



HEREFORD & WORCESTER Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

AGENDA

Wednesday, 31 January 2018

10:30

Conference Suites

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

ACTION ON DISCOVERING A FIRE

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

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

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

ACTION ON HEARING THE ALARM

- 1 Proceed immediately to the Assembly Point

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

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

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS

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Wheelchair access

The meeting room is accessible for visitors in wheelchairs.

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First Aid -please ask at reception to contact a trained First Aider.

Toilets – please ask at reception.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

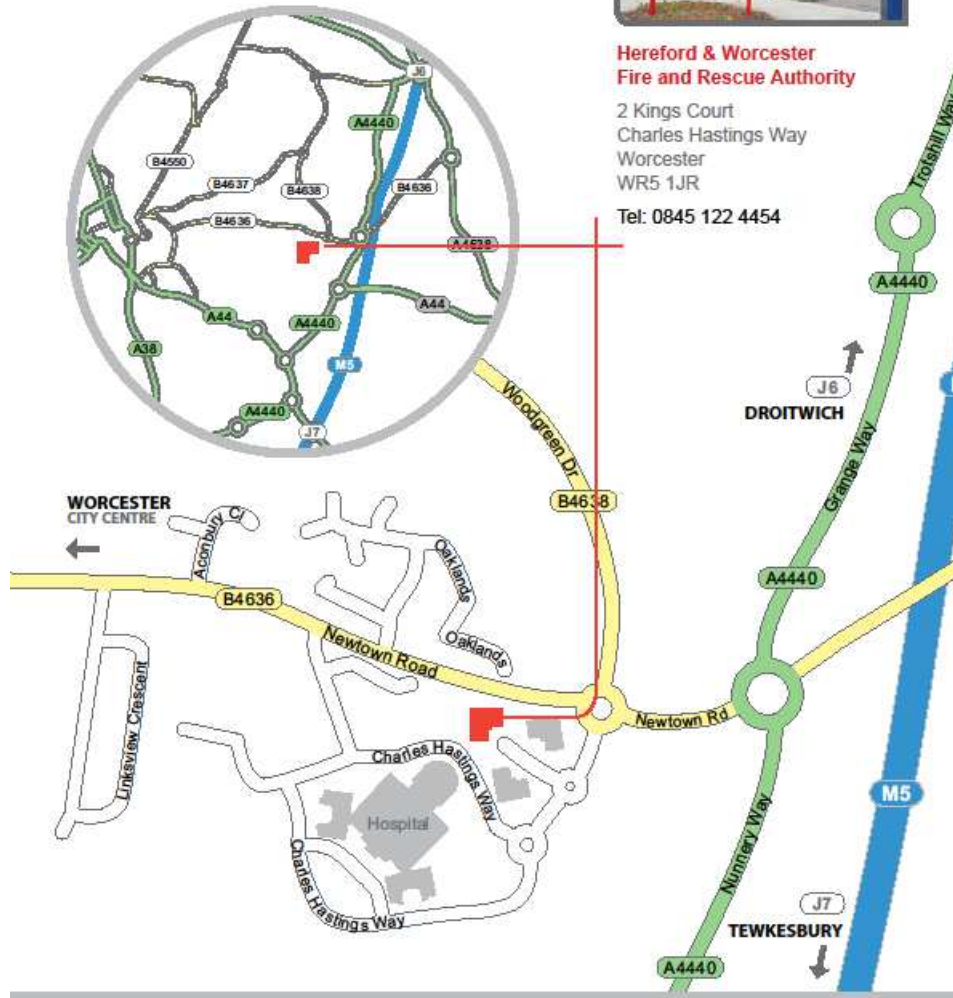
Service Headquarters



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

2 Kings Court
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester
WR5 1JR

Tel: 0845 122 4454





Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 31 January 2018, 10:30

Agenda

Councillors

Mr C B Taylor (Chairman), Mr R C Adams (Vice Chairman), Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Mr D Greenow, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mrs J Potter, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall

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	Confirmation of Minutes To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2017.	7 - 11
4	Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) To review the current position in relation to budgets for 2018/19 and beyond, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority.	12 - 23

5	Fire and Rescue National Framework for England - Government Consultation	24 - 66
	This paper reports on the recently published consultation on a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and provides a draft response for consideration.	
6	Proposed Fire and Rescue Services Inspection Programme and Framework	67 - 90
	This report provides details of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) consultation on their proposed inspection programme and framework. It includes a proposed response to the consultation.	
7	Relocation of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park Estate	91 - 94
	To update Members on the current position of the Headquarters relocation project and to request the granting of delegated authority for grant expenditure and to enter into appropriate lease arrangements.	
	Exclusion of the Press and Public	
	In the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority the meeting will not be, or is not likely to be open to the public at the times Appendix 1 to Item 7 and Item 8 are considered for the following reason:	
	Both are likely to disclose information relating to the financial affairs or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	
8	Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub	
	To update Members on the progress of the project and to seek approval of a revised budget allocation.	



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 22 November 2017, 10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mrs J Potter, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill

92 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr R Phillips and Mr B Baker.

93 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

94 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

95 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 20 September 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

96 PCC Business Case

In the absence of the Chairman of the Fire Authority, the Vice-Chairman Mr P Tuthill provided Members with a verbal update on the PCC's Business Case.

Members were reminded that the PCC had submitted a revised business case direct to the Home Office and this was now being reviewed by CIPFA. Following a meeting with the Chairman of Shropshire & Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority, the Leaders of the Constituent Authorities had

again requested the two Fire Authorities to engage the consultants to review the revised business case due to concerns about the potential impact this could have on the delivery of fire and rescue services and that the evidence then be fed into CIPFA for further consideration.

The Treasurer confirmed that the cost could be met from underspends elsewhere in the existing budget.

RESOLVED that the Authority contribute up to £10,000, shared between the two authorities, to support the cost of the consultants' review for the revised business case.

97 2017/18 Budget Monitoring – 2nd Quarter

Members were informed of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2017/18 and noted the forecast revenue underspend of £0.278m and the in budget risk regarding the uniform staff pay award of £0.195m.

There was particular discussion around property issues; namely Redditch Fire Station and Wyre Forest Hub and Members were pleased to note that both projects were progressing as expected.

With regard to the Capital budget, Members requested a breakdown of each future project. The Treasurer confirmed that this would be provided to Members separately following the meeting.

With regard to Treasury Management, Members queried the borrowing and investment percentage rates and were happy with the information provided by the Treasurer.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- (i) note the forecast revenue underspend of £0.278m (-0.9%); and**
- (ii) note the in budget risk regarding the uniform staff pay award £0.195m (+0.6%).**

98 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

Members were informed of the current Medium Term Financial Plan and noted that a further report will be brought to the Committee when the key funding information has been made available.

Members asked if there were any further grants available from government and were advised by the Treasurer that all that was available

was what they had already received for the Headquarters move and the Wyre Forest Hub.

RESOLVED that the current resources position be noted and a further report be brought to the Committee when the key funding information has been made available.

99 Review of Cost Recovery for Chargeable Special Services – 2017/18

Members were asked to consider an increase in the cost recovery based charges made for certain operational non-emergency special services, in line with the rising costs incurred by the Authority.

Members queried how often these services were used and were advised that the number of lift rescues, in particular, had dropped as companies were now taking on better maintenance. Members were also reminded that the charging is not for attendance at an emergency, but charges could be made for any subsequent recovery phase, such as any clean up requested by the Environmental Agency.

Members noted that the level of charges had to be based on cost recovery and could not include a profit element. Members also noted that the fees would be reviewed in February 2018 for 2018/19 and annually thereafter.

RESOLVED that:

i) the fees for chargeable operational non-emergency special services be revised as set out in Appendix 1 of the report with immediate effect;

ii) in future this item be considered annually as part of the Annual Budget and Precept report to the Fire Authority.

100 2017-18 Performance Report: Quarters 1 & 2

Members were provided with a summary of the Service's Quarters 1 and 2 performance against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board.

There was particular discussion in relation to retained availability at Kidderminster Fire Station. Members were advised that this was due to an unprecedented number of leavers, however, recruitment was currently underway. Members were assured that the Service's resources were being appropriately distributed during this time.

With regard to parking problems for fire engine access, Members requested to help the Service by issuing campaign leaflets. It was agreed that Members would receive the leaflet for their use once it had been finalised.

Members queried the data regarding attendance times at building fires and it was agreed that the figures needed to be adjusted as there were some inaccuracies.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 of the report relating to performance in Quarter 1 & 2, 2017-18:

i) A total of 3617 incidents were attended in Quarters 1 & 2, an increase of 0.3% (11 incidents) over the same period in 2016-17, and 4.4% (159 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years.

ii) The majority of the increase in Quarters 1 & 2 can be accounted for by a rise in the numbers of Secondary Fire incidents (primarily with a spike in Q1, in isolation Q2 is lower than the same period of 2016-17). Special Service incidents have increased slightly, whilst False Alarms were down (72 incidents):

a. Fires: an increase of 59 incidents for this period over the previous year is largely accounted for by an increase in Secondary outdoor Fires (up by 54 incidents) due to the warmer summer period.

b. Special Services: there was an increase of 24 incidents over the period. Most subcategories have increased slightly; these include Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), assisting other Agencies, Rescue/Evacuation from Water, Spills and Leaks (non-RTC) and Ring Removal. The areas in which decreases have occurred are lift releases (9 incidents).

c. False Alarms: there was a decrease of 72 incidents overall when compared to the same period in 2016-17. Only a minor increase of the sub-category of Malicious False Alarms went up (7 incidents).

iii) Overall Staff Sickness levels are 2.90 days lost per head, which is outside of tolerance levels set (see paragraph 3 below) for Quarter 1 & 2.

iv) The Service attended 60.8% (344 incidents) of Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarters 1 & 2 compared with 62.5% in the same period in 2016-17. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all building fires was nine minutes and forty two

seconds.

v) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 89.5%; however this has decreased by 1.6 % when compared to the same period in 2016-17.

The Meeting ended at: 11:57

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Report of the Treasurer

Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Purpose of Report

1. To review the current position in relation to budgets for 2018/19 and beyond, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) recommend that the Fire Authority agrees the amendments to expenditure and resource projections as set out in Appendices 2 to 4;*
- (ii) recommends that the Authority increases the Band D Precept by £2.37 (2.98%) in 2018/19;*
- (iii) recommends that the Authority plans to increase precept by 3% in 2019/20 and 1.96% per year thereafter;*
- (iv) recommends that the Authority approves a planning assumption of annual pay awards of 2%;*
- (v) recommends that the Authority continues to approve the Reserves Strategy to smooth the implementation of efficiencies over the period; and*
- (vi) authorises the Treasurer to make appropriate adjustments to the phasing of the use of reserves to accommodate the confirmed council tax-base, council tax collection fund, Business Rate yield and Section 31 Grant figures.*

Background

2. In November 2017 the Committee considered an interim revision to the MTFP for 2018/19 to 2021/22, pending receipt of full funding information from government and billing authorities.
3. In the absence of any further information, the Fire Authority considered the same report in December 2017 and made no changes.
4. On 8th January 2018 Group Leaders considered the options around precept increases and whilst not a decision-making body has made recommendations to the Committee to consider.
5. Most, but not yet all, of the missing funding data has been received, and there is more information available regarding the expenditure assumptions, and this has been incorporated into this revision.

The position so far

6. The MTFP had significant budget gaps over the period, but there are major efficiencies which would be brought to fruition within the period to close the underlying base budget gap. Prudential use of reserves, that had been built up to manage the transition, are used to avoid unnecessary budget reductions over the period.
7. Appendix 1 sets out the Interim MTFP position, in a consolidated format and shows that after the use of reserves, in accordance with the approved strategy, there was a balanced budget through to 2020/21 with a gap of £0.947m in 2021/22.
8. Appendix 2 sets out the revised position, in the same format and Appendix 3 provides an indicative position for the following two years. However, reference to Appendix 4 will show the changes to the projections and these are referred to in more detail below.

Expenditure Variations

9. There has been a revision to the calculation of the current pay award provision, where previously the full year effect of the 2017 awards had been double counted (Appendix 4 Line 3).
10. Given that the Local Government Employers have just agreed a 2-year 2% settlement for Support Staff, general discussion about the future of public sector pay increases and discussion at the last Committee, it is now considered prudent to make provision for a 2% award across the whole MTFP period. (Appendix 4 Line 4). The actual awards remain subject to national level negotiations.
11. There has been a revision to the estimated saving from better co-ordination of the Fire Control Centres for Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Service. (Appendix 4 Line 5)
12. The Interim MTFP made provision for the costs of property maintenance arising from the comprehensive review that had just been completed, and a total provision of £1.136m was made. Full plans now only require investment of £0.872m over the period. (Appendix 4 Line 6).
13. There is a consequential adjustment to the use of the Property Maintenance Earmarked Reserve. (Appendix 4 Line 7).

Resources

14. The provisional grant position to 2019/20 has now been given and shows a small reduction in Business Rate top up grant. (Appendix 4 Line 9). The figures should be formally confirmed in late January.

15. As previously indicated the position thereafter is much less clear. As government is reviewing public spending and consulting on:
 - i. the relative size of the fire share
 - ii. the distribution of the fire share between AuthoritiesEither of which could have significant impact on this Authority's financial position.

To add to the uncertainty it is not clear now if the proposed introduction of full rates retention will be implemented, due to other pressures on legislative time, and it is still not determined whether Fire will be part of the arrangement anyway.
16. The legislative timetable has now prevented the promised implementation of 100% business rate retention, but Government is now consulting on a proposal for 75% retention using existing legislation, effective from 2020/21.
17. Whilst government have still not determined whether Fire will continue to be part of the rates retention scheme now it is at 75% rather than 100%, the projections have been made on the assumption of continued involvement.
18. In the absence of any detail the following assumptions have been made:
 - i. Revenue Support Grant (RSG) ceases in total from 2020/21.
 - ii. The Fire Authority retains 1.5% of the locally collected Business Rates (*based on the principal that it keeps 1% under the current 50% retention regime*).
19. As the previous assumptions about grant reduction were very prudent and RSG for this authority is very low, the impact is one of timing with £0.186m less net resource in 2020/21, but £0.394m greater in 2021/22 onwards. (Appendix 4 Lines 10).
20. It should be noted that the relative levels of Business Rate yield and RSG in some Fire Authorities mean that there would inevitably have to be some form of resource redistribution.
21. Other Authorities have been more optimistic about future funding and if this Authority were to adopt those assumptions there could be £0.500m - £0.600m in available resources in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Treasurer does not believe this is a prudent planning assumption.
22. The existing MTFP makes provision for the loss of grant in support of the Firelink radio scheme as the Authority moves to the new national Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP scheme). This project now faces significant (1 to 2 years) delay, but government will not give any clarity about continued Firelink funding. Any clarity is not anticipated before the Budget setting meeting, so it is considered prudent to retain the existing assumption.
23. Billing Authorities have now provided tax-base information for 2018/19 and show a net increase of 1.32% against the 1.40% in the MTFP. This compares to an average annual increase of 1.9% for the last 4 years. These figures remain to be formally confirmed.

