that change wasn't yet accepted and understood throughout the organisation. We were told that "many staff don't yet understand the importance of EDI". The service has appointed EDI allies, but it has given them limited training to date and their roles were unclear.

The service doesn't yet have robust processes in place for equality impact assessments of its policies and procedures. These are needed to make sure that the service doesn't discriminate or disadvantage people. At the time of our inspection, the service was developing its arrangements for quality assurance, monitoring of actions and reporting using the [National Fire Chiefs Council's](#) (NFCC) Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit.

The service has talked to and worked with staff to improve their understanding of positive action. Encouragingly, the service has been increasing the overall percentage of female staff in the service from 15 percent in 2017/18 to 16 percent in 2019 /20. Since 2017/18 there has been a 3.3 percent increase in the female wholetime firefighter workforce. This has increased the overall percentage of wholetime staff female firefighters to 10 percent. This is well above the England average of 7 percent.

However, the service has made limited progress to improve BAME and gender diversity across all staff in the service. Since 2017/18, the percentage of staff who have self-declared as being from a BAME group has reduced from 2.8 percent to 2.3 percent. Five percent of the workforce don't declare their ethnicity.

The service has made some improvements in showing fairness in recruitment, promotion and progression processes, but needs to do more

There is an open, fair and honest recruitment process for staff or those wishing to work for the fire and rescue service. The service's recruitment policy gives some guidance to hiring managers about how to recruit to posts and consider the equality duty at each stage of the process. The policy includes guidance on:

- how to recruit to new or vacant roles;
- employment legislation; and
- giving feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

For the most recent whole-time-firefighter recruitment in 2020, the service carried out a wide-ranging positive action campaign to encourage women to apply. However, there was limited focus in the arrangements for BAME candidates and limited evaluation of the campaign's success.

The service has developed a new promotion policy to make sure that progression processes are fair and that staff understand them. The policy is linked to the NFCC leadership framework. It covers acting up, and temporary and permanent operational staff vacancies, but doesn't include non-operational roles. To ensure consistency and transparency of promotions, the policy contains provision for an independent scrutiny panel to oversee all stages of the procedures. The panel is made up of a cross-section of people from the workforce, to check and challenge the process.

However, we did find that the service doesn't always use the scrutiny panel effectively. We also found that some staff still don't feel confident that the procedures are fair, or that the procedures are promoting the right leaders or people with appropriate experience.

Nearly 40 percent of those who responded to our staff survey said that they didn't think the promotion process was fair. One third said that they weren't given the same opportunities to develop as other staff.

Most staff are confident in the service's approach to tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination

Staff have a good understanding of what bullying, harassment and discrimination are, and the negative effect they have on both colleagues and the organisation.

Our staff survey revealed that, over the last 12 months:

- 9 percent of respondents had been subject to bullying and harassment (20 from 225); and
- 15 percent had been subject to discrimination (34 from 225).

Of the 20 people who reported that they had been subject to bullying and harassment, 10 didn't report it. The reasons cited for this were mainly a belief that nothing would be done if the matters were reported, or fear of being labelled a troublemaker.

However, during our inspection many staff told us that they are confident in the service's approach to tackling bullying, harassment, discrimination, grievances and disciplinary matters. Staff we spoke to had received training on these matters and understood their importance. They also knew how to report concerns and felt comfortable to challenge inappropriate behaviour. Most felt confident that their line manager would deal appropriately with any concerns that they raised.

Our surveys showed that most representative bodies feel that the service has put appropriate processes in place, and that it takes appropriate action to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination.

The service had nine grievance cases in 2019/20. Managers are encouraged to resolve grievances informally, but we did see that the service doesn't record informal outcomes of grievances. The service may be limited in identifying and responding to any potential trends.

Managing performance and developing leaders



Requires improvement (2018: Requires improvement)

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at managing performance and developing leaders.

Fire and rescue services should have robust and meaningful performance management arrangements in place for their staff. All staff should be supported to meet their potential and there should be a focus on developing high-potential staff and improving diversity in leadership roles.

Areas for improvement

- The service should improve all staff understanding and application of the appraisal review process.
- The service should make sure it has mechanisms in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service is inconsistent at managing individuals' performance

The service has an individual appraisal process. But we heard that its effectiveness depended on the skills of the line managers who do the reviews. We also heard that the process is more effective for those staff who are in development or seeking promotion.

It is evident that many members of staff haven't had an annual performance review. The service supplied data for 2019/20 which showed it had carried out the following percentages of appraisals:

- 58 percent of wholetime firefighters;
- 37 percent of on-call firefighters;
- 35 percent of support staff; and
- 0 percent of [fire control](#) staff.

Therefore, a large number of the workforce aren't receiving an annual review of their performance. This means that staff are missing out on a performance conversation with their manager, as well as potential opportunities to further their development and improve individual performance. This could be detrimental to the service more broadly, as it isn't supporting staff development or improving organisational effectiveness.

The service isn't effective at developing leadership and high-potential staff at all levels

The service needs to improve how it actively manages the career pathways of staff, including those with specialist skills and for leadership roles.

In our previous inspection in 2018, we identified that the service should improve its talent process, and put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders. We found that the service had updated its promotions process. But it still didn't have a talent management scheme to develop leaders and high-potential staff.

The service should consider putting in place more formal arrangements to identify and support members of staff to become senior leaders. There is a significant gap in its succession planning at present. The service hasn't set out how it will identify and develop high-performing staff. Currently, the promotion process is its only process.

The service's new promotions policy doesn't apply to all staff. And non-operational staff told us that they have limited or no promotion opportunities. The service's promotion policy focuses on operational staff. This has resulted in inconsistency and it undermines staff perception of fairness. It has also contributed to some non-operational staff feeling less valued than their operational colleagues.

The policy covers acting up, and temporary and permanent operational staff vacancies. However, we found that temporary promotions aren't well managed, and we found evidence of them being in place for longer than appropriate when compared to other fire and rescue services. According to data that the service submitted, the average length of temporary promotions as of 31 March 2020 was 483 days. The longest was 1,551 days. The service uses temporary promotions to fill gaps created by such matters as long-term sickness, secondments and temporary deployments into other areas. The service also needs them for succession planning, development of staff and in between promotion board processes.

Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

Attendance Performance Measure

Purpose of report

1. This report is seeking permission from the Fire Authority to undertake public consultation on a new Service Attendance Performance Measure as outlined in the 2021-25 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
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Recommendation

It is recommended that the Fire Authority authorises officers to commence public consultation on a revised Attendance Performance Measure.





Introduction and Background

Current Attendance Performance Measure

2. Attendance performance measures are established by each Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) individually and are used to measure the FRS's performance in regards of how quickly fire engines attend incidents, which are then reported to the Fire Authority. Results are also reported in a FRS's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) / Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and link to the Strategic Risk Register.
3. The current attendance performance measures for Building Fires and Road Traffic Collisions (Table1) were first introduced in 2009 as part of the 2009-12 Integrated Risk Management Plan. Out of the four published measures, attendance of the first appliance at building fires is the only one that is consistently reported to the Fire Authority on a quarterly basis.
4. The Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 (CRMP) states that a new performance measure will be consulted upon:

"A new standard based on our Alliance work with Shropshire FRS will be consulted upon and, if appropriate, introduced during the term of the CRMP. This will be complemented by a travel-time analysis of all incidents that do not align with expected travel times, in order to identify any areas for improvement."
5. Please note that since 2009-10, the Service's attendance performance measure has been calculated for Primary Buildings Fires, which is a slightly narrower category, when compared to 'all building fires'. It is noted that since the introduction of the attendance performance measure (2009) all fire engines are equipped with dedicated cutters and spreaders (described in the IRMP as an 'enhanced rescue capability'). This is calculated for four stages of response, i.e., call handling time, crew turnout time, travel time and from call to arrival time.

Table 1: Summary of Current Attendance Performance Measure

Model	HWFRS's Standards of Fire Cover from 2009-12 IRMP			
	<i>Attendance Times and Weight of Attack</i>			
Fires in buildings		First fire engine		Second fire engine
	<i>Within 10 mins on 75% of occasions</i>		<i>Within 5 mins of first fire engine on 75% of occasions</i>	
Road Traffic Collisions		First fire engine		Second fire engine
	<i>Within 10 mins on 75% of occasions</i>		<i>Enhanced rescue capability within 20 mins on 85% of occasions</i>	

Performance Against the Current Attendance Performance Measure

6. A summary of the Service's performance calculated against the current measure is presented in Table 2. These calculations refer to the first appliance in attendance and are measured from the time of call to the time of arrival at the scene.

Table 2: Service's performance reported each year in the Performance Report




Year	No. of incidents that met the attendance standard	Total no. of incidents	Proportion of incidents where performance measure was met	Reported as
2012/13	431	675	63.85%	Building fires
2013/14	366	677	54.06%	Building fires
2014/15	351	574	61.15%	Building fires
2015/16	404	671	60.21%	Building fires
2016/17	384	660	58.18%	Building fires
2017/18	380	636	59.75%	Building fires
2018/19	369	655	56.34%	Primary building fires
2019/20	318	614	51.79%	Primary building fires
2020/21	241	497	48.49%	Primary building fires

7. Analysis of reports logged in the Incident Recording System (IRS) shows that the current performance measure is no longer a meaningful tool, and applies a singular measure across the whole Service area when it is clear that attendance times in a city centre will be much quicker than in a more rural area, for example.
8. The Service attends a much wider range of incidents than just fires in buildings, so a different way of measuring a wider range of incidents taking into account the different areas covered would be more appropriate.
9. Since the measure was first introduced in 2009, there have been a number of key factors outside of the Service's control that have changed significantly, including increasing traffic congestion, traffic calming, and roadwork network changes and upgrades
10. Of utmost importance it must be emphasised that revising the attendance performance measure is only a change in how the Service measures and reports performance, and will not have a detrimental impact on the service provided to the local communities. Revising the performance measure will allow the Service to collate more useful data, report on performance on a wider range of incidents, and analyse where this falls short of expectations, enabling review and improvement.

Proposed New Performance Measure

11. A revised attendance performance measure will provide local communities with a much clearer picture of the emergency incident response time for the area in which they live for each type of incident attended.
12. It is proposed that the response time is measured from the time of mobilisation to the arrival at the scene by the first appliance. Call handling time will not be included as part of this measure. Attendance performance will be reported against expected travel times by using a new mobilising system. The new mobilising system project is being progressed currently. Route network analysis will be used in order to determine the risk areas of 10, 15 and 20 minutes response time using each fire station's location as a starting point.
13. In adopting this model it supports the strategic alliance with Shropshire FRS and ensures a more transparent consistent approach across both Services.

Table 3: Summary of Proposed New Attendance Performance Measure

Model	<i>First fire engine at the scene</i>	<i>Risk area</i>	<i>First fire engine within</i>
Emergency response time (exc. call handling)		Urban	10 minutes
		Town and fringe	15 minutes
		Rural	20 minutes

Public Consultation

14. Should the recommendation to consider adopting a revised attendance performance measure be approved, it is recommended that the Fire Authority supports a proportionate public consultation process.
15. It would be advisable to run the Public Consultation throughout the spring to summer period 2022, analyse obtained results and reporting the final results and recommendations to the Fire Authority in December 2022.
16. The Service will announce a procurement process to deliver this Public Consultation upon Fire Authority's approval. The successful company will deliver a final report of consultation findings for review. All collected data will be carefully analysed and summarised in a final report presented to the Fire Authority in December 2022.
17. The cost of the consultation exercise is accounted for in budget planning and is expected to be in the region of £15,000.

Conclusion/Summary

18. To conclude, the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025, endorsed by the Fire Authority, states that a new attendance performance measure will be consulted upon during its term. An analysis of the current data has shown that the current attendance performance measure is no longer a meaningful tool.

