

<p>Notes of the Policy Planning Forum</p>
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**1 February 2016 at 10.30 am
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham**

- Present:** **Members of the Authority**
Councillor Edwards (Chair);
Councillor Idrees (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Atwal Singh, Barrie, Clinton, Davis,
Dehar, Douglas-Maul, Eustace, Hogarth, Mks,
Mottram JP, Quinnen, Sealey, Shackleton, B Singh,
P Singh, T Singh, Spence, Tranter, Ward and
Young.
- Officers:** **West Midlands Fire Service**
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (P Hales);
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (G Taylor);
A Afsar, B Brook, M Hamilton-Russell, M Pym, P Shergill,
S Shilton, N Spencer, S Timmington, S Vincent and
S Warnes.
- Clerk and Monitoring Officer**
K Gowreesunker (Clerk)
M Dudley (Monitoring Officer)
S Sahota (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
- Apologies:** Councillors Afzal, Aston, Barlow, Craddock and Skinner.
Mr Ager and Mr Bell.
Chief Fire Officer (P Loach).
- Observers:** Nil

4/16 Chair and CFO's Announcements

The Chair and Deputy Chief Fire Officer welcomed all attendees to the Policy Planning Forum.

The Chair reminded Members of the upcoming development opportunities:

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- 15 February 2016: Transport Engineering Workshops visit
- 11 April 2016: Community Heritage Centre Tour at Aston Fire Station
- Date to be confirmed: Employment Law update

An update on the future governance of the Fire Service which had been published on the WMFS intranet for members of staff was circulated to Members for their information.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members that a ballot paper had been issued by the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU). The ballot was to call for action short of strike. The closing date was 22 February 2016. A meeting held between the Service and the FBU on 29 January 2016 had proved to be positive, although too late to stop the ballot papers being sent out. Members would continue to be updated on progress as events unfold.

Presentations to the Forum

The following presentation was given to the Policy Planning Forum:

- The Plan – interactive demonstration

5/16 The Plan – interactive demonstration

Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk to the Fire Authority, delivered a presentation on The Plan, the vision statement, and priorities and outcomes:

The Plan had been refreshed to ensure the statements reflected the broadening approach to prevention, protection and response. Changes were reflected in the vision statement and the priorities and outcomes.

The priority and outcome statements had been streamlined to three areas, Prevention, Protection and Response, focusing The Plan.

The changes reflected the broadening of WMFS's services and alignment with the West Midlands Combined Authority, over the rolling three year strategy. The inclusion of 'safer, healthier and stronger communities' within the vision statement supported the Service's

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prevention agenda and helped the Service to explore areas for flexible funding.

The vision statement and the priority and outcome statements would be presented to the Fire Authority on 15 February 2016 for approval.

In response to Members' questions on the vision statement and the priorities and outcomes, the following answers were provided:

- The future governance arrangements of WMFS may still be uncertain with so many options regarding governance; however it was believed that the vision statement would still remain whatever the outcome, as this is what WMFS stands for.
- The West Midlands Combined Authority represented potentially more alignment and shared priorities with WMFS. There may be different viewpoints in the future, such as those of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) although some PCC's have stated that fire and police should be kept separate, citing the need for a separate Chief Fire Officer and a separate Chief Constable. However, WMFS has a three year strategy which in light of so much potential uncertainty would allow the flexibility to adapt, evolve and change.

Ben Brook, Group Commander Integrated Risk Management, delivered a presentation on the Community Safety Strategy (CSS) and new interactive web tool which provided a second opportunity following the Policy Planning Forum in December 2015 for Members to have a hands-on demonstration:

The CSS links directly with The Plan. It is the risk plan, which along with The Plan, demonstrates WMFS's integrated risk management which is a legal obligation of the national framework.

The CSS would allow Officers, Members, and members of the public to look at their area to examine what is happening and what WMFS is doing to support this, linking in with The Plan. The tool provides evidence that backs up the WMFS service delivery model, demonstrating why the Service has the assets it does, located where they are.

The CSS interactive tool will replace the previous CSS which comprised

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an 80 – 90 page document, improving the accessibility and aiding the understanding of the information contained within. The tool will enable users to drill down to incident data and further information can be linked to enabling greater analysis of command areas. The data is real incident data; updated quarterly in line with the WMFS quarterly performance schedule (it was acknowledged that the publication of live data would be ideal). Additionally, other 'non-fire' data will be available via the tool such as demographic data, deprivation levels and flood risk.

Members were encouraged to show and use the CSS when engaging with their communities.

(Meeting ended at 11:15 am)

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