

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

5TH DECEMBER 2005

1. **ACTION ON A MATTER OF URGENCY – REGIONAL FIRE CONTROL**

Report of the Clerk

RECOMMENDED

THAT the report be noted.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report on action taken on a matter of urgency, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 **Regional FireControl**

The West Midlands Regional Management Board Programme Board at its meeting on 3rd October, 2005 considered a letter from Jim Fitzpatrick, MP, Under Secretary of State in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [ODPM], indicating the outcome of consultation with Regional Management Boards on the governance and financial arrangements in respect of the new Regional Control Centres. The Minister also indicated that the ODPM wished to adopt a uniform approach to governance of these Centres across the country, and continued to favour the local authority company model over the lead authority model. The Regional Management Board was asked to confirm that it would be prepared to set up a company owned by the relevant authorities to run the new Control Centre.

ODPM asked for a response to this letter by 21st October, 2005, which did not give the Regional Management Board time to consider this matter. The Programme Board formulated the basis of a response to the Minister that was circulated to all constituent Fire Authorities for approval. Unfortunately the timescales

precluded this matter being considered at a formal meeting of the Authority.

The Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, approved the response on behalf of the Authority, in accordance with the provisions of the scheme of delegation relating to action on matters of urgency. A copy of the response is set out as an Appendix to this report.

4. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

5. **CORPORATE AIM SUPPORTED**

The principal corporate aim supported by the information in this report is as follows:

1. To meet the Authority's statutory duties, standards and expectations.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The course of action recommended in this report does not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications of adopting the local authority company model of governance for Regional Control Centres cannot be quantified with any certainty at this stage. Further guidance is expected from the ODPM on governance and the financial arrangements in the near future.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

West Midlands Regional Management Board agenda dated 28th October, 2005.

F N SUMMERS
CLERK