Reviewing the measure allows the Service to collate more useful data, report on performance on a wider range of incidents, and analyse where this falls short of expectations, enabling review and improvement ensuring an effective and efficient response. It is proposed that public consultation is commenced on a revised attendance performance measure.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	A procurement process will be undertaken to secure a provider to conduct the public consultation. This is budgeted for. Upon completion of the consultation the feedback will be analysed by the Performance and Information Department.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	This closely links to the CRMP and also delivery of the Response Strategy.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	This work closely aligns to the CRMP and by default the Strategic Risk Register.

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	The report proposes a public consultation exercise is carried out. Consultation will also occur internally with members of staff encouraged to contribute.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An equality impact assessment of the consultation proposal will be carried out by the preferred provider.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	A DPIA will be conducted as part of the procurement process.

Report of Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Director of Prevention and Assets

Replacement Mobilising System Reserve Budget

Purpose of report

1. To seek the Authority's authorisation to begin spend against the Fire Control Reserve to procure a replacement mobilising system for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).

Recommendation

It is recommended that Officers are authorised to utilise the agreed Fire Control reserve to procure a replacement command and control system for the Service.

Introduction and Background

2. The main principle behind HWFRS's Response Strategy is to mobilise the most appropriate resources to an incident considering the incident type and the potential risks that may be known or suspected and to arrive as promptly and safely as possible.
3. The current command and control system in use in HWFRS and in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is the SEED system, provided by Lampada. It went live in September 2012 and despite significant effort from the Services, there are still a number of issues with the system. The system is also now ten years old and would normally be considered for replacement at this stage.
4. In addition to the long term system issues, integrations with key software and support systems have been only able to provide limited functionality. Despite the ethos of agile development, the current system has not kept pace with advances in technology or flexed when other software that it uses is superseded or becomes obsolete. In order to more effectively address the outcomes of the Kerslake and Grenfell reports, the Service needs access to more advanced functions such as the ability to transfer incident details electronically from fire control to other emergency services and fireground incident commanders which is not provided with the current system.

5. As the current system is not now meeting the Service needs, a complete user specification has been produced in conjunction with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, and a full business case was presented to SMB in December 2021. SMB agreed that a more reliable, flexible and resilient system with increased functionality that comes from a more comprehensive solution is required to better deliver the core strategies, to support the work of the control staff and mitigate risks to firefighters, the public and the organisation as a whole.
6. A full summary of the risks and issues associated with continuing with the current system is contained within the business case previously approved by SMB.
7. The requirement for a replacement command and control system has long been recognised and a Fire Control Reserve was allocated by HWFRA in February 2019.

Timelines

8. The project to procure a new command and control system will be jointly acquired with Shropshire FRS and will enable complete mobilisation of any asset from HWFRS and SFRS independently from either Service control room (Hindlip and Telford). SFRS has agreed that they will procure the same command and control system but not necessarily in the same timescales as Hereford and Worcester. However the intention is to procure the system to provide resilience across the two control room sites (Phase 2), once they move their control room from Shrewsbury to Telford.
9. It has been agreed to provide a proven and tested system and not one in development or untested in a UK Fire Service. It is therefore anticipated that an 'off the shelf' command and control system could be live in HWFRS control room by the end of 2023, if procurement is initiated in February 2022. At the latest it would be anticipated that the product would be fully live by the end of 2024.

Conclusion/Summary

10. This paper seeks permission from Members to begin utilising funding against the Fire Control reserve to secure an appropriate replacement command and control system.

Please note that the full business case and risk assessment have not been included in this paper due to commercial sensitivity ahead of any procurement process.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Financial – request to spend against agreed budget
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Response Strategy – a replacement mobilising system is required in order to provide high quality sustainable services.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	A risk assessment of continuing with the current SEED mobilising system has been carried out. The new mobilising system is required to mitigate the risks identified to an acceptable level.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Stakeholders within HWFRS and SFRS
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Not applicable
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	Not applicable

Report of the Assistant Director: Prevention

Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

Purpose of report

1. To present the Pay Policy Statement for 2022-2023 for approval and publication on the Authority's website.
-

Recommendation

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

Introduction and Background

2. The Localism Act 2011 places a requirement on the Authority to approve and publish an annual Pay Policy Statement prior to the commencement of each financial year.
3. Pay Policy Statements must articulate an Authority's policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff (or "Chief Officers") and its lowest paid employees. Pay Policy Statements must be prepared and approved by the Authority by 31 March in each year and be published as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. Publication can be in such a manner as the Authority considers appropriate but must include publication on the Authority's website.

Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

4. The Pay Policy Statement sets out the Authority's policies for the financial year 2022-2023 relating to:
 - The level and elements of remuneration of its Chief Officers;
 - The remuneration of its lowest paid employees; together with its definition of "lowest paid employees" and its reasons for adopting that definition;
 - The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other employees;
 - Other aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration namely:
 - Remuneration range for Chief Officers on recruitment;
 - Methodology for increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer;
 - The use of performance-related pay for Chief Officers;
 - The use of bonuses for Chief Officers;
 - The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office under, or be employed by, the Authority; and

- Transparency, that is, the publication of and access to information relating to the remuneration of Chief Officers.
5. It also includes the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to other terms and conditions applying to its Chief Officers.
 6. The definition of Chief Officers (as set out in section 43(2)) is not limited to Heads of Paid Service or statutory Chief Officers. It also includes those who report directly to them (non-statutory Chief Officers), and the people who report directly to them.
 7. The draft Pay Policy Statement for 2022-2023 is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

Conclusion

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

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial implications as a result of national pay awards. Producing and publishing an annual Pay Policy Statement is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRMP and core organisational strategies.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to produce and publish an annual Pay Policy Statement by 31 March may attract public and political scrutiny and breach of section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	N/A

Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	No – the general principle supports a common and transparent approach by linking Executive pay rises to that of the lowest paid employees.
Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	N/A. Data is published in line with the Local Government Transparency Code.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority Pay Policy Statement

Introduction

The Pay Policy Statement for Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority (the Authority) covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The Statement sets out the Authority's approach to pay in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Pay Framework

Terms and conditions of employment for staff within the Authority pay framework are set nationally with any variations negotiated and agreed locally. Pay for all Authority staff is determined by:

- the Local Government Employers with the Employers' Sides of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services;
- the Middle Managers' Negotiating Body;
- the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services;
- the Authority locally and Representative Bodies nationally.

