

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

**1. REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority.

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Authority approve the purpose of the review at 3.2.

THAT the Authority approve the scope of the review at 3.3.

THAT the Authority note the methodology for the review at 3.4.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report builds on the Authority decision to appoint Phil Loach to the role of Chief Fire Officer (CFO) on a temporary basis; and as part of undertaking this role the CFO will conduct a review of the Principal Management structure.

This report is submitted to outline the proposed purpose, scope and methodology which have been developed between the CFO and the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority.

This has been done in consultation with the Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Authority at their meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September approved arrangements for scoping a review of the Principal Management Team. This report outlines the purpose, the scope and the methodology of the review.

3.2 The Purpose of the review is to ensure that the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) have, as outlined in 'The Plan 2013-16', a 'lean, accountable and empowered management structure'.

A key driver for this is to ensure that WMFRA minimise any adverse impact on our key aim of 'Making West Midlands Safer' by delivering Value for Money (VFM) through its delivery structures. The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) nationally continues to be subjected to central grant budget reduction. This reduction in grant will continue beyond the already planned for period of April 2011 to March 2015. The Government has announced there will be a requirement for plans to be developed which take into account a further reduction in grant of 10% across the sector in 2015-16.

Various reports have or are emerging containing commentary on suggested arrangements for senior management and governance structures for the FRS as a means of coping with the on-going grant reductions.

Therefore, the purpose of this review is to provide a preferred proposal or proposals to the Authority which will take into account the size, roles, responsibilities, conditions of service and pay structure for the Principal Management Team. This will be achieved by a fundamental review of the current structure of the Principal Management Team.

The WMFRA constitution delegates all matters relating to the operational effectiveness of the service (part 3, 3.1) to the CFO. This includes legal responsibilities for Health and Safety, Fire Safety enforcement and Operational Incident Command. These matters will be evaluated and reported on through the review.

This review will be presented to the Authority in the form of a preferred proposal or proposals for decision.

### 3.3 The Scope of the Review

The scope will underpin the purpose and will set out the parts of the organisation that will be subject to review. The primary group subject to the scope of the review will be defined as the Principal Management Team, this currently consists of:

- 1 x Chief Fire Officer
- 1 x Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- 1 x Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations)
- 1 x Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Technical and Operational Support)(TOpS)
- 1 x Director of Human Resources and Administration
- 1 x Director of Resources

However, it should be noted that whilst the scope of the review will be defined as the Principal Management Team it is likely that the outcomes of the review will impact upon other structures below the Principal Management tier which may require additional changes. These will be identified and options scoped as part of the review and delivered through the scheme of delegations.

### 3.4 The Methodology of the Review

The CFO will lead the review using a structured approach within the following methodology. The CFO will utilise those resources available within the organisation to enable the review to be completed systematically and within an approved timeline.

The review will explore the full range of options available including looking for shared service opportunities with other public sector providers. The review will use the recognised approach of benchmarking between comparator organisations and roles.

To ensure delivery of 'The Plan' and a strategic operational response a sustainable Principal Management Team will need to be provided. To support the decision making process sector validated analysis tools which examine roles and responsibilities will be used to provide the optimum roles and structures required.

This methodology will be supported by the professional judgement of the CFO which will be required to inform the review.

The methodology will be supported by:

- the Clerk to the Authority to provide Quality Assurance
- appointed FA Members to provide scrutiny throughout the review.
- the use of Policy Planning Forums to provide updates on the review.
- the use of appropriate external validation as required, arising from analysis and recommendations from the functions of quality assurance and scrutiny. This may also include consultation on the range of options considered.

The preferred proposal or proposals presented to the Authority for consideration and decision. The proposal or proposals will be clearly underpinned by the evidence and options delivered within the review process. This will demonstrate our agreed commitment to the 'The Plan 2013-16' to 'an evidence based approach'.

#### 3.4 Interim Principal Management Team Structure

During the period of the review temporary arrangements will be in place for the Principal Management Team. This team will consist of the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director Human Resources and Administration and Director of Resources.

The reduction from two to one Assistant Chief Fire Officer will be achieved by combining the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer TOPS and the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer. This role will be undertaken by Philip Hales who will assume the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer on a temporary basis.

The Principal Officers' operational rota will be maintained by the three Brigade Managers (CFO, DCFO and ACFO). This interim structure will help inform the review in terms of structure, roles, responsibilities and capacity.

Consideration will be given to those posts directly supporting the Principal Management Team with changes made through the agreed scheme of delegations within The Constitution (part 3, 3.7).

The scope of the review will be to make a preferred proposal or proposals for consideration by the Authority. It will also recommend a framework for further scheduled reviews.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report equality considerations have been undertaken in the form of internal organisational data and national data collected on a 'best endeavours' basis. This will form the basis of a full equality impact assessment to support the review.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under part 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 the Fire and Rescue Authority has a duty to provide a number of functions in its area that constitute a Fire and Rescue Service. In particular it is required to secure the provision of personnel necessary to meet this duty.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The paper has already identified that during the review that the roles of Deputy Chief Officer and Assistant Chief Officer TOpS will be combined temporarily. It is anticipated, at this time, that these savings will cover any costs associated with the review.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Agenda Item No6 – Fire Authority Report 16<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

PHIL LOACH  
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