24. This has a marginal (£0.016m) detrimental impact on the 2018/19 budget which is more than offset by the, one off, Collection Fund surpluses of £0.151m (Appendix 4 Line 12). Again these estimates require formal confirmation and currently omit figures for one Billing Authority.
25. More significantly, however the net projected increases for future years have been revised downwards from 1.25% to 1.00%. This has a major impact on future resources such that by 2021/22 resources are £0.256m less than in the existing MTFP (Appendix 4 Line 11)
26. At the time of writing information was still awaited from Billing Authorities in respect of Business Rates. To date there has been no indicative information on how these items may change.
27. Within the grant settlement data there is an estimate of the Section 31 grant payable, which shows an increase over 2017/18. This is however a government estimate of the information that the Billing Authorities must provide in due course. Given the volatility and uncertainty regarding Business Rate Yield it was considered prudent not to include this increase until the fuller picture is known.

Overall Position

28. Bringing all these factors into account, and re-profiling the agreed use of reserves, results in a balanced budget for 2018/19 & 2019/20 with a small gap of £0.124m in 2020/21 rising to £1.458m in 2021/22, (Appendix 2 Line 36).
29. Indicative projections for 2022/23 and 2023/24 show this marginally reducing to £1.308m and £1.146m largely as a result of growth in the council tax-base. (Appendix 3 Line 14).
30. As a consequence it is estimated that the Authority will need to identify further on-going annual savings of around £1.2m by 2022/23.

Council Tax Limitation

31. Members will be aware that government now controls the level of council tax increase by setting a level above which, any increase requires approval by referendum before it is legitimate. The cost of holding a referendum must be borne by the Authority and is prohibitive in relation to the likely increases.
32. The previous limit had been set at 2% and this form the basis of the MTFP assumptions. However, government has now set the limit for 2018/19 and 2019/20 at 3%.
33. If the Authority were minded increasing Council Tax to the maximum permitted, and allowing for the appropriate re-alignment of the use of reserves, it would result in a balanced budget for 2021/22 and an approximate gap of £0.700m for later years.
34. Discussions at Group Leaders meeting on 8th January gave support to the proposal to increase the precept by the maximum amount permitted.

35. The detail impact of this proposal is shown in Appendix 4 Line 21, but reduces the potential savings target to £0.600m by 2022/23.(see paragraph 30 above)

Reserves Strategy

36. Reserves are held for a number of reasons including the funding of planned operational equipment purchases and the smoothing of the budget gap. Appendix 5 summarises the planned use of reserves in accordance with the approved strategy.
37. The current MTFP assumption of using £0.300m of General Balances in 2018/19 remains, leaving the core balance at £1.538m as agreed.
38. Whilst this level of balances remains prudent there is an opportunity cost of holding reserves. They could be used to finance one off expenditure or to temporarily reduce the council tax precept. The risk, of course, is that if reserves are reduced there is less capacity to meet unforeseen or unexpected expenditure pressures, and a temporary reduction in council tax cannot be readily recovered.

Fleet Strategy

39. The revenue budget includes the revenue impact of the approved Property and Vehicle Strategies. In accordance with the latter it was requested that information about the quantities and types of vehicles to be purchased is brought to this Committee. To avoid the need for an additional report this is included here as Appendix 6.

Future Progress

40. The following information is still required to complete the revision of the Budget and MTFP
- i. Confirmation of government grant
 - ii. Confirmation of Council Tax-base and Collection Funds
 - iii. Provision of Business Rate information (including related Section 31 Grant)
- It is unlikely that this will impact on the strategy and principles of the budget and MTFP, but is possible that there will be an impact on the timing of the future budget gap.
41. As this information may not be fully confirmed until after the date of the Committee, the Treasurer seeks authority to make the relevant changes to the data for presentation to the Authority in February.
42. The Fire Authority will meet on 14 February 2018 to agree a budget and precept for 2018/19.

Corporate Considerations

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

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Interim Medium Term Financial Forecasts 2018/19 to 2021/22 (Nov 2017)

Appendix 2: Revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22

Appendix 3: Indicative Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 & 2023/24

Appendix 4: Changes from Interim to Revised MTFP

Appendix 5: Summary Reserves Strategy

Appendix 6: Proposed Fleet Procurements

Background Papers

Policy & Resources Committee 22 November 2017: MTFP Update

Fire Authority 15 February 2017: Budget and Precept 2017/18 and MTFP

Contact Officer

Martin Reohorn, Treasurer

(01905 368205)

Email: mreohorn@hwfire.org.uk

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19

Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018

Interim Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-19 to 2021/22

As discussed P&R Cttee Nov 2017 & Fire Authority Dec 2017

	2018/19 Forecast £m	2019/20 Forecast £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m
1 2017/18 CORE BUDGET	31.687	31.687	31.687	31.687
2 2017/18 Inflation Saving	(0.171)	(0.171)	(0.171)	(0.171)
3	31.516	31.516	31.516	31.516
<u>Pay Awards & Inflation</u>				
4 2% Grey book Pay Award Jul 2017	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260
5 Future Pay Awards (2% 2018, 1% thereafter)	0.422	0.714	0.941	1.168
6 General Inflation	0.300	0.600	0.900	1.200
7 LGPS Revaluation	0.010	0.020	0.020	0.030
 8 Capital Programme	 (0.267)	 0.094	 0.094	 0.194
<u>Other Cost Pressures</u>				
9 FFPS Contribution Rates		0.315	0.315	0.315
10 Back-log Property Maintenance	0.713	0.352	0.071	
<u>Efficiencies & Other Savings</u>				
11 JPV Savings	(0.032)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.101)
12 EMSCP Post Contribution			(0.020)	(0.020)
13 Crewing Changes				(0.250)
14 Hindlip Move - release of existing HQ	(0.120)	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)
15 Hindlip Move - reduction in running costs	(0.040)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.080)
16 Hindlip Move - back office efficiencies		(0.029)	(0.100)	(0.100)
17 Fire Control				(0.500)
18 Wyre Forest				(0.100)
19 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	32.762	33.421	33.576	33.292
20 To/(From) Property Maintenance Reserve	(0.361)	(0.352)		
21 To/(From) Other Reserves	(0.911)	(1.201)	(1.553)	
22 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	31.490	31.868	32.023	33.292
 23 Revenue Support Grant	 (2.427)	 (2.036)	 (1.428)	 (0.873)
24 Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3.254)	(3.370)	(3.437)	(3.506)
25 Fire Service Revenue Grant	(0.985)	(0.835)	(0.835)	(0.835)
26 Rural Services Delivery Grant	(0.067)	(0.088)		
27 Business Rate Yield	(2.217)	(2.261)	(2.306)	(2.352)
28 Business Rate S31 Grants	(0.171)	(0.174)	(0.177)	(0.181)
29 Council Tax Yield	(22.369)	(23.104)	(23.840)	(24.598)
30 TOTAL FUNDING	(31.490)	(31.868)	(32.023)	(32.345)
 31 GAP	 0.000	 0.000	 0.000	 0.947
 <u>Forecast Changes in:</u>				
32 Council Tax-base	1.40%	1.30%	1.20%	1.20%
33 Band D Council Tax Precept	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%
34 Business Rate Yield	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
35 Business Rate Support Grant	3.20%	3.56%	2.00%	2.00%
36 Revenue Support Grant	-22.04%	-16.11%	-29.88%	-38.86%
37 Net Grant	-9.34%	-4.84%	-10.00%	-10.00%

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19
Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018
Revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-19 to 2021/22

	2018/19 Forecast £m	2019/20 Forecast £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m
1 2017/18 CORE BUDGET	31.687	31.687	31.687	31.687
2 2017/18 Inflation Saving	(0.171)	(0.171)	(0.171)	(0.171)
3	31.516	31.516	31.516	31.516
4 2021/22 FORECAST BUDGET REQUIREMENT				
<u>Pay Awards & Inflation</u>				
5 2% Grey book Pay Award Jul 2017	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260
6 Future Pay Awards (2% 2018, 1% thereafter)	0.317	0.723	1.138	1.560
7 General Inflation	0.300	0.600	0.900	1.200
8 LGPS Revaluation	0.010	0.020	0.020	0.030
9 Capital Programme	(0.267)	0.094	0.094	0.194
<u>Other Cost Pressures</u>				
10 FFPS Contribution Rates		0.315	0.315	0.315
11 Back-log Property Maintenance	0.260	0.120	0.185	0.160
<u>Efficiencies & Other Savings</u>				
12 JPV Savings	(0.032)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.101)
13 EMSCP Post Contribution			(0.020)	(0.020)
14 Crewing Changes				(0.250)
15 Hindlip Move - release of existing HQ	(0.120)	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)
16 Hindlip Move - reduction in running costs	(0.040)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.080)
17 Hindlip Move - back office efficiencies		(0.029)	(0.100)	(0.100)
18 Fire Control				(0.300)
19 Wyre Forest				(0.100)
20 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	32.204	33.198	33.887	34.044
21 To/(From) Property Maintenance Reserve	(0.260)	(0.120)	(0.185)	(0.160)
22 To/(From) Other Reserves	(0.312)	(1.375)	(1.978)	
23 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	31.632	31.703	31.724	33.884
24 Revenue Support Grant	(2.427)	(2.036)		
25 Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3.240)	(3.316)	(3.382)	(3.450)
26 Fire Service Revenue Grant	(0.985)	(0.835)	(0.835)	(0.835)
27 Rural Services Delivery Grant	(0.088)	(0.088)		
28 Business Rate Yield	(2.217)	(2.261)	(2.306)	(2.352)
29 Business Rate Yield - 75% Retention			(1.153)	(1.176)
30 Business Rate S31 Grants	(0.171)	(0.174)	(0.177)	(0.181)
31 Business Rate S31 Grants - 75% Retention			(0.089)	(0.091)
32 Business Rates Collection Fund				
33 Council Tax Yield	(22.353)	(22.993)	(23.658)	(24.341)
34 Council Tax Collection Fund	(0.151)			
35 TOTAL FUNDING	(31.632)	(31.703)	(31.600)	(32.426)
36 GAP	0.000	0.000	0.124	1.458
<u>Forecast Changes in:</u>				
37 Council Tax-base	1.32%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
38 Band D Council Tax Precept	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%
39 Business Rate Yield	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
40 Business Rate Support Grant	3.20%	3.56%	2.00%	2.00%
41 Revenue Support Grant	-22.04%	-16.11%	-100.00%	
42 Net Grant	-9.34%	-4.84%		

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19
Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018
Indicative Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 & 2023/24

	2022/23 Indicative £m	2023/24 Indicative £m
1 2021/22 FORECAST BUDGET REQUIREMENT	34.044	34.044
<u>Pay Awards & Inflation</u>		
2 Future Pay Awards (2% 2018, 1% thereafter)	0.420	0.840
3 General Inflation	0.300	0.600
<u>Other Cost Pressures</u>		
4 Back-log Property Maintenance	(0.013)	(0.147)
5 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	34.751	35.337
6 To/(From) Property Maintenance Reserve	(0.147)	
7 TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	34.604	35.337
8 Business Rate Top Up Grant	(3.519)	(3.589)
9 Fire Service Revenue Grant	(0.835)	(0.835)
10 Business Rate Yield	(3.599)	(3.671)
11 Business Rate S31 Grants	(0.278)	(0.284)
12 Council Tax Yield	(25.065)	(25.812)
13 TOTAL FUNDING	(33.296)	(34.191)
14 GAP	1.308	1.146
<u>Forecast Changes in:</u>		
15 Council Tax-base	1.00%	1.00%
16 Band D Council Tax Precept	1.96%	1.96%
17 Business Rate Yield	2.00%	2.00%
18 Business Rate Support Grant	2.00%	2.00%

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19
Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018
Changes from Interim to Revised MTFP

	2018/19 Forecast £m	2019/20 Forecast £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m
1 Interim MTFP Gap	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.947		
2 Expenditure Variations:						
3 Revised Pay Award Calculation	(0.105)	0.009	0.032	0.014		
4 Additional Pay Award			0.165	0.378		
5 Revised Fire Control saving				0.200		
6 Revised estimate of Property back-log	(0.453)	(0.232)	0.114	0.160		
7 change in Phasing of use of Property Reserve	0.101	0.232	(0.185)	(0.160)		
8	(0.457)	0.009	0.126	0.592		
Funding Variations:						
9 Net Grant Changes	(0.007)	0.054	0.055	0.056		
10 75% Business Rates			0.186	(0.394)		
11 Council Tax-base changes	0.016	0.111	0.182	0.257		
12 Council Tax Collection Fund	(0.151)					
13 Business Rate Yield						
14 Business Rate S31 Grant						
15 Business Rate Collection Fund						
16	(0.142)	0.165	0.423	(0.081)		
17 change in Phasing of use of Other Reserves	0.599	(0.174)	(0.425)	0.000		
18 Revised MTFP Gap	(0.000)	0.000	0.124	1.458	1.308	1.146
Impact of Increased Council Tax Precept						
19 Raising Council Tax by 3%	(0.223)	(0.462)	(0.474)	(0.490)	(0.506)	(0.520)
20 further change in Phasing of use of reserves	0.223	0.462	0.351	(0.968)	(0.068)	
21 Resulting MTFP Gap	(0.000)	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.734	0.626

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19
Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018
Reserves Strategy