Pay awards are considered annually for all staff.

Operational (Uniformed) – Salary and Remuneration

The pay structure for employees conditioned to the Scheme of Conditions of Service for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (Grey Book) provides a three point pay structure at Firefighter level and a two point pay structure for all other roles. Rates of pay are based on defined stages of development such as training, development and competent pay levels. After all the applicable functions have been assessed as having been achieved, competence is deemed to have been demonstrated and competent salary rate applied.

The Authority pay framework for operational staff was reviewed in 2003 and implemented in December 2003 following a rank-to-role exercise in line with national guidance, with the grade for each role being determined by a consistent job evaluation process.

For operational staff, any outcome of national consultations by the Local Government Employers in negotiation with the Representative Bodies is applied in July each year.

Support Roles (Non-Uniformed) – Salary and remuneration

The salary and remuneration levels for support staff are determined in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book).

The pay structure is aligned to the national spinal column point system. Spinal column points are configured into groups to provide incremental pay points. The incremental rises occur on 1 April, subject to national pay bargaining until the top of the spinal column is reached. Where an employee commences in post after 1 October and up to 31 March, they receive an increment six months later and then annually on 1 April.

Starting salary may be uplifted along the incremental structure if experience and knowledge warrant this approach.

The Authority pay framework for support staff was implemented in 2003 in line with national guidance, with the grade for each role being determined by the national Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) Job Evaluation scheme. The Scheme was developed to support Local Authorities in carrying out their obligations under the national agreement on single status. The national agreement required all Local Authorities, and a number of other public sector employers, to review their pay and grading frameworks to ensure fair and consistent practice for different groups of workers with the same employer.

The grading structure was reviewed and implemented in 2012 for support Senior Management posts, PO3 and above.

For support staff, any outcome of national consultations by the Local Government Employers in negotiation with the Representative Bodies is applied in April each year.

Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and Principal Officers – Salary and Remuneration

The National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Authorities will publish annually recommended minimum levels of salary applicable to Chief Fire Officers/Chief Executives employed by local authority fire and rescue authorities.

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive's pay is considered by the Authority. Account is taken of relevant available information, including the salaries of Chief Officers in other comparable Fire and Rescue Services nationally. To support the pay review, information may be provided on inflation, earnings growth and any significant considerations from elsewhere in the public sector.

For Brigade Managers, any outcome of national consultations by the Local Government Employers in negotiation with the Trade Unions is applied in January each year.

The Authority has adopted the following pay levels for the Principal Officer team:

- Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) – 80% of Chief Fire Officer (CFO)
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) – 75% of CFO
- Director of Finance – 80% of ACFO

The Treasurer is part of the Director of Finance's role for which a specific honorarium is paid and this is reviewed periodically.

Market Forces

Where necessary the Authority may apply market supplements for specific roles in order to ensure that it can recruit the best staff. This approach will only be adopted where there is clear evidence of recruitment difficulty and any such payments will be time limited and reviewed annually. The Authority currently pays market supplements.

Pay Allowances, Expenses, Bonuses and Performance Related Pay

There are a number of allowances paid to employees where specific circumstances require this and where it can be justified, for example to cover additional responsibilities over and above pay grades. Allowances are negotiated nationally or locally through collective bargaining arrangements and/or as determined by Service policy.

Honorariums

This is a one-off additional payment for work carried out over and above the job role. This payment is at the Chief Fire Officer's discretion.

When legitimately incurred in the performance of their duties, all employees are able to claim a restricted range of legitimate expenses. These are reimbursed in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions specified in the Gold, Grey or Green Book. All expenses have the usual audit requirements with the requirement to produce receipts, authorisation of all expenditure and the requirement to retain records.

The Authority does not award performance related pay nor bonuses in addition to base salary.

Latest National Pay Award

Annual pay awards normally take place as follows:

- Chief Officers' – January
- Non-uniformed Support staff – April
- Uniformed staff - July

The last annual pay award for these groups were as follows:

- Chief Officers – January 2021
- Non-uniformed Support staff - April 2020
- Uniformed staff - July 2021

Appendix 1 and 2 details the remuneration relating to the above groups.

Other Employment-Related Arrangements

Pension Schemes

The Service operates the following pension schemes:

- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
- 1992 Firefighter Pension Scheme
- 2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme
- Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (Modified)
- The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (England)

In accordance with the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, the Authority has established a Pensions Board for the Firefighter's Pension Scheme.

New employees are automatically enrolled to the relevant occupational pension scheme as defined by their terms and conditions of employment on appointment and qualifying employees are automatically re-enrolled during their employment.

Employment Arrangements

Due to the nature and responsibilities of their role, Senior Managers are normally employed on full time, permanent employment contracts. The Service's policy and procedures with regards to recruitment of Chief Officers is set out within the Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Fire Authority Constitution.

When recruiting to all posts the Authority will take full and proper account of its own Equal Opportunities, Recruitment and Redeployment Policies. The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and the relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment.

Payments on Termination of Employment

The Authority's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment for all staff prior to reaching normal retirement age are in accordance with the Service's Redundancy Policy and relevant terms and conditions as follows:

- Arrangements for Support and Control staff are set out within the Service's LGPS Discretions Policy Statement in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment), (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 [and if adopted] Regulations 12 and 13 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contribution) Regulations 2007.
- Arrangements for uniformed staff are set out within the relevant conditions of service i.e. NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

The Authority agreed on 18 February 2015 the discretion to pay voluntary redundancy to all employee groups based on the number of statutory weeks x actual weekly pay, enhanced by 75%. On the 8 October 2015, the Authority extended the Scheme of Delegation to permit the Chief Fire Officer to approve early retirements, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority and Treasurer, in the case of employees whose salary is less than £45,000 to include Officers at Station Commander role subject to the pension costs still not exceeding £45,000. Where it is above £45,000 the decision will be taken by the Policy and Resources Committee.

The Authority operates a Flexible Retirement Policy which was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee of the FRA at its meeting on 25 January 2012. This policy applies to all staff in all relevant pension schemes. The Authority offers re-employment as an option to fill specific post(s) where there is a shortage of skills/experience within the remaining workforce.

