

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

30 NOVEMBER 2009

1. **CONSULTATION BY WARWICKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ON THEIR SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009**

Joint report of the Chief Fire Officer and Clerk.

RECOMMENDED

1.1 THAT the Authority considers Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service's Improvement Plan proposals which are detailed in their consultation document (attached as Appendix 1).

1.2 THAT the Authority provides a formal response to the consultation.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 This report is submitted to make Members aware of the Improvement Plan proposals of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and the potential impact upon service provision of the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and its communities.

2.2 This report is also submitted to enable the Authority to consider the content of a formal response to WFRS.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Following a review of WFRS by its Chief Fire Officer, an Improvement Plan has been developed for the Service which contains eight proposals. The proposals include significant changes to the number and location of fire stations within the County.

3.2 WFRS has initiated a formal public consultation process about their proposals which concludes on 8 December 2009, their consultation document is attached as Appendix 1 of this report. The outcome of the consultation will inform the development of the WFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2010-2013.

- 3.3 The proposals include the closure of seven stations three of which (Bedworth, Brinklow and Kenilworth) are within close proximity of the boundary of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority area.
- 3.4 At the time of submitting this report further information is being sought from WFRS to provide clarity about the specific detail of their proposals. This information will be used to determine the impact of the proposals upon WMFRA and its communities, and will be advised to Members at the Authority meeting.
- 3.5 The West Midlands Fire Service has arrangements in place with WFRS under Section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for cross border support. Subject to the outcomes of the consultation process, it may be necessary for the WMFRA to consider and, if appropriate, review and amend the arrangements.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and has raised potential issues which will require a full Equality Impact Assessment to be completed once the detail of the proposals by WFRS have been clarified.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The requirements of the National Framework Document, which is established under the provisions of the Fire and Rescue Service's Act 2004 (FRS Act), require FRSs to undertake a consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders that may be affected by proposals which will or may change their IRMP and service provision.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Until the outcomes of the consultation process are identified fully by WFRS it is not possible to determine the extent of any financial implications for the Authority.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Warwickshire Consultation document: “*A Fitter stronger Fire and Rescue Service Have your say...*”

Warwickshire County Council, A Fitter Stronger Fire and Rescue Service Report of the Chief Fire Office. Background information considered by Cabinet on 30 July 2009, on which the Fire and Rescue Service – Consultation Strategy and Proposals are now based.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Performance Review
1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009

Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11
Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004

VIJ RANDENIYA
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUSAN PHELPS
CLERK