		Deferred Expd. Reserves	Property Mtnce. Reserves	Funding Reduction Reserves	Other Reserves	Total E-marked Reserves	General (Unalloc.) Reserves	Total Reserves
1	Balance at 31st March 2017	5.381	0.213	4.069	1.844	11.507	1.838	13.345
	2017/18 Impact:							
2	Existing Property Reserve		(0.054)			(0.054)		(0.054)
3	Additional Property Reserve		0.713			0.713		0.713
4	Funding Equipment etc.	(0.033)				(0.033)		(0.033)
5	Supporting the Budget Gap			(0.703)		(0.703)		(0.703)
6	Expected at 31st March 2018	5.348	0.872	3.366	1.844	11.430	1.838	13.268
7	Funding Equipment etc. 18/19	(0.840)	(0.260)			(1.100)		(1.100)
8	19/20	(1.050)	(0.120)			(1.170)		(1.170)
9	20/21	(2.791)	(0.185)			(2.976)		(2.976)
10	21/22	(0.667)	(0.160)			(0.827)		(0.827)
11	22/23		(0.147)			(0.147)		(0.147)
12	HVP Accommodation 18/19				(0.140)	(0.140)		(0.140)
13		0.000	0.000	3.366	1.704	5.070	1.838	6.908
14	Supporting the Budget Gap 18/19			(0.012)		(0.012)	(0.300)	(0.312)
15	19/20			(1.375)		(1.375)		(1.375)
16	20/21			(1.978)		(1.978)		(1.978)
17	21/22					0.000		0.000
18	22/23					0.000		0.000
19	Expected at 31st March 2021	0.000	0.000	0.001	1.704	1.705	1.538	3.243
	Based on 1.96% Precept Increase							
	Balance at 31st March 2017	5.381	0.213	4.069	1.844	11.507	1.838	13.345
	Expected at 31st March 2018	5.348	0.872	3.366	1.844	11.430	1.838	13.268
	Expected at 31st March 2019	4.508	0.612	3.354	1.704	10.178	1.538	11.716
	Expected at 31st March 2020	3.458	0.492	1.979	1.704	7.633	1.538	9.171
	Expected at 31st March 2021	0.667	0.307	0.001	1.704	2.679	1.538	4.217
	Expected at 31st March 2022	0.000	0.147	0.001	1.704	1.852	1.538	3.390
	Expected at 31st March 2023	0.000	0.000	0.001	1.704	1.705	1.538	3.243
	If Precept Increase is different	1.96%	2.98%					
	Balance at 31st March 2017	13.345	13.345					
	Expected at 31st March 2018	13.268	13.268					
	Expected at 31st March 2019	11.716	11.939					
	Expected at 31st March 2020	9.171	9.856					
	Expected at 31st March 2021	4.217	5.253					
	Expected at 31st March 2022	3.390	3.458					
	Expected at 31st March 2023	3.243	3.243					

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority 2018/19
Policy & Resources Committee: 31st January 2018
Proposed Fleet Procurements 2017/18 & 2018/19

Vehicle Type	2018/19	2019/2020	Comments
Vans white fleet	3	2	
Cars, white fleet	9*	Nil	*Several additional new cars may be required in addition to existing fleet strategy due to changing demands and structures in Service Delivery
Minibus	2	Nil	Young Firefighters Association (YFA) and Training Centre Minibuses
Fire Appliances**	10 + 2	8	*A pilot scheme for 2 smaller fire appliances is included within this year as part of the replacement programme
Command Support Unit	2*	Nil	* Delayed from 2017/18
Water Carrier	2*	Nil	To be reviewed in 2018
Responding Officer Cars	24	11*	*No cars were replaced in 2017/18 hence carry over into 2018/19. Also 2019/20 cars may be purchased in 2018/19 year.
Trailers	3*		*carried over from previous year
Restricted Access Vehicles	Nil*	Nil	*Deferred to 2020/21.
Off Road Vehicles	Nil	1	

- 1 Fire Appliances (Large) – Within the Fleet Strategy there is provision for 20 replacement fire engines 2017 – 2021. These new fire engines are required within this time period to ensure the average age of the front line fire engine fleet is reduced to below fifteen years in line with the Fleet Strategy. Some of these vehicles may be substituted with smaller 'van' sized fire engines, subject to the success of a pilot scheme in 2018/19.
- 2 A full review of the chassis specification of the large fire engines has been undertaken to inform any future procurement process. Following a procurement tender competition process (Nov 2017) it has been identified that the continued procurement of the current Scania chassis provides best value against the fleet and user specification.
- 3 Exact vehicle costs are difficult to determine until the procurement process commences and the specification is tested against the market. The fleet capital programme provides appropriate funding for these proposed procurements and is agreed with the Treasurer and Deputy Chief fire Officer.
- 4 Funding for the replacement fleet vehicle programme is allocated through the capital programme and is reviewed by the Treasurer on a regular basis.

31 January 2018

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England – Government Consultation

Purpose of report

1. This paper reports on the recently published consultation on a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and provides a draft response for consideration.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that the draft response to the consultation (Appendix 2) be approved.

Introduction and Background

2. The National Framework sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. Fire and rescue authorities have a duty to have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions and every authority is required to publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework.
3. A new National Framework document has been drafted to replace the current 2012 version. It includes changes required to embed the Fire Reform programme and provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017.
4. Government are seeking comments on the six main sections of the draft National Framework: Delivery of Core Functions; Inspection, Accountability and Assurance; Governance; Achieving Value for Money; Workforce and National Resilience. Comments are also sought on a proposed new Intervention Protocol. It is clear that these themes will be explored in more details in the forthcoming HMICFRS inspections.
5. The draft Framework document and consultation is attached as Appendix 1. The consultation runs from 27 December 2017 to 14 February 2018.

Changes to the National Framework priorities

6. Essentially, the draft Framework reiterates the main priorities of the 2012 version with additional provisions in such areas as inspection, governance (including where governance is through a Police and Crime Commissioner), collaboration and workforce development.

7. For comparison, the table below lists the 2012 priorities and the proposed new priorities.

National Framework 2012 priorities for fire and rescue authorities	Proposed new National Framework priorities 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be accountable to communities for the service they provide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be accountable to communities for the service they provide; • develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Response to the consultation

8. The attached draft response (Appendix 2) sets out comments in relation to each area being consulted on. While appreciating the aims of incorporating the Fire Reform programme and the provisions of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 into the National Framework, the general response is that there needs to be more guidance and clarity in each of the areas being consulted on. Particular areas highlighted in the response include the need for more guidance on appropriate evaluation methodologies, more clarity on the judgement criteria to be used in the forthcoming inspections, more clarity on governance arrangements especially in relation to PCC fire and rescue authorities, and in terms of assessing value for money at a time of reducing resources.
9. In discussing the comments, Members should consider if they wish to add any further comments for inclusion in the response.

Conclusion/Summary

10. Government is consulting on the proposed new National Framework document, which updates the 2012 version and incorporates additional requirements following the introduction of the Fire Reform programme and the Policing and Crime Act 2017. It also sets the context for the forthcoming HMICFRS inspections due to begin in summer 2018. A response to the

consultation questions has been drafted, which Members are requested to consider and provide additional comments and/or amendments.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The draft revised National Framework sets out expectations for Fire and Rescue Authorities, which will have resource implications. The consultation document provides an opportunity to comment on key implications, especially in relation to effectiveness, efficiency, governance and human resources.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The National Framework provides guidance and direction on what Government expects of Fire and Rescue Authorities. It covers all core functions, priorities and policies including the Integrated Risk Management Plan and the Statement of Assurance.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A, the report sets out a proposed response to a Government consultation document.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	The Government is consulting all relevant bodies. Members of the Strategic Management Board have provided input to the proposed consultation response.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A, the report sets out a proposed response to a Government consultation document.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Fire and Rescue National Framework for England – Government consultation, 27 December 2017

Appendix 2 - Draft HWFRS response to the consultation

Background papers None

Contact Officer Jean Cole, Head of Corporate Services (01905 368329)
JCole@hwfire.org.uk



Home Office

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

Government consultation

This consultation begins on 27 December 2017.

This consultation ends on 14 February 2018.

About this consultation

To:	Fire and rescue authorities and fire and rescue representative bodies
Duration:	From 27 December 2017 to 14 February 2018
Enquiries (including requests for the paper in an alternative format) to:	<p>Alan Turnbull Home Office 6th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF Tel: 0207 035 3558 Email: FRSComms@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</p>
How to respond:	<p>You can submit your responses to the consultation by using the online form on gov.uk</p> <p>or in hard copy, by 14 February 2018 to:</p> <p>Harinder Sahota Home Office 6th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF Tel: 0207 035 3478 Email: FRSComms@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</p>
Response paper:	A response to this consultation exercise is due to be published by spring 2018 on gov.uk.

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Foreword

Fire and rescue services play a crucial role in making our communities safer, whether it be preventing and protecting people from fire and other risks, or responding swiftly and effectively to the incidents and emergencies that occur. Over the past decade we have witnessed a significant decrease in the number of fires which suggests that we are, as a society, becoming safer than ever from the risk and consequences of fire. In part this must be a testament to the successful fire prevention and protection work that fire and rescue services deliver day in, day out, up and down the country.

Nevertheless, the awful tragedy at Grenfell Tower provided a stark and terrible reminder that we can never afford to become complacent. We must continue to work hard to keep people – especially those whose vulnerability to fire is increased by age, infirmity, mental health, domestic violence or any of the other complex issues some of us are living with – as safe from fire and associated risks as possible. In many cases, this means engaging effectively with other agencies to work together to better protect and improve the outcomes for these individuals.

The past decade has also seen fire and rescue services respond to an ever growing number of non-fire incidents. Collaboration should be at the heart of how services operate so that services can work with, or on behalf of, local providers, to deliver a range of public safety activity to protect their local communities where it is in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness for them to do so.

In 2016, the Home Office outlined an ambitious programme of reform which it is delivering with the fire and rescue sector. This revised National Framework seeks to embed these reforms, which include:

- transforming local governance of fire and rescue by enabling mayors and police and crime commissioners to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a local case is made;
- establishing Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as an independent inspection regime for fire and rescue authorities;
- developing a comprehensive set of professional standards to drive sector improvement;
- supporting services to transform commercially with more efficient procurement and collaboration;
- increasing the transparency of services with the publication of greater performance data and the creation of a new national fire website; and -
- driving forward an ambitious programme for workforce reform including through enhancing: professionalism; management and leadership; training and

development; equality and diversity; improved culture; and options for flexible working.

As part of this reform programme, the fire landscape is changing with the formation of the National Fire Chiefs Council; an independent inspectorate (HMICFRS); and a professional standards body. The revised framework outlines the roles and responsibilities of these bodies and sets expectations for how services should work with them.

It is against this background that the Government launches this revised National Framework for consultation. The National Framework will continue to provide an overall strategic direction to fire and rescue authorities, but Whitehall will not run fire and fire and rescue services remain free to operate in a way that enables the most efficient and effective delivery of their services, drawing upon their considerable skills and experience to best reduce the risks from fire. Ultimately, it is to local communities, not Government, that fire and rescue authorities are accountable.

Finally, it is vital that we learn the lessons from Grenfell. I very much welcome the publication of Dame Judith's interim report setting out a comprehensive analysis of the current system of building regulations and fire safety and recommendations for how it can be improved. It is clear there is a need for reform across the system and that we need a new intelligent system of regulation and enforcement which encourages everyone to do the right thing and which holds those who cut corners to account. The scale of the change that her report calls for cannot be delivered by government alone so we will work closely with Dame Judith and other partners – including the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue services - during the next phase of the review, identifying the changes that need to be made to the system. We will update the National Framework as required to ensure that the learning and recommendations from this Review, as well as those from the wider Grenfell Tower Inquiry, are captured and reflected.

In the meantime, we acknowledge the vital work that local fire and rescue services, and the NFCC, as a member of the Expert Panel, are doing to ensure that building owners are taking all the necessary steps to ensure those living in high rise buildings are safe and feel safe to remain in their homes.

I look forward to receiving consultation responses on the revised National Framework.



Rt hon Nick Hurd MP

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service

Executive summary

1. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England in connection with the discharge of their functions. FRAs have a statutory duty to have regard to the Framework. The 2004 Act requires the Secretary of State to keep the Framework under review and revise it if needed with significant revisions subject to statutory consultation with representatives of fire and rescue authorities and their employees.
2. The National Framework was last updated in 2012 and changes are needed which warrant a full revision of it at this time to embed the fire reform programme such as the creation of a new inspectorate for fire and rescue services and the creation of the National Fire Chiefs Council. The Framework also reflects the provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017 on emergency services collaboration and changes to fire and rescue governance.
3. We have sought the views of an external working group in drafting this framework including the LGA and their elected members; the National Fire Chiefs Council; and HMICFRS.
4. We propose the priorities and objectives for FRAs as set by the Framework to be:
 - identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
 - make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
 - collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision;
 - be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
 - develop and maintain a workforce that is resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.
5. Within the Workforce chapter (chapter 6) of the draft National Framework, the section on 're-engagement of senior officers post-retirement' has been the subject of an earlier, separate consultation. The Government's response to that consultation is published separately. The draft National Framework includes the proposed wording following that consultation and no more changes to that section are planned following this consultation process.

6. Annex A of the draft National Framework contains a revised 'Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities'. Section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires that an intervention protocol be prepared, and for the Secretary of State to have regard to it in the exercise of their power of intervention. Revisions to the protocol are required to be consulted on and so comments are invited on this document.
7. Subject to the outcome of the public consultation and parliamentary time allowing, the Government intends for the new National Framework to come into effect in April 2018 to coincide with the commencement of fire inspection. The existing Framework – brought into effect in 2012 - remains valid until it is replaced. The outputs from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety will be considered on an ongoing basis and further changes may be made to the Framework as required. Any such changes will be subject to a separate consultation.

Introduction

This paper sets out for consultation the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and also for the revised 'Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities'. The consultation is aimed at fire and rescue authorities in England and their staff, as well as fire and rescue representative bodies.

The proposals are unlikely to lead to additional costs or savings for businesses, charities or the voluntary sector, or on the public sector.

Copies of the consultation paper are being sent to:

Chiefs and Chairs of all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England

Local Government Association

National Fire Chiefs Council

Association of Principal Fire Officers

Fire Brigades Union

Fire Officers' Association

Retained Firefighters' Union

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

However, this list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive and responses are welcomed from anyone with an interest in, or views on, the subject covered by this paper.

Draft Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

1. INTRODUCTION

Powers

- 1.1 Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (“the 2004 Act”), the Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework.

The Framework:

- a) must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;
 - b) may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions; and
 - c) may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.
- 1.2 In setting out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England, the requirements are best calculated to promote public safety and the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities. The Framework sets out high level expectations; it does not prescribe operational matters which are best determined locally by fire and rescue authorities and their staff.
- 1.3 In preparing the Framework, the Secretary of State is required to consult fire and rescue authorities or their representatives; persons representing employees of fire and rescue authorities; and any other persons they consider appropriate.
- 1.4 Every fire and rescue authority must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions. Every authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework (see Chapter 3).
- 1.5 Fire and rescue authorities function within a long-established statutory and policy framework. This document does not repeat all the duties placed on them in connection with the discharge of their functions, or more generally as a public service provider and employer.
- 1.6 The term ‘fire and rescue authority’ in this Framework applies to every fire and rescue authority in England unless otherwise stated.

Priorities

- 1.7 The priorities in this Framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:
- identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
 - make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
 - collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision;

- be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
- develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

2. DELIVERY OF CORE FUNCTIONS

Identify and assess

- 2.1 Every fire and rescue authority must assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities, whether they are local, cross-border, multi-authority and/or national in nature from fires to terrorist attacks. Regard must be had to Community Risk Registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.
- 2.2 Fire and rescue authorities must put in place arrangements to prevent and mitigate these risks, either through adjusting existing provision, effective collaboration and partnership working, or building new capability. Fire and rescue authorities should work through the Strategic Resilience Board where appropriate when determining what arrangements to put in place.

Prevent and protect

- 2.3 Prevention is always better than cure. Fire and rescue authorities must make provision for promoting fire safety, including fire prevention, and have a locally determined risk-based inspection programme in place for enforcing compliance with the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in premises to which it applies.
- 2.4 We expect fire and rescue authorities to target their fire safety, prevention and protection resources on: those individuals or households who are at greatest risk from fire in the home; those most likely to engage in arson or deliberate fire setting; and on those non-domestic premises where the life safety risk is the greatest.
- 2.5 To identify those at greatest risk from fire, we expect fire and rescue authorities to work closely with other organisations in the public and voluntary sector, as well as with the police and ambulance services. Wherever appropriate, we expect fire and rescue services to develop partnerships to support risk reduction services to those identified as vulnerable, including from exploitation or abuse, and wherever possible to share intelligence and relevant risk data.
- 2.6 In many cases, fire and rescue prevention and protection staff will be in a position to identify individuals' wider vulnerabilities and exposure to risks beyond fire. By working closely and collaboratively with other public and voluntary sector organisations – both nationally through the National Fire Chiefs Council and through local arrangements - we recognise fire and rescue authorities can make an important contribution to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of public services and alleviating pressures on local response resources. However, this should not be at the expense of their core fire functions.
- 2.7 Given the wide range of roles that fire and rescue personnel undertake, including with people with complex needs and vulnerabilities, fire and rescue authorities will need to ensure that all their staff in public-facing roles have the necessary skills and training to meet such demands. They also should have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to provide the public with the reassurance and confidence that they have every right to expect.

2.8 In all their prevention and protection activities, fire and rescue authorities should robustly evaluate the impact of their activities to ensure that they only pursue those which can be demonstrated to impact effectively and cost-efficiently on risk reduction within their communities. Fire and rescue authorities should share details of their successful interventions (and, importantly, those less successful interventions) to support each other to understand and build on what works best and what is most cost-effective.

Respond

2.9 Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements.

2.10 Fire and rescue authorities can enter into reinforcement schemes, or mutual aid agreements, with other fire and rescue authorities for securing mutual assistance, so far as practicable.

2.11 Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These arrangements must be able to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties and commitments that they face. Business continuity plans should not be developed on the basis of armed forces assistance being available.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

2.12 To establish how it aims to deliver its core functions to effectively prevent and mitigate the fire and rescue related risks facing their communities, each fire and rescue authority must produce an integrated risk management plan. Each plan must:

- reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a cost effective way;
- evaluation of service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources, for the mitigation of those risks;
- set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
- cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;
- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
- be easily accessible and publicly available.

3. INSPECTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSURANCE

Inspection

- 3.1 Independent inspection of fire and rescue authorities in England – and the fire and rescue service they oversee - is delivered by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The chief fire and rescue inspector and inspectors of fire and rescue authorities in England have powers of inspection given to them by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017.
- 3.2 The inspectorate will provide a crucial assurance function to consider how effective and efficient fire and rescue authorities are, how well they manage their people and whether they are fulfilling their statutory obligations. The inspectorate will also highlight good practice and identify areas where improvement is needed so that remedial or constructive action can be taken.
- 3.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 requires the chief fire and rescue inspector for England to publish an inspection programme setting out what inspections of fire and rescue authorities in England they propose to carry out, and an inspection framework setting out the manner in which inspections will be carried out, including the matters that will be inspected. The inspection framework and programme applies to every fire and rescue authority in England. The 2017 Act also requires the chief fire and rescue inspector for England to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State providing an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England for the period in respect of which the report is prepared.
- 3.4 All fire and rescue authorities must cooperate with the inspectorate and its inspectors to enable them to deliver their statutory function. This includes providing relevant data and information to inform inspections. The Home Office and HMICFRS will work together to align data and information collections where possible to avoid duplication.
- 3.5 Fire and rescue authorities should give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and - if needed - prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan (including any such plans arising from peer reviews and self-assessments) detailing how the recommendations are being actioned. When forming an action plan, the fire and rescue authority could seek advice and support from other organisations, for example, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association.

Intervention

- 3.6 Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 gives powers to the Secretary of State to intervene should a fire and rescue authority fail, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with this Framework. The Secretary of State is required to prepare a protocol about the exercise of these powers and to have regard to it when exercising the section 22 powers. The intervention protocol for these powers is attached at Annex A.
- 3.7 The 2004 Act allows the Secretary of State, by order, to require the fire and rescue authority to do something; to stop doing something; or not to do something in order to ensure the fire and rescue authority acts in accordance with this Framework. An order could be made if the Secretary of State considers it would promote public safety, the

economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the relevant fire and rescue authority. Before any such order is made the Secretary of State must give the authority an opportunity to make representations about the order proposed.

- 3.8 Use of this power is a last resort and intervention would only be considered if there was clear evidence that an authority was failing to act in accordance with the Framework, and that the failure was sufficiently serious as to warrant Government intervention. The expectation is that the fire and rescue authority should put in place processes to overcome any concerns, seeking sector-led support as appropriate.
- 3.9 The Secretary of State also has other powers of intervention (for example, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999) but the Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities at Annex A relates solely to ensuring fire and rescue authorities act in accordance with the National Framework.

Accountability

- 3.10 Fire and rescue authorities are expected to have governance and accountability arrangements in place covering issues such as financial management and transparency, complaints and discipline arrangements, and compliance with the seven principles of public life.¹
- 3.11 Each fire and rescue authority must hold the individual who has responsibility for managing the fire and rescue service – in most cases the Chief Fire Officer - to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service and the functions of persons under their direction and control. In London, the Mayor of London must hold the London Fire Commissioner, as fire and rescue authority for Greater London, to account for the exercise of the Commissioner's functions.
- 3.12 In demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need to:
- be transparent and accountable to their communities for their decisions and actions;
 - provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement; and
 - have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard communities expect for an important public safety service.

Assurance and scrutiny

- 3.13 Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance to their communities and to government on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to their priorities and expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in this Framework.

¹ Selflessness; Integrity; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Honesty; and Leadership

- 3.14 Fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance, which in the case of PCC fire and rescue authorities (PCC FRA), will be subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel (PFCCP). These statements may also be considered by the inspectorate as part of their work.
- 3.15 PFCCPs will perform a scrutiny function, providing both support and challenge to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) on the exercise of their functions, acting as a critical friend. The powers, responsibilities and membership requirements of PFCCPs are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Transparency

- 3.16 Each fire and rescue authority must comply with their statutory transparency requirements. The nature of the requirements is dependent on the legal basis of the authority; for example, combined fire and rescue authorities would be subject to the Local Authority Transparency Code 2015 while PCC FRAs must comply with requirements under section 11 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. All fire and rescue authorities should therefore publish certain information, including: senior salaries, register of interests, staffing, income and expenditure, property, rights and liabilities, and decisions of significant public interest. Fire and rescue authorities must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on their performance.
- 3.17 Furthermore, section 26 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that a fire and rescue authority must:
- a) submit to the Secretary of State any reports and returns that are required; and
 - b) give the Secretary of State any information with respect to its functions that are required.
- 3.18 Specifically, fire and rescue authorities have a responsibility to provide regular data to the Home Office as stipulated by the DCLG Single Data List process. The data supplied are the source for the official and national statistics published by the Home Office and are used for the purposes of policy development across a range of organisations including Government as well as providing a publicly available national overview of activity by fire and rescue services.

4. GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 Fire and rescue authorities operate with a range of different locally determined governance arrangements including an individual – either a police, fire and crime commissioner or a mayor – having sole responsibility for being the fire and rescue authority for an area. Where police and crime commissioners - and mayors - wish to develop a local proposal with options to take on governance responsibility for fire and rescue in their area, fire and rescue authorities must provide the police and crime commissioner with such information that they reasonably require for the purposes of developing a proposal for the Secretary of State to consider.
- 4.2 The Secretary of State can only give effect to such a fire governance proposal where, in her view, it appears to be in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, or in the interests of public safety. The Secretary of State cannot give effect to a proposal if, in her view, it would have an adverse effect on public safety.
- 4.3 Each fire and rescue authority has a statutory duty to ensure provision of their core functions as required by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and, for example, take strategic decisions and hold their chief fire officer to account.
- 4.4 The exception is in London, where the Policing and Crime Act 2017 reforms the governance of fire and rescue in London by abolishing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and creating the London Fire Commissioner as a corporation sole being the fire and rescue authority. The Mayor of London has overall responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the fire and rescue authority in London, appointing the London Fire Commissioner (subject to a confirmation hearing), holding the Commissioner to account and setting the budget for the Commissioner.
- 4.5 The London Fire Commissioner is responsible for ensuring fire and rescue services in London are efficient and effective and prepares the integrated risk management plan for approval by the Mayor.

Managing the fire and rescue service/Chief Fire Officer

- 4.6 Each fire and rescue authority will appoint an individual - a Chief Fire Officer - who has responsibility for managing the fire and rescue service. This includes managing the personnel, services and equipment secured by the fire and rescue authority for the purposes of carrying out functions conferred on it by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and other enactments. The Chief Fire Officer must, in exercising their functions, have regard to the fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan.
- 4.7 The fire and rescue authority should give due regard to the professional advice of the chief fire officer when making decisions affecting the operation of their fire and rescue service.

Plans to be prepared by PCC fire and rescue authorities

- 4.8 Where a police and crime commissioner takes on the functions and duties of a fire and rescue authority they will be known as the police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC). The PFCC must prepare and publish the documents set out below:

A fire and rescue plan: the plan should set out the strategic vision, priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue service over the period of the document in connection with the discharge of the fire and rescue authority's functions. The plan is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel (in the same way they scrutinise the PCC's police and crime plan). In developing this plan, the PFCC must make arrangements for obtaining the view of the community, as they currently do in preparing their police and crime plan.

A fire and rescue statement: the statement should outline the way in which the authority has had regard - in the period covered by the document - to this National Framework and to any fire and rescue plan prepared by the authority for that period. This is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

- 4.9 The PFCC must have regard to both the fire and rescue plan and the police and crime plan when carrying out their functions. The plans can be combined. Where a joint police and crime and fire and rescue plan is developed, the plan must set out both policing and fire and rescue priorities and objectives. Such plans are subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
- 4.10 The PCC FRA must, like all other fire and rescue authorities, produce an integrated risk management plan as set out in chapter 2. This may also include details of how the fire and rescue service intends to meet the strategic vision set out by the fire and rescue plan. The integrated risk management plan will be subject to inspection by HMICFRS.
- 4.11 The function of preparing and issuing the plan may be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer - or Chief Officer where a single employer has been put in place – however, the plan must be approved by the PCC FRA.

National Fire Chiefs Council

- 4.12 The National Fire Chiefs Council brings together the leadership of the UK's fire and rescue services to provide co-ordinated professional, operational and technical leadership of the sector, advising and supporting central and local government, and other stakeholders.
- 4.13 The NFCC fulfils a multifaceted role that is reflected throughout this document and other national frameworks. The NFCC represents the sector in local and national structures, helping to develop national policies and strategies. The NFCC is the first line of operational advice to central and local government during major incidents. This is outlined within the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), which fire and rescue services must proactively engage with.
- 4.14 The NFCC has a role to drive continuous improvement and development throughout the sector. Fire and rescue services should consult the NFCC for advice and support when developing improvement plans, particularly in response to inspections.
- 4.15 The expectation is that fire and rescue services in England engage with the NFCC and, in turn, that the Chiefs Council works to support and represent every service.

5. ACHIEVING VALUE FOR MONEY

- 5.1 Fire and rescue authorities must manage their budgets and spend money properly and appropriately, and ensure the efficient and effective use of their resources, pursuing all feasible opportunities to keep costs down while discharging their core duties effectively. Fire and rescue authorities should regularly review the numbers and deployment of firefighters and other staff to ensure that its fire and rescue service has a workforce that is commensurate with the risks that it faces.
- 5.2 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure that financial decisions are taken with the advice and guidance of the chief finance officer and that decisions are taken with an emphasis on delivering value for money to the public purse. Fire and rescue authorities should ensure that management of their finances is undertaken with regard to published guidance including those set out at Annex B.
- 5.3 Fire and rescue authorities should publish a medium term financial strategy which includes funding and spending plans for revenue and capital. The strategy should take into account multiple years, the inter-dependencies of revenue budgets and capital investments, the role of reserves and the consideration of risks. It should have regard to affordability and also to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The strategy should be aligned with the fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan and – if appropriate – the Fire and Rescue Plan.
- 5.4 Fire and rescue authorities should publish robust, transparent and locally owned efficiency plans on their websites. Each fire and rescue authority should also publish an annual report on their progress against their efficiency plans.

Reserves

- 5.5 Sections 31A, 32, 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
- 5.6 Fire and rescue authorities should establish a policy on reserves and provisions in consultation with their chief finance officer. General reserves should be held by the fire and rescue authority and managed to balance funding and spending priorities and to manage risks. This should be established as part of the medium-term financial planning process.
- 5.7 Each fire and rescue authority should publish their reserves strategy on their website, either as part of their medium term financial plan or in a separate reserves strategy document. The reserves strategy should include details of current and future planned reserve levels, setting out a total amount of reserves and the amount of each specific reserve that is held for each year. The reserves strategy should provide information for at least two years ahead.
- 5.8 Sufficient information should be provided to enable understanding of the purpose for which each reserve is held and how holding each reserve supports the fire and rescue authority's medium term financial plan.

5.9 Information should be set out in a way that is clear and understandable for members of the public, and should include:

- how the level of the general reserve has been set;
- justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of budget;
- whether the funds in each earmarked reserve are legally or contractually committed, and if so what amount is so committed; and
- a summary of what activities or items will be funded by each earmarked reserve, and how these support the fire and rescue authority's strategy to deliver good quality services to the public.

Commercial transformation

5.10 Each fire and rescue authority must demonstrate that it is achieving value for money for the goods and services it receives. Every fire and rescue authority should look at ways to improve its commercial practices including whether they can aggregate their procurement with other fire and rescue authorities and other local services (e.g. police) to achieve efficiencies.

5.11 Fire and rescue authorities must demonstrate and support commercial transformation programmes where appropriate. Each fire and rescue authority should be able to demonstrate full awareness of the objectives to standardise requirements, aggregate demand and manage suppliers of products and services within their commercial arrangements.

5.12 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure that their commercial activities, be that the placement of new contracts or the use of existing contracts, is in line with their legal obligations, including but not limited to the Public Contracts Regulations, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and transparency commitments.

Collaboration

5.13 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 created a statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities, police forces, and ambulance trusts to:

- keep collaboration opportunities under review;
- notify other emergency services of proposed collaborations that could be in the interests of their mutual efficiency or effectiveness; and
- give effect to a proposed collaboration where the proposed parties agree that it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness and that it does not have an adverse effect on public safety.

5.14 The duty is deliberately broad to allow for local discretion in how it is implemented and recognises that local emergency services are best placed to determine how to collaborate for the benefit of their communities. However, the duty sets a clear expectation that collaboration opportunities should be considered.

5.15 The duty does not preclude wider collaboration with other local partners, such as local authorities and wider health bodies. To reflect their wider role, ambulance trusts are required to consider the impact of the proposed collaboration on their wider non-

emergency functions and the NHS when determining if it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness.

- 5.16 Fire and rescue authorities should, where appropriate, work alongside all relevant local agencies and multi-agency teams involved in protecting those identified as vulnerable.
- 5.17 Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver intraoperability (between fire and rescue authorities) and interoperability (with other responders such as other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums) in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with the National Resilience Lead Authority to ensure interoperability is maintained for National Resilience assets.
- 5.18 Intraoperability includes, but is not limited to:
- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment;
 - common command and compatible control and co-ordination arrangements;
 - effective information, intelligence and data sharing;
 - compatible operational procedures, and guidance with common terminology;
 - compatible training and exercising (both individually and collectively); and
 - cross border working with other English fire and rescue authorities and those in the devolved administrations.
- 5.19 Interoperability includes, but is not limited to:
- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment, as appropriate;
 - compatible command, control and co-ordination arrangements;
 - effective inter-agency working and liaison and, where appropriate, information, intelligence and data sharing;
 - shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, guidance and terminology;
 - robust multi-agency plans for managing risks identified in the National Risk Assessment and community risk registers;
 - multi-agency training and exercising; and
 - cross border working with other responders in England and the devolved administrations.

Research and development

- 5.20 Fire and rescue authorities should engage with national research and development programmes, including those overseen by the NFCC, unless there is a good reason not to.
- 5.21 Where fire and rescue services embark on research and development outside of any national programme, processes should be put in place to ensure it meets quality standards and, where possible and appropriate, is available to the sector to enable good practice to be shared.

Trading

- 5.22 Fire and rescue authorities have the power to trade and make a profit but they must ensure that their commercial activities are performed in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Local Government Order 2009. Fire and rescue authorities must also ensure that such commercial activities are exercised through a company within the meaning of Part 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 5.23 A trading company is a separate legal entity and elected members and officers should at all times be aware of potential conflicts of interest when carrying out their roles for their authorities, or when acting as directors of trading companies.
- 5.24 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure any actions taken in respect of their trading companies are considered against the requirements of competition law. Any financial assistance - in cash or in kind - given by an authority that establishes or participates in it, should be for a limited period, set against the expectation of later returns, and re-paid by those returns. Any assistance should be provided under a formal agreement with the company and must be entered into for a commercial purpose. Before entering into such an agreement, the authority should satisfy itself that it will achieve its objective, and the company should satisfy itself that it will meet its objective in terms of its business plan. The parties should consider any State Aid implications and obtain their own expert advice where necessary.

6. WORKFORCE

People Strategy

6.1 Each fire and rescue authority should have in place a people strategy that has been designed in collaboration with the workforce. This should take into account the principles set out in the NFCC's people strategy and at a minimum cover:

- improving the diversity of the workforce to ensure that it represents the community it serves;
- equality, cultural values and behaviours;
- recruitment, retention and progression;
- flexible working;
- professionalism, skills and leadership;
- training opportunities;
- health, wellbeing and support; and
- a policy to tackle bullying and harassment.

6.2 The Home Office collects and publishes a range of workforce data. This includes workforce diversity, information on new joiners, reasons for leaving and firefighter injuries.

Professional Standards Body²

6.3 The sector is currently working in partnership with government to consider options for enhancing professionalism by ensuring the development of a coherent and comprehensive set of professional standards across all areas of fire and rescue services' work, drawing on existing standards where appropriate.

6.4 All fire and rescue authorities must implement the standards approved through this work and the inspectorate will have regard to these standards as part of their inspections.

Fitness Principles

6.5 Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment. Each fire and rescue authority must comply with the fitness principles set out at Annex C.

Re-engagement of senior officers

6.6 The re-appointment of principal fire officers to the same or similar posts within the same fire and rescue authority, a short time after they have retired, has caused concern in recent years and increases costs for taxpayers. These individuals very often receive their pension benefits on retirement (such as their tax free lump sum) and then return on favourable terms, including an increase in take-home pay through avoiding paying employee pension contributions.

² Please note that this policy is under development and an announcement is likely to be made before the final Framework is published.

- 6.7 Fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers³ after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety. Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited.
- 6.8 In the exceptional circumstance that a re-appointment is necessary in the interests of public safety, this decision should be subject to agreement by a public vote of the elected members of the fire and rescue authority, or a publicised decision by the appropriate elected representative of the fire and rescue authority, taking into account the legislative requirements of PCC FRA Chief Fire Officer appointment procedures. The reason why the re-appointment was necessary in the interests of public safety, and alternative approaches were deemed not appropriate, must be published and the principal fire officer's pension must be abated until they cease to be employed by a fire and rescue authority.
- 6.9 To ensure greater fairness and the exchange of talent and ideas, all principal fire officer posts must be open to competition nationally, and fire and rescue authorities must take account of this in their workforce planning.
- 6.10 While the above requirements only extend to principal fire officers, we expect fire and rescue authorities to have regard to this principle when re-appointing at any rank.

³ For the purpose of this Framework, Principal Officers refers to those officers at Brigade or Area Manager level, and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles.

7. NATIONAL RESILIENCE

- 7.1 The Government retains responsibility for the provision of national resilience assets and capabilities managed and delivered through fire and rescue services. This responsibility extends to undertaking the National Risk Assessment which informs the requirements for fire and rescue national resilience capabilities.
- 7.2 In meeting this responsibility, the Government has committed significant financial resource to build national resilience capabilities and to support their ongoing maintenance.
- 7.3 The Government relies on the strategic leadership role of the NFCC to maintain fire and rescue national resilience capabilities in a high state of operational readiness through a comprehensive assurance regime delivered through lead authority arrangements.
- 7.4 Fire and rescue authorities must work with the lead authority to support the national resilience assurance processes in order to ensure capabilities are maintained at a high state of operational readiness. This includes co-operation of fire and rescue authorities, as necessary, on devolved training and, where applicable, on the long term capability management arrangements.
- 7.5 Fire and rescue services, through the NFCC's representation on the Strategic Resilience Board, must also work with Government to identify and address any national resilience capability gaps identified through ongoing analysis of the National Risk Assessment.

Gap analysis

- 7.6 Fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience (as defined above).
- 7.7 Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas.
- 7.8 As part of their analysis, fire and rescue authorities must highlight to the Home Office or the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, any capability gaps that they believe cannot be met even when taking into account mutual aid arrangements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action.
- 7.9 The Home Office, in liaison with other government departments and the devolved administrations, will support fire and rescue authorities in considering and defining the gap between existing capability and the capability required to ensure national resilience.

National Coordination and Advisory Framework

- 7.10 The National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) has been designed to provide robust and flexible response arrangements to major emergencies that can be adapted to the nature, scale and requirements of the incident.
- 7.11 Fire and rescue authorities must proactively engage with, and support, the NCAF arrangements including the NFCC's lead operational role.

Response to Terrorist Attacks or Marauding Terrorist Attacks

- 7.12 Fire and rescue services must be able to respond to the heightened threat of terrorism and be ready to respond to incidents within their areas and across England to keep communities safe. Fire and rescue services should also be interoperable to provide operational support across the UK to terrorist events as required. To enhance resilience to terrorist risks, the Government has committed significant financial resources to develop a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA) capability, with the support of fire and rescue services. This is aligned to the National Risk Assessment and provides a specialist response across the country.
- 7.13 Government and the NFCC recognise the critical contribution of fire and rescue services when responding to acts of terrorism. This is an agreed function of fire and rescue services as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book), and is encompassed within the broad descriptions within the existing agreed firefighter role maps: to save and preserve endangered life, and safely resolve operational incidents.
- 7.14 Fire and rescue authorities are responsible for maintaining the robustness of the capability and, where they have an MTFA capability, must put in place arrangements to ensure their teams are fully available at all times, including periods when business continuity arrangements are in place.
- 7.15 MTFA arrangements shall be further enhanced by putting in place an appropriate multi-agency assurance mechanism that will ensure the capability is effective and delivers it to the agreed standard.

National Resilience Assurance

- 7.16 Fire and rescue authorities must continue to work collectively and with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board and the national resilience lead authority to provide assurance to government that:
- existing national resilience capabilities are fit for purpose and robust; and
 - risks are assessed, plans are assessed and any gaps in capability that are needed to ensure national resilience are identified.
- 7.17 Fire and rescue authorities with MTFA teams must work with police forces and ambulance trusts to provide tri-service assurance of this capability.

8. TIMESCALE AND SCOPE

Timescales

- 8.1 This Framework has an open ended duration. The Secretary of State continues to be responsible for keeping the terms of the Framework under review under section 21(3) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and is required under section 25 to prepare a biennial report to Parliament on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Framework.

Scope

- 8.2 The Framework covers England only. It does not apply to Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales where responsibility for fire and rescue is devolved.

Annex A

Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities

Introduction

1. It is a requirement under section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) that an intervention protocol be prepared, and for the Secretary of State to have regard to it in the exercise of their power of intervention.
2. The Secretary of State's order-making powers under section 22 of the 2004 Act are to ensure that fire and rescue authorities act in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the Framework). Intervention is by order, subject to the negative Parliamentary procedure, and can only be made if the Secretary of State considers it would promote public safety; and the economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the relevant fire and rescue authority, or the services it provides.
3. To date there has been no formal intervention in the operations of a fire and rescue authority by the Secretary of State under these powers. Use of this power is seen as a last resort. The expectation is that the political and professional leadership of the fire and rescue authority will put in place processes to ensure that sector-led support is provided to any fire and rescue authority that needs it.
4. This intervention protocol (the protocol) broadly sets out the arrangements between the Secretary of State, the Local Government Association (LGA), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and fire and rescue authorities should formal intervention be considered necessary.
5. In this protocol the term 'intervention' is used to refer to action by the Secretary of State in exercise of their powers under section 22 of the 2004 Act. Although the Secretary of State also has other powers of intervention (for example, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999) this protocol does not apply to an intervention under those powers.

Role of partners in supporting fire and rescue authorities at risk

6. HMICFRS will play a leading role in identifying any fire and rescue authority that is failing, or is likely to fail, in providing efficiency, effectiveness and leadership for the public. The NFCC and the LGA, will play an important liaison role in engaging the wider sector in supporting those authorities at risk and work collaboratively with key bodies,⁴ identify at an early stage serious risks to performance or the requirement to act in accordance with the Framework. The NFCC and/or Local Government Association will work with these bodies to prevent the escalation of those risks to avoid any risk to public safety or any negative impact on the reputation of the sector. For a PCC fire and

⁴ This could refer to fire and rescue authorities, the relevant professional leadership including the National Fire Chiefs Council, other sector-owned bodies, inspection bodies and HMICFRS in particular, and/or government departments

rescue authority, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) could also be approached for advice and support.

7. If there are specific concerns in respect of performance, or if there is evidence that indicates a fire and rescue authority is failing or is at risk of failing to act in accordance with the Framework, either through inspection by HMICFRS or through sector-led processes, the NFCC and/or the Local Government Association, and/or the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, and/or the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners will work with the authority to help them address the issues and seek improvement.

Circumstances leading to statutory intervention

8. No intervention would be considered unless there was clear evidence that an authority was failing to act in accordance with the Framework and that the failure was sufficiently serious as to require Government intervention.
9. If, following a sustained and determined attempt to resolve problems through sector-led improvement an issue cannot be resolved, or if a fire and rescue authority is unwilling or unable to engage with sector-led improvement measures, the Secretary of State can, under section 28 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, commission HMICFRS to lead an investigation. Under this provision, the Secretary of State also has the power to require HMICFRS to undertake any further inspection of fire and rescue authorities in England as required for the purpose of furthering their efficiency and effectiveness. The Secretary of State may also seek advice and information from other persons/bodies (for example, the NFCC) in respect of specific identified issues.
10. The Secretary of State has a range of powers including to request information about a fire and rescue authority's functions⁵ and conferring on a fire and rescue authority functions relating to emergencies⁶. Inspection powers – powers to obtain information and access premises – are also held by HMICFRS' inspectors.⁷

What happens upon statutory intervention?

11. In the event that statutory intervention is considered necessary, the Secretary of State will consult the authority concerned and any other body or authority which is considered necessary, such as HMICFRS, the NFCC and the Local Government Association, before exercising powers of intervention under section 22 of the 2004 Act.
12. The form or extent of any formal intervention will be a matter for determination on a case by case basis, taking into account the views of the fire and rescue authority, HMICFRS, the NFCC, the Local Government Association, and any other consultees, depending on the nature and the severity of the failure under consideration. Following such deliberations, the Secretary of State will agree a course of action, and how the required improvement will be delivered.

⁵ Section 26 of the 2004 Act

⁶ Section 9 of the 2004 Act

⁷ Section 28 of the 2004 Act

Annex B**Published Financial Guidance** (see Chapter 5)

- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government which sets the financial reporting framework for local government bodies, including police bodies and Combined Authorities.
- The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting issued by CIPFA /LASAAC, which constitutes proper practices for local government bodies, including fire bodies.
- The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) issued by CIPFA as the relevant internal audit standards setter for local government and the fire and rescue service.
- Local Government Application Note for the United Kingdom Public Sector Internal Audit Standards issued by CIPFA.
- Delivering Good Governance in Local Government issued by CIPFA/SOLACE.
- Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Public Service Organisations issued by CIPFA.
- Standing Guide to the Commissioning of Local Authority Work and Services issued by CIPFA.
- Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities issued by CIPFA.
- Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes issued by CIPFA.
- Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police issued by CIPFA.
- Position Statement on Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police, CIPFA, 2013.
- Statutory guidance for local authorities on the framework for flexible use of capital receipts issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.
- Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) bulletins that provide topical guidance on specific issues and accounting developments.

Annex C

Fitness Principles

Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment. Each fire and rescue authority must:

- have a process of fitness assessment and development to ensure that operational personnel are enabled to maintain the standards of personal fitness required in order to perform their role safely;
- ensure that no individual will automatically face dismissal if they fall below the standards required and cannot be deployed operationally;
- ensure that all operational personnel will be provided with support to maintain their levels of fitness for the duration of their career;
- consider where operational personnel have fallen below the fitness standards required whether an individual is able to continue on full operational duties or should be stood down, taking into account the advice provided by the authority's occupational health provider. In making this decision, the safety and well-being of the individual will be the key issue;
- commit to providing a minimum of 6 months of development and support to enable individuals who have fallen below the required fitness standards to regain the necessary levels of fitness;
- refer an individual to occupational health where underlying medical reasons are identified that restrict/prevent someone from achieving the necessary fitness; and ensure that individual receives the necessary support to facilitate a return to operational duties; and
- fully explore opportunities to enable the individual to remain in employment including through reasonable adjustment and redeployment in role where it appears the medical condition does not allow a return to operational duties.

In those circumstances where there are no such opportunities and suitable alternative employment is either unavailable or, where available, is not agreed by the individual, then the fire and rescue authority will commence an assessment for ill-health retirement through the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner process.

If no underlying medical issues are identified, and following a programme of development and support it becomes apparent that an individual will be unable to regain the necessary levels of fitness, then a fire and rescue authority will fully explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments and/or suitable alternative employment. In those circumstances where there are no opportunities for reasonable adjustments or suitable alternative employment, the fire and rescue authority will in the case of an employee aged at least 55, consider commencement of the authority initiated early retirement process for it to determine whether the individual should be retired with an authority initiated early retirement pension.

Questionnaire

We would welcome comments on the following sections in the draft National Framework, or any general comments.

Delivery of Core Functions

Inspection, Accountability and Assurance

Governance

Achieving Value for Money

Workforce

National Resilience

Intervention Protocol (Annex A)

Other comments

Thank you for participating in this consultation.

About you

Please use this section to tell us about yourself

Full name	
Job title or capacity in which you are responding to this consultation exercise (for example, member of the public)	
Date	
Company name/organisation (if applicable)	
Address	
Postcode	
If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response, please tick this box	<input type="checkbox"/> (please tick box)
Address to which the acknowledgement should be sent, if different from above	

If you are a representative of a group, please tell us the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that you represent.

Contact details and how to respond

Please send your response by 14 February 2018 to:

Harinder Sahota

Home Office

6th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0207 035 3478

Email: FRSComms@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Home Office at the above address.

Extra copies

Further paper copies of this consultation can be obtained from this address and it is also available online at [web address]

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested from [email/telephone number of sponsoring policy division].

Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in [insert publication date, which as far as possible should be within three months of the closing date of the consultation] months' time. The response paper will be available online at [web address]

Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In

view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Home Office.

The Home Office will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Consultation principles

The principles that government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the consultation principles.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Appendix 2

Draft HWFRS response to the Government consultation on a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The following headings relate to the question areas set out in the consultation document.

Delivery of Core Functions

In terms of identifying and assessing risks set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2, there is no guidance on how to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks, which is likely to lead to an inconsistent approach across the country. While we continue to welcome local determination of risks, we would appreciate additional guidance on assessing the potential impact of those risks. There is also a requirement to prevent and mitigate national level risks. However it is not clear where the delineation of responsibility falls, especially for those escalated to the Strategic Resilience Board.

With the lack of clarity on standards or benchmarks by which fire and rescue services assess risks, there are likely to be inevitable variance across the country, and also variance in HMICFRS inspection outcomes as a consequence.

We welcome the focus on prevention and protection, particularly the need to target those most vulnerable. This has already been a long-standing focus in our Community Risk Management Plan and is a central strand of our Community Risk activities.

We also welcome the recognition that fire and rescue staff can do more towards keeping people safe and improving people's lives through their work with other organisations and services. This is also an important feature of our 'Saving More Lives' vision and our 'Signposting' work. However, this raises an apparent contradiction in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6, that suggests that fire and rescue services should do more in addressing issues around vulnerability and the health and wellbeing agenda, including abuse and exploitation, but not if it impacts adversely on core fire functions. We would welcome more clarity in this respect.

The proposed Framework also recognises that fire and rescue staff will require new skills sets to be able to effectively carry out people-facing work in local communities. However, training budgets are already stretched following years of making efficiencies. So again, we would welcome clarity on how to do this without impacting on core functions.

The section on evaluation (paragraph 2.8) suggests that fire and rescue services should only pursue those prevention and protection activities that demonstrably reduce risk effectively and cost-efficiently. However, that appears to be a very narrow and possibly imprecise measure. Much prevention work only shows results over time, such as long-term changes in people's safety related behaviour, which may not be evident in short-term performance returns. Additional guidance and clarity on what the Government expects 'robust evaluation' to look like would be welcomed.

We note at paragraph 2.10 that "fire and rescue authorities *can* enter into reinforcement schemes ...". Is there any particular reason why this is a change of emphasis from the 2012 version of the National Framework, which stated that "fire and rescue authorities *are required to* enter into reinforcement schemes ..."?

In terms of national resilience at paragraph 2.11, provision is based on the National Risk Assessment and National Risk Planning Assumptions. Fire and rescue services are not in a position to determine response options to national scale risks through their local IRMPs.

In relation to the section on the IRMP, there is little up to date guidance to assist fire and rescue services in writing their IRMPs, which vary considerably across the country. As noted above, we would welcome further guidance, especially in relation to the methodology to be used for evaluating the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of service delivery outcomes and the allocation of resources to mitigate risks. Such guidance would also help to ensure consistency in using evaluation criteria: it would also provide sufficient rigour and quality assurance when reporting.

Inspection, Accountability and Assurance

We note that HMICFRS will be consulting on the criteria to be used to judge and measure effectiveness, efficiency and performance. Once these are established, it would be useful to make appropriate reference in the National Framework.

At paragraph 3.4, while fire and rescue authorities will need to comply with the provision of data to HMICFRS as part of the inspection process, there will need to be sufficient notice and time to assemble the required data. This is especially important for those fire and rescue services in earlier tranches for inspection, and recognition should be made that not all services have the same levels of staff resources available.

In terms of intervention powers, there is no mention of PCC fire and rescue authorities. There needs to be clarification of whether or not PCC fire and rescue authorities will be subject to the same intervention powers.

Likewise, there is a need to clarify whether or not the provisions for accountability in paragraph 3.10 to 3.12 will be applicable to PCC fire and rescue authorities.

Paragraphs 3.14 and 3.15 refer to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel (PFCP) and its scrutiny role. However, there appears to be no requirement for fire and rescue expertise to be represented on the PFCP. The differences between Police, Fire and Crime Panels and Police and Crime Panels needs to be clarified, particularly in relation to their relative powers, responsibilities and membership requirements.

Governance

There is no clear direction given or expectations provided for governance arrangements. It is also noted that governance will not be included in the HMICFRS inspection programme, other than where inspectors find that fire authority decisions and activities inhibit the efficiency and effectiveness of the chief fire officer. Considering that this is the primary strategic decision making mechanism for the organisation, this would appear to present a significant gap.

There also appear to be no plans to inspect or assess the effectiveness of PCC governance arrangements.

At paragraph 4.7, there is an expectation that the fire and rescue authority should give due regard to the professional advice of the chief fire officer. It should be clarified whether or not this expectation will also extend to PCC fire and rescue authorities.

Paragraphs 4.8 to 4.11 refer to plans to be prepared by PCC fire and rescue authorities. It appears to be both unhelpful and inefficient for PCC fire and rescue authorities to have to produce a fire and rescue plan, which can be combined with a police and crime plan, *and also* a separate IRMP, which also details how it will meet the requirements of the fire and rescue plan. This is likely to result in unnecessary overlaps and duplication, which should be avoided. The fire and rescue statement also appears to be a similar requirement to the annual statement of assurance. Again, this appears to be inefficient duplication.

Further guidance on the required content of PCC fire and rescue plans and statements would be useful to help avoid unnecessary duplication with IRMPs and statements of assurance.

Achieving Value for Money

Overall, we would question whether a National Framework document is the appropriate place for these provisions, which are already required by Budget and Precept Setting regulations. We would also question how a county council based fire authority would be able to comply with the provisions.

The Framework sets out many expectations that do not seem to recognise the much reduced resources of fire and rescue services, nor the fact that further reductions are likely to be ongoing for years to come. The expectations will inevitably place additional burdens on what are effectively shrinking organisations.

Similarly, the Framework does not say anything about additional costs that might be incurred in delivering the Government's wider fire reform agenda, nor indeed how any savings realised should

be utilised.

We would welcome further guidance and direction on the specific requirements for cost-benefit analysis of fire and rescue service activities, the financial return on investment, multi-agency partnership working return and social return on investment.

In relation to collaboration at paragraphs 5.13 – 5.16, there does not appear to be any common purpose identified for the three blue light services leaders. While being directed to work together in collaboration for the benefit of the public, there is no set common goal for these services and other key organisations to work towards.

Workforce

In relation to professional standards at paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4, it is noted that all fire and rescue authorities are required to implement the standards. However, the standards will arrive before the final Framework document is published, which means that fire and rescue authorities are very unlikely to be able to demonstrate compliance in the first year of inspection.

National Resilience

While there is a commitment from the Government to assist in considering the gap between existing National Resilience capability and the required capability, there is no apparent commitment to assist in closing that gap. Further clarification in the Framework would be welcome.

In terms of National Resilience assurance at paragraphs 7.16 and 7.17, there is a requirement to assure Government that National Resilience arrangements and capabilities are appropriate. We would have expected that this assurance should also be given to the general public as well as Government.

Intervention Protocol

We have no comments at this stage.

Other comments

We note the list of consultees in the Introduction to the consultation document. We would have expected the consultation to extend directly to Unison and other public sector trades unions in addition to the FBU, FOA and RFU.

31 January 2018

Proposed Fire and Rescue Services Inspection Programme and Framework 2018/19

Purpose of report

1. This report provides details of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) consultation on their proposed inspection programme and framework. It includes a proposed response to the consultation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the proposed response to the consultation (Appendix 3) be approved.

Introduction and Background

2. In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) remit was extended to include inspections of Fire and Rescue Services in England. It is now called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
3. The first inspections of all 45 Fire and Rescue Services will take place over eighteen months starting in the summer of 2018. The inspections will assess and report of the efficiency and effectiveness of each Service. This will include how well Fire and Rescue Service prevent, protect against and respond to fires and other emergencies and how well they look after the people who work for the Service.
4. The consultation document seeks responses to seven questions about how the inspection should be carried out. The consultation document is attached as Appendix 1, and the accompanying inspection methodology is attached as Appendix 2.
5. The consultation runs from 19 December 2017 to 19 February 2018.

Principal themes in the inspection framework

6. The inspections give prominence to four principal themes:
 - a. how effective each Fire and Rescue Service is at preventing and responding to incidents;
 - b. whether the Service provides value for money;

- c. whether the Service understands where future risks lie; and
 - d. the ability of the Service to train staff, embrace diversity and develop a positive working culture
7. Each of these themes will be examined through a series of questions as set out in the attached inspection methodology (Appendix 2). In preparing their inspection reports, HMICFRS will provide graded judgements, which are designed to help the public to see how well their Fire and Rescue Service is performing.

Response to the consultation

8. Seven specific questions were asked in the consultation, and a letter of response has been prepared (attached as Appendix 3). A summary of the questions and response is set out below for your information.

Consultation Question	Summary Response
1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the approach should enable the inspection to consider the wider context of Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) timescale is relatively short, so little time for any in-depth understanding of FRS activities could utilise previous inspections to gain more context
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrated inspections should provide a more comprehensive picture of each FRS a broader range of information should help the public in understanding their FRSs better
3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> noted that governance and accountability is not included in the inspection, but we would expect the impact of any changes to governance would be recognised and reflected in the inspection noted that there are no specific questions relating to the growing health agenda and little mention of collaboration and partnership working – this may miss key areas of joint work that FRSs are involved in for the benefit of their communities
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the questions appear well framed to gather good evidence we would expect all 45 FRSs to be asked the

for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?	same questions to ensure consistency
5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a one-off inspection can only provide a snapshot of each FRS, which may not be enough for the public to judge their FRSs • public surveys tend to yield poor responses – other ways of evaluating public views should be considered
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the impact of ongoing austerity should not be underestimated – this is equally applicable to FRSs and their public sector partners – and the potential consequences this has on our ability to tackle risks associated with vulnerable people • HMICFRS will need to appreciate that austerity does not affect all FRSs in equal measure; some are better placed to ease the effects of austerity than others • uncertainties about future governance and other areas such as shared services, pay caps and collaboration issues should not be discounted in the inspections
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is still no judgement criteria for comparing FRS performance – this needs to be carefully designed to ensure variations between FRSs is reflected fairly • it is not clear if there will be a 'league table' approach, and how the public will be able to interpret and understand the findings.

Conclusion/Summary

9. HMICFRS are consulting on their approach to inspection, which are due to commence in summer 2018. A response to the consultation questions has been drafted which Members are asked to note and consider if there are any further comments to add.
10. Members should note that HMICFRS are still finalising the inspection process, and a briefing will be prepared for the Fire Authority when details are known.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources)	The HMICFRS inspection is a key feature of the Government's Fire Reform programme. There will be resource implications throughout the inspection and
--	--

issues)	potentially further implications once the inspection reports are published. More detail will be known once the inspection programme is announced and a further report to Members will consider this further.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The inspection will look at all aspects of efficiency and effectiveness in how the Fire and Rescue Service is performing. It will examine how well the Service is meeting the aims and objectives set out in key documents such as the Community Risk Management Plan, the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Efficiency Plan and the People Strategy.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A, the report sets out a proposed response to the HMICFRS consultation document.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Members of the Strategic Management Board have provided input to the proposed consultation response.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A, the report sets out a proposed response to the HMICFRS consultation document.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2018/19 – HMICFRS consultation, December 2017

Appendix 2 - HMICFRS fire and rescue service inspection methodology

Appendix 3 – Proposed HWFRS response to the HMICFRS consultation

Background papers: None

Contact Officer: Jean Cole, Head of Corporate Services (01905 368329)
JCole@hwfire.org.uk

Proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2018/19

For consultation

December 2017

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Foreword

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) remit was extended to include inspections of fire and rescue services in England. It is now called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

This is the first inspection programme and framework for fire and rescue service inspections. We will assess and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of the 45 fire and rescue services in England. This includes how well fire and rescue services prevent, protect against and respond to fires and other emergencies and how well they look after the people who work for the service. This consultation document seeks responses to seven questions about how the inspection of fire and rescue services should be carried out. We will use the consultation responses to develop a programme and framework, and methodology for our inspections.

We have given prominence to the following principal themes: how effective each fire and rescue service is at preventing and responding to incidents; whether the service provides value for money; whether the service understands where future risks lie; and the ability of the service to train staff, embrace diversity, and develop a positive working culture. As part of our inspection reports, we will provide graded judgments, which will help the public to see how well their fire and rescue service is performing.

The inspection programme will be developed with the fire and rescue service by recruiting experts from the sector to carry out the inspections, and by taking advice from senior service representatives who are members of the external reference group. The inspection programme will be designed to promote improvement in all aspects of the work undertaken by fire and rescue services.

This public consultation will be open from 19 December 2017 to 19 February 2018. I hope that you will offer your considered views, to help us design an inspection programme that leads to continued improvements across fire and rescue services.

(Sgd.) Thomas P Winsor

Sir Thomas Winsor WS
HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Consultation introduction

This document provides details of HMICFRS' proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme for 2018/19, and asks for your views on whether the right areas of fire and rescue services activity are covered. In particular, we are seeking your responses to the following questions:

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?
3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?
5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

These questions are repeated in the body of this document. At the end of the document there is an explanation of how you can let us have your views.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses and reports on the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and fire and rescue services – in the public interest.

We ask the questions which we believe the public wishes to have answered, and publish our findings, conclusions and recommendations in an accessible form, using our expertise to interpret the evidence. We provide authoritative information to allow the public to compare the performance of their police force or fire and rescue service against others, and to determine whether performance has improved or deteriorated over time. Our recommendations are designed to bring about improvements in the service provided to the public.

Introduction

This document provides details of HMICFRS' proposed inspection programme and framework for fire and rescue services for 2018/19.

Types of inspection HMICFRS will conduct in 2018/19

HMICFRS may conduct several different types of inspection each year. To provide context for the proposed fire and rescue services' inspection framework for 2018/19, each type of inspection is summarised here.

Fire and rescue services inspection programme

The fire and rescue services inspection programme enables HMICFRS to draw together evidence from inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England. This rounded assessment of all fire and rescue services will cover the effectiveness and efficiency of each service and how it looks after its people. This will include an assessment of:

- the operational service provided to the public (including prevention, protection, resilience, and response);
- the efficiency of the service (how well it provides value for money, allocates resources to match risk, and collaborates with the police and ambulance services); and
- the organisational effectiveness of the service (how well it promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for the workforce and develops leadership and service capability).

The resulting assessments will include graded judgments of performance.

HMICFRS' assessments are designed to enable the public to see how each fire and rescue service's performance changes over time and in relation to the performance of other services.

The fire and rescue services inspections will not include an assessment of corporate governance or the accountability structures provided by the fire and rescue authority, police, fire and crime commissioner, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office.

Inspecting governance arrangements

The fire and rescue service inspections will focus on the service provided to the public rather than on the accountability structures that govern fire and rescue services. During inspections, HMICFRS inspectors will meet representatives from fire and rescue authorities, police, fire and crime commissioners, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office.

If during an inspection we identify evidence that the decisions and activities of those within the fire and rescue authority, police, fire and crime commissioner, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office inhibit the efficiency and effectiveness of the chief fire officer, we may carry out a separate corporate governance inspection.

Statutory requirements

This inspection programme and framework requires the approval of the Home Secretary before the inspectors act in accordance with it¹.

The Home Secretary may, at any time, require HMICFRS to carry out an inspection of a fire and rescue authority in England, all fire and rescue authorities in England, or all fire and rescue authorities in England of a particular type².

Such a requirement may limit the inspection to a particular matter³. HMICFRS may also carry out an inspection of a fire and rescue authority in England even though that inspection has not been set out in an inspection programme and has not been required by the Home Secretary⁴. Before doing so, the chief inspector must consult the Home Secretary⁵.

Consultation questions

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?

¹ Section 28A(2), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

² Section 28A(3), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/contents

³ Section 28A(4), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

⁴ Section 28A(5), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

⁵ Section 28A(6), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

An overview of HMICFRS' proposed inspection programme for fire and rescue services 2018/19

Fire and rescue inspection programme

In May 2016, the Home Secretary established a wide-ranging reform programme for the fire and rescue services in England. This included a proposal to establish a rigorous and independent inspection regime for fire and rescue authorities.

In July 2017, the Home Office confirmed that HMIC would take on the role of inspecting fire and rescue services in England, and of assessing and reporting on the effectiveness and efficiency of each service. To reflect these new responsibilities, HMIC's name changed to HMICFRS.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017, which amended the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, contains provisions to strengthen existing powers to inspect fire and rescue authorities⁶.

HMICFRS will inspect the fire and rescue services that carry out the principal functions of a fire and rescue authority: fire safety, firefighting, road traffic accidents and other emergencies⁷. We will inspect all 45 fire and rescue services in England, in three sets of 15 services, beginning in summer 2018. We will consult the fire and rescue sector on the criteria for judgment. Each inspection will result in a rounded assessment and graded judgments for each fire and rescue service. We will publish a report of our findings.

The principal questions which the fire and rescue services inspection programme is designed to answer are set out below, along with the corresponding inspection focus. The detailed draft FRS inspection methodology is provided at annex A. We ask for your views on the proposed methodology.

⁶ Section 11, Policing and Crime Act 2017

⁷ Sections 6-9, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

Principal question**Inspection focus**

How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

How well the fire and rescue service understands its current and future risks, works to prevent fires and other risks, protects the public through the regulation of fire safety, responds to fires and other emergencies, and responds to national risks.

How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

How well the fire and rescue service uses its resources to manage risk, and secures an affordable way of providing its service, now and in the future.

How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

How well the fire and rescue service promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures that they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for its workforce, and develops leaders.

Our assessment of effectiveness will consider how well the fire and rescue service is performing its principal functions in relation to fire safety, fire-fighting and road traffic collisions. The inspection will give prominence to the principal themes of how effective each service is at preventing, protecting against and responding to incidents; whether the service provides value for money; and whether the service understands its current demands and where future risks lie.

Our assessment of efficiency will consider whether the way in which each fire and rescue service operates represents value for money, and how well it is matching resources to the risks faced by the public.

Our assessment of how each fire and rescue service looks after its people will consider leadership at all levels in the organisation, including training, diversity, values and culture.

This will be the first full assessment of all 45 fire and rescue services for some years. At the end of each set of inspections, HMICFRS intends to publish a report of its assessment of each fire and rescue service inspected in that set, as well as a summary of themes emerging from the inspections. HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services for England is required to report each year on the carrying out of inspections, including an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the fire and rescue authorities in England⁸.

⁸ Section 28B, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

National thematic inspections

National thematic inspections are in-depth examinations of specific fire and rescue service matters, which will usually be identified through HMICFRS' monitoring processes or as a result of a commission from the Home Secretary. These inspections will identify areas of strong and weak practice in specific fire and rescue services, but will result also in recommendations that are relevant to the fire and rescue service as a whole. The Home Office can commission thematic inspections on individual issues if needed. HMICFRS is not funded to carry out thematic inspections.

Consultation questions

3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?

HMICFRS' inspection framework

Inspection framework for fire and rescue services

We will gather information to inform our assessments using a range of methods that include: analysis of documents and data; reviews of operational incidents; surveys of the public, and of fire and rescue services staff; interviews; focus groups; and observations of fire and rescue practice.

Following the first round of full inspections, HMICFRS intends to move to a risk-based inspection programme, which will be developed and consulted on separately. This allows inspection activity and resources to take account of known risks to public safety and to reflect the assessed performance of each fire and rescue service.

Graded judgments

Fire and rescue services will be assessed and given graded judgments for the three principal questions in the inspection methodology (efficiency, effectiveness and people). We may give a single overall judgment for each service. We will test this during the pilot inspections and make a final decision as to our approach when the pilots have concluded. The categories of graded judgment are:

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

Judgment is made against how efficient and effective fire and rescue services are, and how well they look after their people.

Good is based on policy, practice or performance that meets pre-defined grading criteria that are informed by any relevant national operational guidance or standards.

If the policy, practice or performance exceeds what is expected for good, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of outstanding.

If there are shortcomings in the policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of requires improvement. If there are serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of inadequate.

Fire and rescue service authorities' priorities

Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England in carrying out their functions⁹. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England¹⁰ states that each fire and rescue authority must produce an integrated risk management plan that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community.

HMICFRS inspectors will consider the content of the fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan and how this translates into the operational practice of the fire and rescue service. The plan will be used as a source of information about the assessment of risk and vulnerability in respect of each service, the factors which affect considerations of public safety, and how each fire and rescue service will use prevention, protection and response activities to mitigate the risk to communities.

Professional standards body

Part of the Home Office reform programme for fire and rescue services is the formation of a professional standards body. It is currently in development. HMICFRS will take account of all existing and new professional standards for fire and rescue services, including national operational guidance.

Consultation questions

5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

⁹ Section 21(7), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

¹⁰ The Framework is prepared by the Home Secretary. It must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions; it may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions; and it may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions as the Home Secretary considers appropriate. (Section 21, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004) Available at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england

Methodology, monitoring, assurance and analysis

Advisory and reference groups

This inspection programme is being developed with fire and rescue services. It has been designed to promote improvements across fire and rescue services.

HMICFRS has established a fire and rescue service external reference group. Its members include those who have specific skills and experience in the areas that will be inspected such as representatives from fire and rescue services, the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Home Office, the Local Government Association and police, fire and crime commissioners. We are using their knowledge and advice to establish a sound methodology for inspections.

The HMICFRS Fire Technical Advisory Group considers how to develop appropriate methods of data collection and analysis to support the inspection methodology. The members of the Fire Technical Advisory Group include representatives of the National Fire Chiefs Council co-ordinating committees, the Home Office, representative bodies, fire and rescue services and others. It will also include representatives from the professional standards body, when it has been established.

HMICFRS' monitoring process

HM inspectors of fire and rescue services (HMIs) will regularly monitor all services in order to promote improvements. If an HMI identifies a cause of concern about practice in a particular fire and rescue service, it will be raised with the relevant chief fire officer/chief executive/commissioner and the fire authority/police fire and crime commissioner, so that they can take action.

Follow-up from previous inspections

HMICFRS conducts a number of follow-up activities throughout the year. They range from formal revisits to offering support to services in responding to our findings. Also, we track the progress that services have made against our recommendations.

Consultation questions

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?
3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?
5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

How to respond to this consultation

Please submit your answers to these questions, together with any other comments, by email to: HMICFRSfireinspectionprogramme@hmic.gsi.gov.uk, no later than 1700 on 19 February 2018.

If you prefer, you can post responses to the Chief Operating Officer, HMICFRS, 6th floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PN.

If you have a complaint or comment about HMICFRS' approach to consultation, you can email this to: HMICFRSfireinspectionprogramme@hmic.gsi.gov.uk

How consultation responses will be reviewed

HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services will consider respondents' views and, if he determines it appropriate to do so, change the proposed inspection programme and framework before putting it to the Home Secretary for approval. In accordance with section 28A(2), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services must obtain the approval of the Secretary of State for an inspection programme or inspection framework before the inspectors act in accordance with it.

The final document, which will be appropriately revised to reflect the results of the consultation, will be made available on HMICFRS' website at:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/about-us/what-we-do/inspection-programmes/

You should note that HMICFRS may publish consultation responses, or summaries of them, except where they have been provided in confidence. Please indicate in your response if you do not wish it to be published.

Annex A - HMICFRS Fire and rescue service inspection methodology

How effective and efficient are the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)?		
Core	Diagnostic	Sub-diagnostic
1. How effective is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?	1.1 How well does the FRS understand the risk of fire and other emergencies?	1.1.1 How well does the FRS engage with the local community to build up a comprehensive risk profile?
		1.1.2 To what extent does the FRS use information from other sources (e.g. health and social care data, population and demographic data) to build the risk profile?
		1.1.3 How well does the FRS define the level of community risk, including those communities most at risk, hard to reach, hidden (e.g. unscrupulous landlords, overcrowded dwellings) or affecting the most vulnerable people?
		1.1.4 To what extent does the FRS undertake regular liaison with relevant bodies to ensure a common understanding of risk, including fire standards and requirements?
		1.1.5 To what extent are the results of preventative or protective activity used to ensure a common understanding of risk?
		1.1.6 How well does the FRS identify and assess current, emerging or future changes in the risk of fire and other risks?
	1.2 How effective is the FRS at preventing fires and other risks?	1.2.1 To what extent is preventative activity, such as the Home Fire Safety Check programme, focused on those most at risk?
		1.2.2 How well does the FRS raise awareness and campaign to prevent fires and promote community safety?
		1.2.3 What progress has the FRS, with partners, achieved in preventing fires and keeping people safe?
		1.2.4 How well does the FRS work with partner organisations to promote road safety and reduce the numbers killed and seriously injured on the roads?
		1.2.5 How well does the FRS work with partners to tackle fire setting behaviour and support the prosecution of arsonists?
	1.3 How effective is the FRS at protecting the public through the regulation of fire safety?	1.3.1 To what extent is enforcement and inspection based on risk?
		1.3.2 To what extent is a systematic, consistent and robust Fire Safety Audit undertaken by FRS staff?
		1.3.3 How well is information on risk communicated throughout the FRS?
		1.3.4 How well does the FRS take enforcement action against those who fail to comply with fire safety regulations?
		1.3.5 How well does the FRS work with other enforcement agencies to share information on risk and take joint enforcement action (e.g. local authority licensing, building control and trading standards officers)?
		1.3.6 To what extent is the FRS working in partnership to reduce the burden of unwanted fire signals?
		1.3.7 To what extent does the FRS engage with local business or large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations?
	1.4 How effective is the FRS at responding to fires and other emergencies?	1.4.1 To what extent does the FRS provide a proportionate response to incidents on the basis of risk and vulnerability?
		1.4.2 How well does the FRS communicate information about risk and vulnerability?
		1.4.3 How well does the FRS command fire service assets at incidents?
		1.4.4 How well does the FRS identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people at incidents?
		1.4.5 How well does the FRS communicate information about incidents to the public?
		1.4.6 To what extent are consistent, rigorous and open systems in place to evaluate operational performance and make operational improvements?
		1.4.7 How well does the FRS exchange learning with other FRSs, including learning from national incidents?
	1.5 How effective is the FRS at responding to national risks?	1.5.1 To what extent has the FRS established arrangements to be able to supplement resources in the event of extraordinary need, such as a flood, or a major incident?
		1.5.2 How well has the FRS established site specific response plans for high risk premises?
		1.5.3 To what extent has the FRS demonstrated it is interoperable with other FRSs to ensure an effective and efficient cross-border response?
		1.5.4 To what extent does joint training and joint exercising help the FRS to plan for and test arrangements for dealing with major multi-agency incidents?
		1.5.5 How well prepared is the FRS to form part of a multi-agency response to a community risk identified by the local resilience forum, including a marauding terrorist attack?
2. How efficient is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?	2.1 How well does the FRS use resources to manage risk?	2.1.1 To what extent do FRS plans address the risks identified in the IRMP (integrated risk management plan)?
		2.1.2 To what extent are the FRS plans built on sound planning assumptions, subject to informed challenge and meet financial requirements?
		2.1.3 How well does the FRS allocate resources to preventative, protective and response activity?
		2.1.4 To what extent has the FRS considered national requirements?
		2.1.5 How well does the FRS ensure that the workforce's time is productive, making use of a flexible workforce and flexible working patterns?
		2.1.6 To what extent is the FRS actively exploring all opportunities for collaboration within and beyond the fire sector?
		2.1.7 How well does the FRS ensure there are mechanisms in place for monitoring, evaluation and review of collaborations (including benefits realisation and outcomes)?
		2.1.8 To what extent are business continuity arrangements in place and how often are these tested?
	2.2 How well is the FRS securing an affordable way of managing the risk of fire and other risks now and in the future?	2.2.1 To what extent does the FRS understand and is taking action to mitigate the main/ significant financial risks?
		2.2.2 To what extent does the FRS have a track record for achieving savings and closing any residual future budget gaps?
		2.2.3 To what extent can the FRS demonstrate sound financial management of principal non-pay costs (inc fleet and equipment) through benchmarking, contract renegotiation, and joint procurement?
		2.2.4 How well do FRS plans make the best use of the opportunities, and respond to the risks, presented by changes in technology?
		2.2.5 To what extent does the FRS estate/fleet strategy, and changes to estate/fleet, support current and future service provision?
		2.2.6 To what extent is the FRS continuing to make savings to invest for future innovation?
		2.2.7 How well does the FRS use reserves to improve efficiency, enable innovation and new ways of working?
		2.2.8 To what extent is the FRS influencing how it can work with others in the future in order to improve efficiency?
		2.2.9 To what extent has the FRS considered and exploited external funding opportunities, or options for generating income?
		2.2.10 To what extent does the FRS have a track record for achieving savings and closing any residual future budget gaps?
3. How well does the FRS look after its people?	3.1 How well does the FRS promote its values and culture?	3.1.1 How well does the FRS understand the wellbeing needs of its workforce?
		3.1.2 How well does the FRS take early action to improve the wellbeing of the workforce?
		3.1.3 How well do leaders demonstrate they model and maintain the values the FRS expects of them?
		3.1.4 To what extent is a culture of promoting health, safety and wellbeing evident at all levels in the FRS?
		3.1.5 To what extent has the FRS established a culture of learning and improvement?
	3.2 How well trained and skilled are FRS staff?	3.2.1 How well does the FRS understand the skills and capabilities of its workforce (including the use of technology)?
		3.2.2 How well does the FRS ensure it has the right workforce mix of skills and capabilities?
		3.2.3 To what extent does the FRS have the capacity and capability it needs to both achieve change and operational performance?
	3.3 How well does the FRS ensure fairness and diversity?	3.3.1 How well do leaders seek feedback and challenge from all parts of the workforce?
		3.3.2 How well does the FRS identify and resolve workforce concerns?
		3.3.3 How well does the FRS identify and address potential disproportionality in recruitment, retention and progression for fire-fighters and staff with protected characteristics?
	3.4 How does the FRS develop leadership and capability?	3.4.1 How well does the FRS manage and develop the individual performance of its fire-fighters and staff?
		3.4.2 How fairly does the FRS identify high potential members of the workforce to become senior leaders?
		3.4.3 How fairly does the FRS select for leadership roles at all levels?

Headquarters

2 Kings Court
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester
WR5 1JR

Tel 0345 122 4454
Fax 01905 357 466
Web www.hwfire.org.uk
Email info@hwfire.org.uk



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
Nathan Travis BA(Hons) MPA

Chief Operating Officer
HMICFRS
6th floor, Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London
SW1V 1PN

Date

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed fire and rescue service inspection programme and framework 2018/19

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed inspection programme. We trust you will find the following comments a constructive contribution to your considerations.

We offer the following comments in response to the specific questions in the consultation document.

Question 1: What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?

The proposed approach should enable HMICFRS to look at Fire and Rescue Services in a wider context than within the bounds of a particular theme. However, the timescale is relatively short to cover all 45 Fire and Rescue Services. At best, we would expect that inspectors will only get a snapshot of the activity and performance of each Fire and Rescue Service. It is not clear how this will be addressed. For instance, could previous independent inspections, such as the Audit Commission direction of travel, use of resources and comprehensive performance assessments, be examined to help gain a better context?

Question 2: Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?

The integrated inspection of effectiveness and efficiency should provide a more comprehensive picture of the fire and rescue service, rather than separate thematic inspections. The integrated inspection should provide a broader range of information and evidence that will be of benefit to the public in understanding how their Fire and Rescue Service is performing as a whole. It should also help to ensure that evidence that crosses more than one area can be shown and linked where appropriate. An integrated approach will also be a good starting point for any future more specific risk based inspections to follow.



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Nathan Travis BA(Hons) MPA

Question 3: Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?

While governance and accountability are not included in the inspections, we would expect the inspectors to take account of the impact on staff and services of any proposed changes to governance, such as where a PCC business case is being considered.

There also appears to be no specific questions posed around the growing health agenda and the associated partnerships and initiatives being explored by fire and rescue services. Likewise, collaboration, which is a central feature of the Fire Reform programme and is a key driver for Fire and Rescue Services, is only directly referred to in section 2.1.6 of the proposed questions. Partnership working is mentioned in section 1.2.5 in relation to fire setter behaviour and section 1.5.5 covers joint working in relation to multi-agency exercising. This may miss many others areas of joint work that Fire and Rescue Services are involved in to benefit their communities.

Question 4: Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?

Apart from the point about collaboration activities noted above, the questions are well framed to gather good evidence on efficiency, effectiveness and people. It is understandable that there are considerably more questions about effectiveness, as that is an area where the public can clearly recognise how their Fire and Rescue Service is performing. The wording of the questions looks to be carefully chosen to avoid simple number counting and tick-box exercises, which is to be welcomed.

We would expect that all 45 Fire and Rescue Services will be asked the same set of questions to ensure consistency.

Question 5: How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?

As noted above, we consider that a one-off inspection will only provide a snapshot of each Fire and Rescue Service. Public surveys are proposed as part of the inspection, but it is not clear how extensive they will be, what questions they will ask, and what judgement criteria will be applied to the responses. From experience, public surveys tend to yield a poor response rate, so it may be useful for HMICFRS to consider other ways of evaluating the public views on their Fire and Rescue Services. It is not clear whether responses from staff, public and focus groups would be weighted in any way.



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Question 6: What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?

The impact of the ongoing austerity measures should not be underestimated. This has impacted greater in some Fire and Rescue Services than others. Importantly, it has also impacted on other public sector organisations that also have a key role to play in maintaining the health, wellbeing and safety of vulnerable individuals in our communities. For example, people who are vulnerable due to their age, health, social isolation, substance abuse and/or exploitation could also – as a consequence – be more vulnerable to injury or death from fire. However, because of the financial pressures on these other public sector organisations, their ability to readily identify, proactively support and work with other partners (such as Fire and Rescue Services) to reduce these risks is increasingly challenged.

HMICFRS will also need to appreciate that austerity does not affect all FRs in equal measure; some are better placed to ease the effects of austerity than others.

In addition, organisational uncertainties for Fire and Rescue Services about future governance, the potential introduction of shared services, pay caps, and the practicalities of collaboration/merger, all have an impact that should not be discounted in the inspection.

Question 7: What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

It will be very important to present the results of inspections fairly and in a way in which the public will understand. The consultation does not cover the criteria for judging and comparing performance and how this will take account of the particular circumstances of each Fire and Rescue Service. This will need to be carefully designed to ensure the variations in risk and demand in different Fire and Rescue Services are reflected and that any potential bias is mitigated. For example, inspectors will need to be able to provide a balanced judgement when addressing sub-diagnostic 1.2.1 in terms of quantity against quality, targeted approaches against blanket coverage, single service against multi-agency, and the overall impact on public safety and public perceptions of safety.

In terms of gradings, is it not clear if there will be a league table approach. If there is, how would it take account of the wide differences between Fire and Rescue Services, for instance in terms of governance structures, geographical coverage, finances, historical make-up and both current and emerging demographics? Members of the public will not necessarily know, or be interested in, the varying organisational models, governance arrangements or funding criteria adopted across the 45 Fire and Rescue Services. If a ranked table approach is to be adopted, then grouping Fire and Rescue Services of a similar make-up would help to ensure that comparisons can be made and understood by the public in a more objective way.



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Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
Nathan Travis BA(Hons) MPA

We trust that you will find our comments useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require clarification on any points.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Travis, Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive



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Report of Head of Strategic Change and Collaboration

Relocation of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park Estate

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the current position of the Headquarters relocation project and to request the granting of delegated authority for grant expenditure and to enter into appropriate lease arrangements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i. Officers proceed with the proposed building and refurbishment works to enable the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate, to be funded from the Government's transformation grant award;***
- ii. the Authority enters into appropriate legal arrangements to support the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate on terms to be agreed by the Head of Legal Services and Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority; and***
- iii. a further report on the future sale or lease of Kings Court be brought back in due course.***

Introduction and Background

2. Following an application for government transformation funding by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), supported by West Mercia Police (WMP), a grant award was received of £1.886m to enable the co-location and appropriate integration of HWFRS Headquarters functions with West Mercia Police at Hindlip Park.
3. The HWFRS bid built upon a previous Police Innovation Fund (PIF) award to West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police for the delivery of a joint Operations and Command Centre (Southwell House) at Hindlip Park, within which, HWFRS Fire Control and Operational Policy departments will be located.
4. The successful delivery and occupation of Southwell House, will release further accommodation at Hindlip for refurbishment, and enable the HWFRS Headquarters relocation project to be implemented.

5. The relocation project forms part of the suite of projects within the HWFRS 2020 vision programme and has the following agreed deliverables:
 - a. The co-location of members of the HWFRS Senior Management Board with the WMP Executive Team within Hindlip Hall, to enable a closer proximity of command and their support functions (such as the staff office and service secretariats).
 - b. The appropriate co-location and alignment of identified Fire & Rescue Service and Police Headquarters functions within the Hindlip Park estate.
 - c. The appropriate integration of HWFRS within the existing branding across the site.
 - d. To support the identification of appropriate integration opportunities for processes and systems within functional business areas.

Current Position

6. The Southwell House build was completed on 22 December 2017. The police ICT systems within the building are currently being fitted and tested to enable occupation of the building by police staff from mid-February 2018.
7. HWFRS's Operational Policy department and Fire Control will move into Southwell House once Fire Service ICT systems have been fitted and tested. This will be carried out in conjunction with the police to support Fire Service occupation within Southwell House from mid-February 2018.
8. Officers are currently exploring the options for sale or lease of the existing Service Headquarters at Kings Court and are currently in discussion with a potential lessee. In order to support these discussions, a completion date of 31 August 2018 has been set for the relocation project.
9. Place Partnership Ltd have been working with the project team and police colleagues to identify suitable options to accommodate the sixty staff and the associated departmental needs within Hindlip Park taking into account the additional space created by the occupation of Southwell House.
10. As part of this process, departmental heads and staff from both services have been fully engaged to enable them to inform the design requirements and options. This is in addition to the imminent commencement of the formal consultation processes necessary due to the relocation of staff from Kings Court to Hindlip Park.
11. Accommodation has been identified for the relocation of current Fire Service Headquarters' teams (except Community Risk, which will be moving to Worcester Fire Station along with the local Police Command Team) onto the Hindlip Estate, with some teams being able to be co-located (wherever possible) with their respective police teams (such as ICT and HR). A large meeting room in Hindlip Hall is also being refurbished in order to facilitate future Fire Authority business and meetings.

12. Whilst the exact 'Heads of Terms' have yet to be agreed, it is envisaged that the accommodation provided will be rent free, with HWFRS contributing to the running costs of the areas occupied.
13. To enable the design work for the identified options to progress, an 'urgent decision process' was undertaken on 22 December 2017. The process approved the allocation of £100,000 from the grant award to cover the accommodation design fees.
14. Outline costs and estimates have been received for the building work and refurbishment necessary to accommodate HWFRS staff, as well as for the ICT provision, to enable access to HWFRS ICT systems and infrastructure within Southwell House and the wider estate as necessary. See Appendix 1: Outline costs & estimates (**Confidential Members Information only**).

Next Steps

15. The project team are now approaching the end of the design phase of the project and, in order to secure the appropriate tenure, will need to develop the appropriate Heads of Terms for the areas being occupied.
16. In order to meet the project completion date, it is necessary for tenders to be progressed for the building works at the earliest opportunity. This is to accommodate the timescales for the tender process and to enable the work to be programmed and co-ordinated appropriately with other projects being undertaken at Hindlip Park.
17. To enable the progression of the project beyond its current position, delegated authority is now needed to enable the required legal processes to proceed and for expenditure to be released.

Conclusion/Summary

18. The Southwell House build at Hindlip Park has now been completed and should be occupied from mid-February 2018.
19. The Operational Policy department and Fire Control staff from HWFRS will form part of the occupancy of Southwell House.
20. The occupancy of Southwell House by West Mercia Police will release accommodation that will enable the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's Headquarters relocation project to be implemented.
21. Fire Service and police staff are involved in the design of the areas being occupied and Fire Service staff will be entering into a period of formal consultation regarding the move from Kings Court.
22. To progress further with the project, delegated authority is needed to enable the required legal processes and expenditure to be progressed.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Forms part of Service 2020 vision programme. Funding from transformational grant award. Legal requirement for Heads of Terms. PPL for property works. Human resource impact due to contractual changes associated with change in work location.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Project Support to Our Strategy through: Building and infrastructure, Resourcing for the future, People and Services priorities.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Existing governance arrangements via 2020 programme in place to ensure appropriate risk management processes are undertaken
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Staff consultation over design requirements undertaken. Formal consultation process initiated with staff associated with change in work location.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the Human Resources work stream of the project.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Outline costs & Estimates (**Confidential Members Information only**).

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

Area Commander Rob Ball
Head of Strategic Change and Collaboration
(01905 368338)
Email: rball@hwfire.org.uk