Where the Authority has defined a specific need, a business case must be produced by the relevant Head of Department showing there are clear benefits for the Authority to offer a re-employment opportunity. Part of the business case will include whether to offer the post out to open competition.

Mandatory Gender Pay Gap Reporting

The Authority is required to publish information regarding the Gender Pay Gap, as required under The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

The Equality and Gender Pay Gap Report has been considered by the Audit and Standards Committee in January 2022 and is published on the Service website.

Pay Grades 2022/23 Job	Remuneration	Pay Relationship to CFO (%)	Salary Range	
			Min	Max
1. Head of Paid Service				
Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive	£135,674	Recommended by Appointments Committee		
2. Statutory Chief Officer				
Treasurer (Part of Director of Finance role) receives an additional £3,000 honorarium for the extra responsibility of Treasurer				
Monitoring Officer (Part of Head of Legal Services role)				
3. Non-Statutory Chief Officer				
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO)	£108,728	80.00		
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)	£101,931	75.00		
Director of Finance (excluding Treasurer role)	£81,545	60.00		
Head of Legal Services	£66,680	50.00	£62,831	£66,680
4. Deputy Chief Officer				
Assistant Director - Protection	£72,861	*	£72,861	£79,920
Assistant Director - Response	£72,861	*	£72,861	£79,920
Assistant Director - Assets	£72,861	*	£72,861	£79,920
Assistant Director - Prevention	£62,831		£62,831	£66,680
Head of Finance (Chief Accountant)	£53,924	39.00	£50,715	£53,924
5. Lowest Paid Employees **				
Uniformed				
Firefighter (Control)	£23,938	17.00	£22,981	£30,632
Non-Uniformed				
Administrator	£19,312	14.00	£19,312	£19,698

Notes:

*** includes an additional 8% enhancement to provide a higher level of fire cover responsibility and includes a 20% allowance to provide out of hours fire cover on a continuous rota system.**

**** The lowest paid employees (Administrators) are employed on full time (37 hours) equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum scale point in use within the Service grading structure. As at 1 April 2020, this is Scale 3, spinal column point 5.**

The Head of Paid Service, Director of Finance, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and uniformed Assistant Directors are provided with a motor vehicle for work purposes. Any private use is chargeable.

The Head of Legal Services receives an essential mileage car user allowance in accordance with the NJC provisions.

A number of staff members including the Head of Paid Service, all statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers and all Deputy Officers are provided with a mobile phone and laptop for work purposes. Any private use is chargeable.

Non-Uniformed Pay Grades from 1 st April 2022*	Pay Range Minimum	Pay Range Maximum	No of Staff In Post		
PO7	£62,831	£66,680	2		
PO6	£56,576	£59,947	0		
PO5	£50,715	£53,924	2		
PO4	£45,607	£49,185	0		
PO3	£39,880	£42,821	4		
PO2	£35,745	£38,890	5		
PO1	£32,234	£34,728	20		
SO2	£30,451	£32,234	4		
SO1	£27,741	£29,577	11		
Scale 6	£24,982	£27,041	14		
Scale 5	£22,183	£24,491	26		
Scale 4	£20,092	£21,748	17		
Scale 3	£19,312	£19,698	25		
Total			130		
Uniformed Pay Grades **			WT	RDS	Total
Area Commander	£56,220	£61,667	3	0	3
Group Commander	£47,887	£53,086	7	0	7
Station Commander	£41,578	£45,861	15	0	15
Station Commander Control	£39,499	£43,568	1	0	1
Watch Commander	£36,521	£39,974	65	23	88
Watch Commander Control	£34,695	£37,975	3	0	3
Crew Commander ***	£34,269	£35,747	21	47	68
Crew Commander Control	£32,556	£33,960	9	0	9
Firefighter	£24,191	£32,244	122	310	432
Firefighter Control ****	£22,981	£30,632	11	0	11
Total			257	380	637

NOTES: Number of staff in post is as at 6 January 2022 and is based on people in their substantive roles. These figures are headcount not full time equivalent.

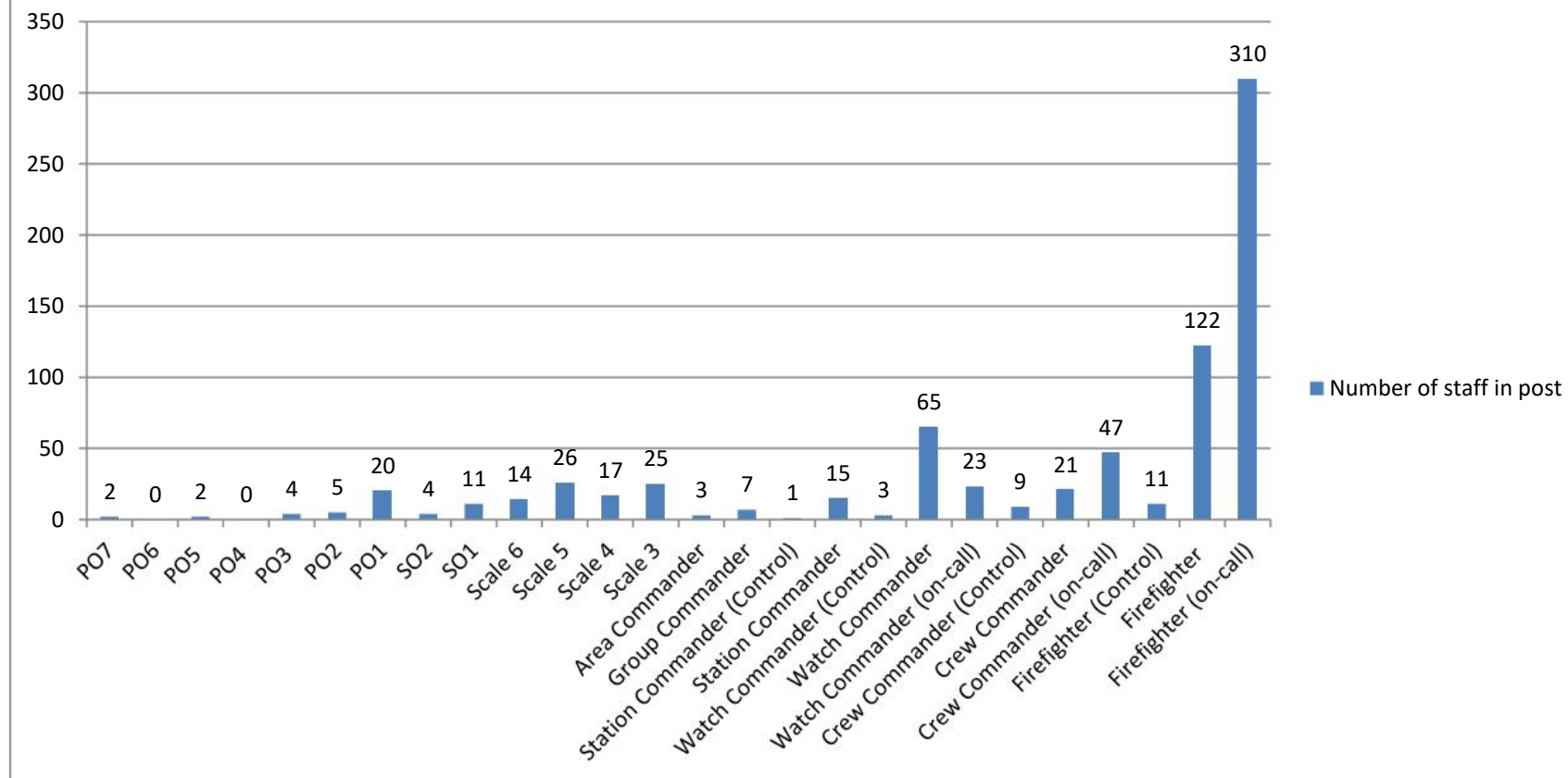
*Includes Fixed Term Contracts, two at Scale 3, one at Scale 4, three at scale 5, one at scale 6, one at scale PO1

** On Call employees have a different pay structure to Wholetime – a retaining fee of either 8%, 9.5%, 10% or 12% of the equivalent Wholetime rate, depending on cover, plus the same hourly rate as Wholetime.

*** Includes three fixed term Wholetime Crew Commander contracts

****Includes three fixed term Firefighter (Control) contracts

Grades and staff in post



Report of the Head of Legal Services

Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23

Purpose of report

1. To propose an increase in the allowances paid to Members for 2022/23 and that future increases be linked to the National Joint Council annual pay award (if any) for 'Green Book' staff.

Recommendation

The Chairman and Vice-chairman recommend that:

- (i) the existing basic and special responsibility allowances paid to Members be increased by 1.75% for 2022/23; and*
- (ii) in subsequent years, allowances be increased by the same percentage as the preceding year's pay award for National Joint Council 'Green Book' staff.*

Introduction and Background

2. The Authority is required to make a scheme each year for its Members to be paid a basic annual allowance, under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. Authorities may also make provision for other allowances, for example for those Members with special responsibilities or for travel and subsistence. The proposed 2022/23 budget for Members' allowances is £51,000.

Consumer Price Index

3. The Regulations allow for authorities to refer to an index for the purpose of any annual adjustments to the levels of allowances and in the past, the Fire Authority has nominally linked its allowances to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In reality however, against the backdrop of austerity and restrictions on public sector pay awards, the Authority has not taken any uplift since 2008 with the exception of the decision taken in February 2016, which provided a slight increase of 0.2% for the financial year 2016/17.
4. The Office of National Statistics has reported that the CPI inflation rate was 4.84% in the year to December 2021. By way of example, an equivalent increase for Members allowances would equate to an additional £56.42 on the current basic allowance of £1,165.80 and would increase the requirement for Members' allowances by £2,374.

NCJ Annual Awards

5. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman recognise that it is neither sustainable nor fair on Members to continue freezing the rate of Members' allowances year on year. However, it would be equally inappropriate for Members to award themselves a larger increase than has been offered to staff.
6. To address these concerns, it is proposed that any increase in Members' allowances should in future be linked to the annual pay awards for the Authority's non-operational NCJ Green Book staff.
7. The NCJ Green Book pay settlement for April 2022 has not yet been finalised but the previous offer from employers is 1.75% and it is proposed to use that figure for Members' allowances in 2022/23. This would equate to an increase of £21.39 per Member on the existing basic allowance. The total additional cost (including special allowances) would be £900 which can be funded within existing budgets.
8. The table below shows a comparison of the current allowances, the proposed 1.75% increase and the amount if CPI were applied.

Allowance	Current	Proposed (1.75%)	CPI (4.84%)
Basic	£1165.80	£1187.19	£1222.22
Committee Chairman/ Group Leader	£1357.44	£1382.34	£1423.14
Authority Vice-Chairman	£5429.76	£5529.38	£5692.56
Authority Chairman	£9049.68	£9215.71	£9487.68
Total allowances *	£49,054	£49,954	£51,428

*Members may only receive one special responsibility allowance

9. Any Member who does not wish to receive the allowance either in full or who chooses to decline the proposed increase may do so.

Conclusion/Summary

10. Members' allowances have previously been nominally linked to the annual increase in CPI but in practice, against a backdrop of austerity and public sector pay restraint, Members have declined to make any changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme for several years. It is proposed that linking future increases to the annual pay awards for the Authority's non-operational, NJC 'Green Book' staff would be a more appropriate benchmark than the CPI.
11. The proposed increase of 1.75% for 2022/23 would equate to an additional cost overall of £900, which can be funded from within existing budgets.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The proposed budget for members' allowances is £51,000. The proposed increase of 1.75% across all allowances could be met within the existing budget.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None directly.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None directly.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	The current Members' Allowances Scheme includes a Dependents' Carers' Allowance to assist those members with caring responsibilities in carrying out their approved duties.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Draft Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23

Background papers –

Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

Inflation and Price Indices – Office for National Statistics www.ons.gov.uk

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Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23

Fire Authority Members receive certain allowances in recognition of their various duties and to recognise the time they give to undertake Authority work. Allowances are also intended to cover incidental costs that may be incurred by Members.

Allowances will be adjusted annually in line with the preceding year's pay award to the Authority's non-operational NJC 'Green Book' staff.

Basic Allowance

The annual basic allowance of £1,187.19 is paid to all Members.

Special Responsibility Allowances

The following additional allowances are paid to Members with special responsibilities:

Chair of the Authority	£9,215.71
Vice Chair of the Authority	£5,529.38
Political Group Leaders	£1,382.34
Chairman of Audit & Standards Committee	£1,382.34
Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee	£1,382.34

Members with more than one special responsibility will only receive one special responsibility allowance at the higher appropriate level.

The Members' Allowances Scheme also includes the following travel and subsistence allowances:

Travel Allowance

Allowances for travel expenses incurred by Members undertaking their approved duties can be claimed.

Mileage can be claimed for travel by car motorbike or cycle in line with the rate used by HM Revenue & Customs. Car park costs incurred by a Member whilst undertaking an approved duty may also be claimed back although evidence of the payment will need to be submitted.

For those Members who car share, a passenger allowance can be claimed by the driver in respect of one or more passengers who are fellow Authority Members carried on Authority business.

Members may claim for use of public transport up to the amount of the ordinary standard class fare (or any available cheap fare as incurred).

Evidence of the payment will need to be submitted. Taxi fares may be claimed where bus/train travel is not practical. Receipts will be required.

Approved Duties

Members may submit a claim for travel allowances for:

- a) meetings of the Authority, its committees, sub-committees, panels or working parties;
- b) meetings of outside bodies to which a Member is appointed by the Authority, if that organisation does not pay Members' expenses;
- c) Authority Member training seminars, events and workshops;
- d) Chairman's briefing meetings;
- e) meetings with Officers in connection with the functions of the Authority which have been convened by the Chief Fire Officer or a member of the Senior Management Board; or
- f) any meeting or event as approved by the Authority or its Committees.

Subsistence Allowances

Members can claim subsistence allowance payments as a reimbursement of actual expenditure, on the basis that reasonable expenses evidenced by receipts will be paid. Similarly, overnight accommodation expenses will be paid where this is necessary and is evidenced by receipts.

Dependent Carers' Allowance

Members can claim an additional allowance to cover expenditure incurred for the care of dependents as follows:

- i) £6.09 per hour;
- ii) Payable in respect of attendance at meetings of the Authority, its committees and Member training events; and
- iii) Claims to be made only in respect of care provided by persons other than family members resident in the house and all claims to be evidenced by receipts.

Report of Head of Legal Services

Fire Authority and Committee Dates 2022/23

Purpose of report

1. To approve the meeting dates for 2022/23.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the meeting dates for 2022/23 be agreed.

Meeting Dates 2022/23

2. Attached at Appendix 1 are the proposed Authority meeting dates for 2022/23. These meeting dates have been checked with Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council in a bid to avoid any clashes in Members' diaries so far as possible.
3. As 2023 meeting dates have not been scheduled for either Council, we have requested that our dates be taken into account when setting the dates of their meetings.
4. In agreement with the Chairman, the schedule for Policy and Resources Committee meetings has been altered to reflect the realities of the grant settlement/budget setting timetable and also better align with the availability of the quarterly performance monitoring data.
5. Meeting venues have yet to be confirmed pending discussions with Worcestershire County Council regarding the availability of parking.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation with Senior Management Board Members and constituent authorities.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Not applicable

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2022/23 Meeting Dates.

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2022/23 Meeting Dates

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue
Fire Authority	Wed 22 June 2022	10.30	TBC
Audit & Standards Committee	Wed 20 July 2022	14.00	TBC
Policy & Resources Committee	Tues 13 Sept 2022	10.30	TBC
Audit & Standards Committee	Mon 26 Sept 2022	10.30	TBC
Fire Authority	Wed 12 Oct 2022	10.30	TBC
Policy & Resources Committee	Tues 15 Nov 2022	10.30	TBC
Fire Authority	Mon 12 Dec 2022	10.30	TBC
Audit & Standards Committee	Wed 18 Jan 2023	10.30	TBC
Fire Authority	Wed 15 Feb 2023	10.30	TBC
Policy & Resources Committee	Wed 1 Mar 2023	10.30	TBC



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Wednesday, 19 January 2022, 10:30

Chairman: Mr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos

Minutes

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

221 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Clayton, Cllr R Morris and Cllr D Toynbee.

222 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

223 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no declarations declared.

224 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

225 External Audit Findings Report 2020/21

The External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP, presented the Audit Findings Report for consideration and the Letter of Representation for approval.

Members were informed that the Audit Findings Report set out any issues that the Committee should consider before approving the accounts, it provided the draft audit opinion and Value For Money conclusion and Members were pleased to note that once again these raised no issues of

concerns.

Members noted that the majority of the Audit was completed at the end of October with the exception of the valuation of properties, which took several further weeks to complete due to previous issues with the valuations undertaken by PPL. New valuations were undertaken by the Police & Crime Commissioner's Property Team upon the Treasurer's request and the Audit was finalised mid December.

Members were asked to approve the Letter of Representation before it could be signed by the Chairman and the Treasurer, to allow the Audit to be formally concluded.

RESOLVED that:

i) the Audit Findings Report be noted; and

ii) the Letter of Representation be approved.

226 Auditor's Annual Report 2020/21

Members were presented with the Auditors Annual Report 2020/21 from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Members were informed that the Auditors undertook a risk assessment to identify any significant risks which needed to be addressed before the value for money conclusion was reached. The Auditors assessed the Authority's financial resilience as part of their work on the value for money conclusion. Members were pleased to note that no issues had been reported and thanked the Auditors for a clear and concise report.

RESOLVED that the Auditors Annual Report 2020/21 from the External Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP, be noted.

227 Statement of Accounts 2020/21

The Treasurer presented Members with the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts for approval.

Members were made aware that the Accounts were signed off by the Treasurer on 30 July in line with the Regulations, but after the original date agreed with the Auditors. There had been a number of resources issues, both in the Service and for the Auditors which had resulted in the Audit extending over a longer period than envisaged. The Accounts were not ready for approval by the statutory deadline, and this was recognised by the appropriate public notice.

Members were informed that since the sign off of the Accounts by the

Treasurer, they had been subject to Audit with the result that a number of changes had been made. Some of these had been of a minor nature, mainly typographical, or updating of the Notes to the Accounts to improve the disclosure and the property valuation changes had also been included.

Having already considered the Audit Findings Report (item 225 above) Members were asked to approve the Statement of Accounts, which when published would include the Audit Opinion and the approved Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED that having already noted the Audit Findings Report, the Statement of Accounts 2020/21 be approved.

228 Internal Audit Draft Audit Plan 2022/23

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service provided Members with the Draft Audit Plan for 2022/23.

Members noted that the Plan would be reviewed regularly and would remain reasonably flexible with any changes being discussed with the Treasurer and reported to Committee for the justification of any changes.

RESOLVED that the 2022/23 Draft Internal Audit Plan be approved.

229 Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22

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

Members were pleased to note that the Safeguarding and Young Firefighters review had been finalised and the Payroll review had been completed and would be reported to Committee as soon as it was finalised. Members were pleased to note that there were no exceptions to be reported and with ongoing reviews taking place, were satisfied with the progress.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

230 People Strategy 2022 - 2025

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the People Strategy 2022 – 2025 for consideration and approval.

Members noted that there were five key aims of the strategy, which would be delivered over the next 5 years starting in April 2022, and an action plan would be reported to the Committee yearly.

Members thanked Officers for providing a very well presented document which aided the understanding with the graphics and were pleased to note that further documentation would be provided in the same way as and when they were updated.

RESOLVED that the Authority considers and approves the People Strategy 2022 – 2025.

231 Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report 2020/2021 and Equality Objectives Progress Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report 2020/2021 and the Service's Equality Objectives 2021-2025 for Q1-Q2 2021-2022.

Members were reminded that the Gender Pay Gap was not about paying men and women differently in the same role. Members noted the contents of the report and approved it for publication.

Members were pleased to note that more female members of staff were moving to senior level roles within the Service. The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that he was very positive in the direction the Service was travelling.

Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr E Marshall and Cllr N McVey would share the role of Member Champion, alongside Cllr Bowen who had confirmed he would stand again in June 2022.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

i) notes the content of the Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report 2020/2021 and approves its publication.

ii) notes the progress made against the Equality Objectives 2021-2025 for Q1–Q2 2021/2022.

iii) appoints Cllr E Marshall and Cllr N McVey jointly as additional Members of the Audit and Standards Committee as Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

232 Prevention Cause of Concern – Action Plan Update

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

The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that he was pleased with the Service's progress and the fact that there was no immediate reinspection was testimony to the work that had been done.

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

**233 Health and Safety Committee Update: July – September 2021
(Quarter 2)**

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

Members noted the report and were pleased that the general number of incidents were decreasing which was testament to the health and safety procedures in place.

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

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

ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during July to September 2021 (Quarter 2).

The Meeting ended at: 12:06

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 26 January 2022, 10:30

Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Chambers, Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs K Hey, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor

193 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Ditta, Cllr J Monk, Cllr R Udall and Cllr T Wells.

194 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

195 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was a member of the NJC for Fire Service, Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), a member of the Fire Commission and a Director of Place Partnership Limited.

196 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

197 Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on the budget for 2022/23 and implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Treasurer was pleased to report that the Comprehensive Spending

Review and Council Tax information had now been received and Members were provided with the updated data. Members were asked to approve the Council Tax Band D Precept increase. Following in depth discussions regarding the cost of inflation and the challenges being faced by our communities across the two Counties, and the need to avoid creating a future budget shortfall, Members agreed to recommend an increase in the Band D Precept of £1.72 per household/per year (1.96%).

Members noted the expenditure efficiencies expected to arise from the opening of the Wyre Forest Hub were being deferred by one year as a result of delays in the disposal of surplus buildings.

Members also noted that the Business Rates information was still awaited and it was anticipated to be received by the statutory deadline of 31 January 2022. This would be reported to the Fire Authority meeting in February 2022.

The Treasurer assured Members that the Authority's financial position in those areas where information was available was better than anticipated, but the as yet unknown Business Rates position could absorb all the gain.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

i) Approved the changes to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) expenditure projection;

ii) Recommended that the Authority increase the Band D Precept by £1.72 (1.96%);

iii) Noted that the MTFP funding projection awaited detailed information on Business Rates; and

iv) Noted that the indications were that the final MTFP would be within previously approved parameters.

198 Update on progress with the Invest to Improve programme

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the progress being made following the release of funding from strategic reserves in June 2021 to make long term improvements in some key elements of core service delivery and infrastructure.

Members noted the key areas of development and were pleased with the improvements being made.

RESOLVED that the schemes identified within the Invest to Improve programme and progress to date, be noted.

199 Fleet Strategy Update

The Assistant Director of Assets presented Members with an update on the current Fleet Strategy.

Members noted that the current Fleet Strategy was developed in 2015 to cover the period 2016 to 2021. A full review of the current Fleet Strategy was underway to ensure that it aligned with the new core strategies and would be published in 2022.

Members thanked Officers for the comprehensive report.

RESOLVED that the Fleet Strategy update be noted.

200 Property Services Update

The Assistant Director of Assets presented Members with an update on the current property programme.

Members noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner's property team now deliver the property management function as part of the joint property team, which became operational on 1 April 2021 and was continuing to transition and develop well.

There are currently four new build schemes being planned/developed across the two Counties and site disposals for former fire stations currently being progressed.

RESOLVED that the property update and progress is noted.

201 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed Members of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since the last update provided on 2 December 2020.

Members were pleased to note the key issues under discussion.

RESOLVED that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:

i) Occupational Health provider

ii) HMICFRS Inspection and Cause of Concern

iii) Policies

iv) Job Evaluation

v) 12 Hour Day Duty System trial at Hereford Fire Station

vi) Standardising promotion processes

The Meeting ended at: 11:44

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman