



WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Monday, 10 October 2022 at 11:00

**To be held at Fire Service HQ and digitally via
Microsoft Teams**

Distribution of Councillors	
<u>Birmingham</u>	D Barrie Z Iqbal G Atwal S Spence
<u>Coventry</u>	C Miks G Lloyd
<u>Dudley</u>	I Kettle P Miller
<u>Sandwell</u>	Z Hussain R Jalil
<u>Solihull</u>	P Hogarth MBE
<u>Walsall</u>	V Waters A Young
<u>Wolverhampton</u>	G Brackenridge J Dehar
<u>Police & Crime Commissioner</u>	S Foster
<u>Representative - Assistant PCC</u>	Wasim Ali
<u>Co-opted Members</u>	Professor S Brake Sarah Middleton ABCA
<u>Independent Member</u>	Mr M Ager
<u>Observers</u>	M Carter, UNISON
	R Merker, Fire Officer's Association
	S Price-Hunt, Fire Brigades Union

Please note: Meetings of the political groups will be held at 10.00 am.

Extraordinary Fire Authority

You are summoned to attend the extraordinary meeting of Fire Authority to be held on Monday, 10 October 2022 at 11:00

At Fire Service Headquarters, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells,

Birmingham B7 4HW

and digitally via Microsoft Teams

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

- 1 To receive apologies for absence (if any)
- 2 Declarations of interests
- 3 Chair's announcements
- 4 Chief Fire Officer Announcements
- 5 Minutes of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 27 June 2022 5 - 18
- 6 Membership of the Authority 2022-2023, Questions of Discharge and Committee Membership 19 - 24
- 7 Portfolio Management (3PT) 25 - 40
- 8 Business Continuity Arrangements 41 - 48
- 9 Monitoring of Finances 49 - 56
- 10 WMFRA Calendar of Meetings and Members Allowances 2022-2023 57 - 62
- 11 Minutes of Previous Public Committee Meetings 63 - 84

12 Exclusion of the public and press

Chair to move:- *"That the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006."*

Agenda (not open to public and press)

13 Business Continuity Costs and Considerations (Private)

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

14 Pay Award Update and Associated Budgetary Pressures

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

15 Planned Procurement Exercise for 2022-23

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

Agenda prepared by Kirsty Tuffin

Strategic Hub, West Midlands Fire Service

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available electronically on the [West Midlands Fire Service Committee Management Information System](#)

This meeting of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority will be held at Fire Service Headquarters. However, please note that although the meeting will be open to the public, there will be limited capacity due to ongoing social distancing measures.

The meeting will also be held digitally via Microsoft Teams allowing observers to access remotely. To access the meeting, please contact a member of the Strategic Hub, West Midlands Fire Service, who will be able to provide login details (please note that Microsoft Teams is not required to join a meeting) or provide guidance if you wish to attend in person at HQ.

Clerk Name:	Karen Gowreesunker
Clerk Telephone:	0121 380 6678
Clerk Email:	Karen.Gowreesunker@wmfs.net

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

27 June 2022 at 1100 hours

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via
Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Brackenridge (Chair),

Councillor Iqbal (Vice Chair),

Councillor Atwal, Councillor Barrie, Councillor Dehar,
Councillor Hogarth, Councillor Hussain, Councillor Jalil,
Councillor Miks, Councillor Miller Councillor Spence
Councillor Waters, Councillor Young. Professor S Brake, co-
opted member and Sarah Middleton, Co-opted member.

Virtual: Mike Ager – Independent Member, Wasim Ali – APCC,
Maurice Carter – Unison, Billy Holland - Fire Brigade's Union,
Richard Merker - Fire Officers Association.

73/22 To elect the Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Councillor Brackenridge be re-elected as Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.

74/22 To elect the Vice-Chair of the authority for the ensuing year

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Councillor Iqbal be re-elected as the Vice-Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.

75/22 To receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Seamus Walsh and
Steven Price-Hunt – Fire Brigade Union.

The Chair of the Authority advised that Councillor Walsh had been unwell and that flowers would be circulated to him on behalf of the authority.

76/22 **Declarations of Interest**

The Chair declared a personal non-pecuniary interest due to being a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s). Councillor Hogarth and Councillor Kettle declared a non-pecuniary interest due to a local government pension.

77/22 **Chairs Announcements**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the full Fire Authority, with a special welcome to the five new members joining the authority: Cllr(s) Atwal, Hussain, Jalil, Kettle and Waters.

The Chair advised that as things had begun moving to a new normality, non-decision-making meetings would continue to take place online and all members would need to attend decision-making meetings in person, unless there were exceptional circumstances.

The Chair thanked all staff and Professor Simon Brake for all their hard work setting up/assisting with the delivery of vaccines, distribution of PPE and other key areas of work throughout the pandemic. Professor Brake thanked the Chair and the Authority for the support over the last extraordinary two years. The Chair highlighted one of the key challenges the authority would face over the next year, including The White Paper consultation response and advised that members would defend the Fire Authority in its response. Councillor Hogarth echoed these comments.

78/22 **Chief Fire Officer's Announcements**

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) welcomed all attendees to the meeting with a special welcome to the new members of the authority.

The CFO wished to send Cllr Walsh best wishes on behalf of the service and endorsed the comments of the Chair of the Authority.

He wished to thank both Professor Simon Brake and Andrew Thurgood who had assisted Professor Brake with the establishment of the scientific cell.

The CFO thanked all FRA members for their dedication and distributed the Platinum Jubilee coins to following members who had been eligible for the award:

- Councillor Brackenridge
- Councillor Dehar
- Councillor Hogarth
- Councillor Miks
- Councillor Spence
- Councillor Young

A special recognition was also given to Mike Ager (who had attended virtually) and Councillor Walsh. The Platinum Jubilee Coins would be posted out to them.

The CFO advised that there was a major incident ongoing in Kingstanding that had unfortunately resulted in one fatality. Lessons learnt from a similar incident over a decade ago had ensure the incident was handled effectively and as safely as possible. Praise was given to Gary Taylor and Sam Burton for their role in the on-going incident. Congratulations was given to Martin-Ward-White on his new position of Area Commander that would commence from the 4 July.

The Service has been in the final stages of preparation for the Commonwealth Games to ensure the Games are delivered safely and bring all seven local authorities together. The UK Festival of Rescue would also be taking place at the end of September 2022, with over 500 Firefighters participating. Members of the Authority were encouraged to attend the events in their local authorities.

Following queries, the Chair of the Authority confirmed that an additional Collaboration and Transformation Committee would take place in July to discuss the White Paper Consultation response and re-assured Members that they would have an input in the response prior to this meeting where it would be formally agreed.

Councillor Hogarth advised that as Cllr Barrie had been developing the response on behalf of the Conservative group, he would attend the Committee meeting on behalf of Cllr Kettle in this instance.

79/22 **Minutes of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 14 February 2022**

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 14 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

80/22 **Membership of the Authority**

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed the Membership of the Authority for 2022-23 be noted.

81/22 **Questions on the Discharge of Functions**

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the members, as per the report, be nominated to answer questions on the discharge of functions of the Authority as required by Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985.

82/22 **Political Balance and Membership of Committees and Panels**

Resolved:

1. That the political balance and membership of committees and panels for 2022/2023, as per the report, be approved.
2. That the current Independent Member be appointed to serve on the committees, as per the report.
3. That the appointment of co-opted members to Scrutiny Committee, Policy Planning Forum and Collaboration and Transformation Committees, be approved.
4. That the appointment to the roles of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and Panels, as per the report be approved.
5. That the appointment of Mr. Ray Tomkinson to the role of Independent Person appointed in pursuance of Section 28 of

the Localism Act 2011, for the term of office expiring at the AGM June 2023, be approved.

83/22 Appointment of Representatives to Serve on Other Bodies

The Chair of the Authority advised that Councillor Jalil would be the nominated representative to attend the West Midlands Road Safety Partnership.

Resolved:

1. That the Authority nominated representatives serve on the bodies set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the one-year term of office expiring with the Annual Meeting of the Authority in June 2023, be approved.
2. That it be agreed that Councillor Jalil would be the nominated representative to attend the West Midlands Road Safety Partnership.

84/22 Member Attendance at Conferences, Seminars and Visits

The Chair of the Authority advised Members that should they be interested in attending any of the events, then to contact him directly and he would look into them attending as the Chair or Vice-Chairs nominee.

Resolved:

1. That the events for 2022-23, as set out in appendix 1 of the report, for the purpose of payment of travel and subsistence allowances and conferences fees, subject to necessary budgetary provision being available, be approved.

85/22 Governance of the Authority 2022-23

The Governance of the Authority 2022-23 report was withdrawn from the agenda, as it was felt there had not been sufficient information provided within the report to make an informed decision. As the report was removed from the agenda no discussion on the item was permitted.

Resolved:

1. That the Governance of the Authority 2022-23 report be withdrawn from the agenda.

86/22 Governance Statement 2021-22

Mike Griffiths presented the Governance Statement 2021-22 report that outlined the process to identify and prioritise risks for the achievement of the Authorities policies, aims and objectives.

The authority were advised that the Governance Statement had been an annual report and covered the period up until 31 March 2022. The Governance Statement would be included within the Statement of Accounts, due to be published the end of November 2022. Mike Griffiths advised that as per the report, that the Internal Auditors had given 'reasonable assurance' that the authority had adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control processes. This was the highest level of assurance that had been available to audit services.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Governance Statement 2021-22 be approved.

87/22 Portfolio Management (3PT)

The CFO presented the Portfolio Management (3PT) report that outlined a strategic summary of the progression of delivery of the portfolio management through 'Our Plan'.

The authority were advised that as a result of COVID and business continuity arrangements the report had been suspended and would be added to future Fire Authority agendas moving forward. As per the report, the approach taken under Portfolio Management, the outcomes and work programme of current projects and programmes were highlighted.

The Chair of the Authority praised 3PT for its effectiveness in running the service and thanked Officers for their input and hard work.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Portfolio Management (3pt) report be noted.

88/22 **Monitoring of Finances**

Mike Griffiths presented the Monitoring of Finances report that outlined the finances of the authority for the current financial year and covered revenue expenditure/capital programme.

The authority were advised that, as per appendix A of the report, the revenue budgeted and the actuals were compared up to the period 31 May 2022. The actual spend to May 2022 had been £22.177m compared to a projected budget of £22.007m. An adverse variance of £0.170m, as a result of pay budgets and increased fuel costs.

As per appendix B of the report, there had been three types of pension schemes: 1992, 2006 and 2015. As of 1st April, all Firefighters had been moved under the 2015 scheme and future Fire Authority reports would reflect this change.

The Authority were advised that, as per appendix C of the report, the capital programme for 2022-23 would be £6.4m, predominately funded by marked reserves. The Chair re-assured Members that he would persist with pushing for a capital grant at all levels and sought re-assurance from Mike Griffiths that with adverse spending had it been manageable with the current budget. Mike Griffiths advised that operational pay had been reviewed and monitored by the Strategic Enabling Team and it had been recognised that fuel and energy had exceeded the amount predicted when the budget had been set. A revised budget would be produced as part of the Authority's 2023/24 budget setting process.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Monitoring of Finances report be noted.

89/22 **Pay Policy Statement 2022-23**

Simon Barry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Temporary, presented the Pay Policy Statement 2022-23 report that outlined the new local government employee pay rates and pay awards.

The Authority were advised that the service must produce a pay policy statement for each financial year and outlined the services approach and policies, as outlined within the report. The pay award for Grey Book staff had been implemented from 1 July 2021 and Green Book staff had been applied from 1 March 2022 and backdated. Members were advised that as per the report, the gender pay gap covered the period up to 31 March 2022 and should not be compared with equal pay. The comparison had been on the average pay of women and men, not of equal pay as the service would pay the same pay scale for every role no matter the gender. There had been an increased distribution of women across the service that had been a positive move forward.

The Chair of the Authority praised the work of officers as the figures showed a move in the right direction. There had still been work to do but believed the service had been ahead of the curve.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2022-2023 be approved.

90/22 **Whistleblowing Policy**

Satinder Sahota, Monitoring Officer to the Authority, presented the Whistleblowing Policy report that outlined the amendments made to the policy in line with current legislation.

The authority were advised that the changes made to the policy had undergone a formal consultation in February 2022 for a four-week period. The key changes highlighted were:

- The role of a whistle blower to align with current government guidance.

- Information added on who would be protected by law to align with current government guidance.
- Information on who to inform and what would be expected when whistleblowing to align with current government guidance.
- Information added on confidentiality.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the amended Whistleblowing Policy be approved.

91/22 Analysis of Progress of Quarterly Performance Against the Plan Qtr 4 2021-22

Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the analysis of progress of quarterly performance against the plan Qtr. 4 2021-22 report that outlined the progress made in delivering the three strategic priorities within 'Our Plan' 2021-2024 and the status of key performance indicators for Qtr. 4 2021-22.

The Authority were advised that the key performance indicators had been RAG rated: Blue (over performance), Green (within tolerance levels) and Red (under performance). Each performance had been categorised into the following categories: Prevention, Protection and Response work, People, Health, safety and Wellbeing and Finance/Resources.

As per appendix 1 of the report, P1 Response – all four categories of incident types had over performed against tolerance levels with the average attendance time for Category 1 incidents of 4 minutes and 43 seconds in Qtr 4. Following queries, the CFO advised that target had been set on survivability work conducted and should the target time be reduced, it could have a negative impact on other areas of response. The average time of 4 minutes and 43 seconds had been within priority areas and could be higher in other areas. Targets were reviewed on a three-year basis but monitored on a regular basis.

The service did not set targets for the number of fatalities at incidents and had been reflected within the report. Following

queries around the number of deaths per age group, Gary Taylor advised members that the service would look at behavioural factors and target those areas, but cases had been complex. Safe and Wells also had a targeted approach for those deemed as vulnerable. The target had been set on the referrals from collaborative work with partners and members were re-assured that although Qtr. 1 and 2 had been challenging, improvements had been made for Qtr. 3 and 4. There had also been a focus upon collaborative work with partners on Road Safety to assist with educating and supporting services.

It was highlighted that in 2021-22, as a result of COVID, the service had to adapt its approach to delivery of its prevention and protection services but had still been successful with the majority of targets achieving a RAG rating of Blue and Green.

90% of the workforce had declared their disability status and the service would continue to work on this to achieve the target of 95-100%. Queries were made around the appointments of Sikh workers and the status of changes to health and safety measures around both their turbans and facial hair. Gary Taylor and Simon Barry re-assured members that there had been a strategic focus on recruitment aspirations and although issues around facial hair had been challenging it had been a focus for the service and it was hoped work on this would be completed by September 2022. The Chair of the Authority stated it had to be a priority for the service and Cllr Dehar had been raising the issue with the LGA as a Champion for Equality.

Following queries around the use of apprenticeships and school leavers, Simon Barry advised members that at present there had not been a live apprenticeship for Firefighters, but the service had been looking at a leadership apprenticeship. The CFO advised that the service did pay into an apprenticeship levy and the service's approach exceeded the standards in regard to apprenticeships and had a well-developed Junior Scheme.

The Chair of the Authority thanked officers for their hard work and highlighted the need to monitor recruitment.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the status of the Services key performance indicators in the fourth quarter of 2021-22 (Appendix 1), be noted.
2. That it be agreed that the progress made in delivering the three strategic priorities contained in 'Our Plan' 2021-2024 (appendix 1), be noted.

92/22 **Corporate Performance Indicators 2022-23**

Gary Taylor presented the Corporate Performance Indicators 2022-23 report that outlined the corporate performance indicators and their targets.

The authority were advised that targets had been set over a three-year period with performance indicators covering a one-year period. The indicators had been compared to previous performances, pre-covid, with the majority of prevention and protection PIs set at a 0% change against the three-year rolling average. It was highlighted that COVID, inflation and the crisis in Ukraine had all had an impact and was reflected within the report.

Following queries around the impact of Brexit, Gary Taylor, advised that there had been some slight supply chain issues that had impacted digital suppliers and smoke detectors.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Corporate Performance Indicators (PIs) and targets for 2022-23 be approved.

93/22 **Decisions taken under Matters of Urgency**

Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk to the Authority, presented the Decisions taken under Matters of Urgency. She advised the authority that the two decisions taken under Matters of Urgency were:

1. Planned Procurement Exercise for 2022-23
2. Authorities National Arrangements for the Provision of external audit services.

Both decisions had been made by the Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the Authority, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, the Clerk and Leader of the Main Opposition Group.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the decisions taken and approved under Matters of Urgency be noted.

94/22 **Contract Awards Summary for Period to 30 June 2022**

Mike Griffiths presented the Contract Awards Summary report for the period to 30 June 2022 that outlined the contracts awarded in excess of £250,000 since October 2021.

The authority were advised that the following 4 contracts had been awarded, as per appendix to the report:

1. Planned works framework agreement
2. Appliance bay door maintenance
3. Liquid fuel (diesel)
4. Property disposal (Kings Norton flats)

Resolved:

1. That the summary of contracts awarded in excess of £250,000 since October 2021, as per appendix of the report, be noted.

95/22 **Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2021-22**

Councillor Miks, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, presented the Annual report of the Audit and Risk Committee, that outlined the work conducted by the Committee during the 2021-22 municipal year.

The Chair of the Committee wished to thank the external auditors, Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority and Kirsty Tuffin, Democratic Services Officer, for all their support.

Resolved:

1. That the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2021-22 be received.

96/22 Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee 2021-22

Councillor Spence, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented the Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee, that outlined the work conducted by the Committee during the 2021-22 municipal year.

The Chair of the Committee advised the authority that due to the pandemic and business continuity arrangements that had been in place, the Scrutiny Committee had been paused until November 2021, as outlined within the report.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for 2021-22 be received.

97/22 Result of Recent Fire Safety Prosecutions

The CFO presented the Result of Recent Fire Safety Prosecutions report that outlined the result of two prosecutions: The Talbot Hotel and Pranzo Restaurant. The authority were advised that both defendants had been charged with offences contrary to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The Chair of the Authority advised members that not many of these were received as the service worked well with businesses to support but recognised that in some circumstances prosecutions had to be made.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the details of the fire safety prosecution be noted.

98/22 Result of Recent Fire Safety Appeal Against Prohibition Notice

The CFO presented the Result of Recent Fire Safety Appeal against Prohibition Notice report that outlined the appeal against the Prohibition Notices served on Lexx Jerkz Ltd, under Article 31 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The authority were advised that appeals had been less frequent, and the appeal made by Lexx Jerkz Ltd had been dismissed. Costs were awarded against the appellant and £3,903.10 had been awarded to WMFS.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the details of the Fire Safety Appeal be noted.

99/22 **Minutes of Previous Committee Meetings**

Professor Simon Brake highlighted the need to approve the calendar of meetings, attached therein the Governance report (agenda item 13). The Chair of the Authority advised that there had been no issues with the dates within the report and this would be dealt with at the next meeting.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the minutes of the following committee meetings, be noted:
 - Audit and Risk Committee – Monday 6 December 2021 and 21 March 2022
 - Collaboration and Transformation Committee – Monday 6 December
 - Scrutiny Committee – Monday 14 February 2022.

The meeting ended at 12:47 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906 Kirsty.tuffin@wmfs.net

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

10 OCTOBER 2022

1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY 2022/2023, QUESTIONS ON DISCHARGE OF FUNCTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

Report of the Clerk.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the appointment of Councillor Gavin Lloyd made by Coventry Council to the Authority for 2022/2023 be noted.
- 1.2 THAT the nomination of Councillor Catherine Miks by Coventry Council to answer questions on the discharge of the functions of the Authority as required by Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985, be approved.
- 1.3 THAT the changes to the membership of committees for 2022-2023, as per appendix 1, be approved.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To advise of the appointment made by the Coventry Council to the Authority for 2022/2023. To nominate members to answer questions put in the course of proceedings of constituent Councils on the discharge of the Authority's functions (as required by Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985). To approve the changes made to the membership of committees for 2022-2023.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following the sad passing of Councillor Seamus Walsh, at their Full Council on 6 September 2022, Coventry Council approved the appointment of Councillor Gavin Lloyd to the Authority for the remainder of 2022-2023. As a result of this new appointment, changes have been made to the membership of the Committees for

2022-2023, previously approved at the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on 27 June 2022.

- 3.2 Under Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985, arrangements have to be made for enabling questions on the discharge of the Authority's functions to be put in the course of the proceedings of any constituent district Council. Members of that Council can put questions to a Member who is nominated by the Authority for that purpose.

4. **QUESTIONS ON THE DISCHARGE OF FUNCTIONS**

- 4.1 Although the Authority has responsibility for nominating Members, it is normal practice to seek the views of the district councils as to the person they wish to see nominated for this purpose. The nominations received are set out below:-

	Lead Member	Substitute
Coventry	Cllr Catherine Miks	Cllr Gavin Lloyd

5. **POLITICAL BALANCE AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS 2022-2023**

- 5.1 No changes have been made to the current political balance on the authority and its proportionality on Committees approved at the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on Monday 27 June 2022. The proposed changes have only been made to the membership of Committees and Panels to reflect the change in membership, following the passing of Cllr Walsh.
- 5.2 The proposed changes to the membership of Committees and Panels can be seen in appendix 1 of this report.

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 In preparing this report, an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Fire and Rescue Authorities were first established by Section 26 of the

Local Government Act, 1985, which provides that such authorities shall consist of members appointed by the metropolitan districts comprised in the relevant county.

- 7.2 Under Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985, arrangements have to be made for enabling questions on the discharge of the Authority's functions to be put in the course of the proceedings of any constituent district Council.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 Fire Authority 27 June 2022 reports:
- Membership of the Authority 2022-23
 - Political Balance and Membership of Committees and Panels
 - Questions on the Discharge of Functions

The contact name for this report is Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority.

Karen Gowreesunker
CLERK OF THE AUTHORITY

Appendix 1

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Appointments to Committees and Panels 2022/2023

Authority 15 elected members & 3 co-opted members (Lab 10; Con 5) All Members to attend 1 Independent 3 Observers	Policy Planning Forum 15 elected members & 3 co-opted members (Lab 10; Con 5) All Members to attend. 1 Independent 3 Observers
Appointments, Standards and Appeals Committee 7 elected members plus 1 Observer (Lab 5; Con 2) At least one Member from each Authority	
Councillor	Substitute
Cllr Rizwan Jalil (Chair)	Cllr Zahir Hussain
Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Jas Dehar
Cllr Zafar Iqbal	Cllr Sybil Spence
Cllr Catherine Miks	Cllr Gavin Lloyd
Cllr Ann Young	Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal
Cllr Ian Kettle	Cllr Peter Miller
Cllr Peter Hogarth MBE	Cllr David Barrie
Independent Person Ray Tomkinson (Observer)	Standards Items Only

Scrutiny Committee (7 elected members) (Lab 5; Con 2) Plus 1 Co-optee (Non Voting) – Sarah Middleton ABCA	
Councillor	Substitute
Cllr Sybil Spence (Chair)	Cllr Zafar Iqbal
Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Zafar Iqbal
Cllr Jas Dehar	Cllr Catherine Miks
Cllr Zahir Hussain	Cllr Rizwan Jalil
Cllr Ann Young	Cllr Rizwan Jalil
Cllr Vera Waters	Cllr Peter Hogarth MBE
Cllr David Barrie	Cllr Ian Kettle
ABCA – Sarah Middleton	Non-Voting

Collaboration and Transformation Committee 7 elected members plus 1 Co-opted Member (Lab 5; Con 2) At least one Member from each Authority	
Councillor	Substitute
Cllr Jas Dehar (Chair)	Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Zahir Hussain (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Rizwan Jalil
Cllr Gavin Lloyd	Cllr Catherine Miks
Cllr Zafar Iqbal	Cllr Sybil Spence
Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal	Cllr Sybil Spence
Cllr Ian Kettle	Cllr Peter Miller
Cllr Peter Hogarth MBE	Cllr David Barrie
Co-opted Member	Simon Brake

Audit and Risk Committee 5 members (Lab 3; Con 2) (Plus 1 Independent)	
Councillor	Substitute
Cllr Catherine Miks (Chair)	Cllr Gavin Lloyd
Cllr Rizwan Jalil (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Zahir Hussain
Cllr Sybil Spence	Cllr Gurdial Singh Atwal
Cllr Peter Miller	Cllr Ian Kettle
Cllr David Barrie	Cllr Vera Waters
Independent Member: Mr Mike Ager	

Joint Consultative Panel (5 elected members + 5 employee representatives) (Lab 3; Con 2)	
Councillor	Substitute
Cllr Ann Young (Chair)	Cllr
Cllr Gavin Lloyd (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Catherine Miks
Cllr Greg Brackenridge	Cllr Jas Dehar
Cllr Vera Waters	Cllr Ian Kettle
Cllr Peter Miller	Cllr David Barrie

*Please note: if both the original member and substitute are unavailable, then a member of the political party can attend appointed to attend by the Leader of that party.

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**10 OCTOBER 2022****1. PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT (3PT)**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the contents of the report be noted.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report provides a Strategic summary of the progression of the delivery of Portfolio Management through 'Our Plan'. The updates provided are based on the continual assessment of Investment and Value release of projects being delivered through the three Programmes of Community Risk Reduction, Enabling Services and People.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 To inform Members of the approach taken under Portfolio Management and the resulting outcomes of the workstreams within current Projects and Programmes, which support the effective leadership of the Service in continual improvement.
- 3.2 This report will lead into the subsequent Fire Authority reports that support the delivery of the Strategy in one or more of the Programmes.

4. DELIVERABLES

- 4.1 The Brigade Managers are accountable to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO), through the programme objectives to deliver the Strategy of the WMFS. The Portfolio is led by the CFO to enable the delivery of the Authority's Strategic priorities, aligned to the CRMP objectives.

- 4.2 The Portfolio is ultimately accountable for the Programmes and will provide assurance that the aims and objectives are being achieved. The Programmes are accountable for Projects.
- 4.3 The deliverables (aims and objectives) of the three Programmes are shown below, supported by recent Programme achievements.

5. **COMMUNITY REDUCTION RISK PROGRAMME (CRR)-HIGHLIGHTS**

There has been significant work conducted by Community Risk Reduction (CRR) over the last reporting period.

CRR are pleased to announce Martin Ward-White formally strategic lead for Organisational Policy, Assurance and Response has moved into a new role, overseeing our operational response function as Area Commander (Strategic Enabler) for Operations.

5.1 Operations

- 5.1.1 The recent heatwave saw a substantial increase in incidents triggering our Heatwave Plan and as such spate condition action plan. The plan is activated when receiving over 50 incidents over a 30-minute period for 2 hours or more. Our Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT) and Risk Based Crewing (RBC) model ensured our response was dynamic, resourcing incidents via a people-based mobilisation taking into consideration the level of risk, this ensured the appropriate weight of attack could be mobilised.
- 5.1.2 Site Specific Risk Information has been a key focus with extensive work been conducted to ensure our risk information is up to date and regularly reviewed.
- 5.1.3 Ben Behan, OLPD, and Paul Duxbury, TRU, have represented WMFS at the World Rescue Organisation, Trauma Challenge. After a complex scenario and amazing performance, they were awarded with the following achievements 3rd place best standard in the world and 2nd overall in the world.

- 5.1.4 Operations have held a number of station open days over the summer, which started with Sutton Coldfield Technical Rescue station in early May. These events have been a huge success and continue to attract large numbers of the community.
- 5.1.5 Fire Control (FC) are now using the Vision 4 mobilising system.
- 5.1.6 In response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations, Fire Control, Response, and our Digital and Data team have developed an app-based solution to support a digital CS10b. The CS10b has been live for 3 months and used to record and share Fire Survival Guidance information at Tall Building incidents between Fire Control and the incident ground, via a dedicated support appliance.
- 5.1.7 Extending our collaborative working with external partner agencies there is ongoing engagement with transport for West Midlands about use of/access to road network CCTV cameras in the control room. This would allow Fire Control (FC) to utilise cameras to support resourcing incidents. This could provide FC a live feed of incidents as they evolve which can then be communicated to responding appliances supporting the organisations 5-minute attendance standard
- 5.1.8 The FC review is now underway, with a dedicated project now in place to ensure Fire Control is fit for the future.
- 5.1.9 FC National Willowbeck exercise report completed and National Operational Learning submitted (now to be shared with stakeholders)

5.2 Prevention

- 5.2.1 Sparks visits in schools with key stage 2 children have now resumed, with WMFS teams delivering key learning and safety messages face-to-face.
- 5.2.2 Service User evaluation of Safe and Well (SAW) is now integral to our service delivery. The data from the surveys indicates that SAW is improving people's health, wellbeing, and quality of life

and reducing risk and vulnerability to fire. Some examples of what the data is showing include:

- 91% of the 2,278 respondents to date say that they have a greater understanding of the risks of falling
- 95% of those who smoke from the 2,278 respondents say they have a greater understanding of the risks of smoking
- of those who smoke, the 145 people who were referred to us have stopped smoking
- just under 1/3 of those who responded told us that they had been referred to services for further support for one or more of the following - smoking cessation, child safety, loneliness, winter warmth and alcohol services.

5.2.3 WMFS is now a member of the 3 new Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) in our service area (Birmingham & Solihull, Black Country, and Coventry & Warwickshire). The service has been recognised for the success in our shift from response to prevention and opportunities for the service to be engaged in local 'place based' working arrangements that will help to embed Prevention activities to improve, health, wellbeing and quality of life whilst reducing fires and other emergencies

5.3 Protection

5.3.1 Two Fire Engineers have now completed their 4-year course and have successfully graduated with First Class Honours. Fire Engineering is the application of scientific and engineering principles, rules (Codes), and expert judgment, based on an understanding of the phenomena and effects of fire and of the reaction and behaviour of people and buildings to fire; to protect people, property, and the environment from the destructive effects of fire and its by-products.

5.3.2 The Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's) project supporting our CRMP is now live. The new approach to mobilising to AFAs allows Fire Control to mobilise a proportionate level of response in line with dynamic mobilising with additional information gained. This could

include utilising BRVs crewed at 2 or 3 when BSVs are unavailable protecting frontline PRLs for CAT 1 response

5.3.3 The blended fleet CRMP project is now live. The project will support our CRMP seeking to develop a fleet that enables simultaneous activity across all prevention, protection, and response activities, maximising the value release of every resource.

5.4 Recent action

5.4.1 WMFS hosted the UKRO festival of rescue event between September 29th – 1st October 22 on the Smithfield site in Birmingham. The event welcomed Fire and Rescue Services from across the UK to compete in a multitude of disciplines to include Road Traffic Collision, Trauma, Water Rescue, Rope Rescue, Urban Search and Rescue and Fire fighter fitness.

5.4.2 Teams worked closely with West Midlands Police and wider external partner agencies during the planned Autumn Conservative Party Conference which is being held in Birmingham city centre at the start of October 2022.

5.4.3 Our WMFS teams supported Birmingham Pride at the end of September. WMFS had several floats in the parade which included a dedicated Fire appliance. Our teams were available throughout the event engaging with members of the community.

6. **ENABLING SERVICES PROGRAMME (ES) – HIGHLIGHTS**

6.1 Digital Transformation

Over recent months:

- Further enhancements to our cyber security posture have prevented attacks and disruption, which were increased during the Commonwealth Games. We are continuing towards recognised security accreditation, Cyber Essentials Plus.

- Development of enhanced connectivity for our stations and back office digital infrastructure, which will enable our mobile devices as well as improve our business continuity posture.
- Working towards a restructure of the Digital and Data team to align our resources to the areas to deliver our CRMP and improve efficiency and effectiveness whilst improving retention and attraction in a challenging job market.

7. **Emergency Service Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)**

- 7.1 This is a government led project that seeks to deliver the updated communications devices that will enable our Fire Service and our blue light colleagues to communicate more effectively, at a reduced cost into the future, by providing enhanced data capabilities.

Over recent months:

- The governance structures have changed which mean we are now supporting our regional FRS colleagues in the delivery of the programme.
- We have completed all required tasks to this point and await the next steps from the national programme.
- There have already been delays to the go live deadlines and there are further delays anticipated past 2028.

8. **Operations Digital Mobile Devices**

- 8.1 This project seeks to move us to individually delivered mobile devices for our frontline teams. This will give them all a voice, allow them to spend more time in the communities they serve, as well as increase their efficiency and effectiveness.

Over recent months:

- We have signed a contract to deliver an innovative trial to transform our incident command digitally, with a view to

improving firefighter safety and outcomes for our communities. This trial will be delivered in the Coventry and Solihull Command area, with interest from other Fire Services nationally.

- We continue to await the arrival of our mobile devices which have been delayed due to the "chip" shortage to deliver the devices across our five "innovation" stations

9. **Vision 4**

9.1 This is in place to upgrade our command-and-control system, responsible for mobilising our resources across the West Midlands and Staffordshire to an upgraded and fully supported software.

Over recent months

- The upgrade has been completed and Fire Control are using the new version to mobilise resources.
- There have been some snagging issues which are limited to back-office reporting and with a dedicated Teams allocated to provide immediate 'work arounds' and fully resolve these issues.

10. **Legacy Systems Project**

10.1 This project seeks to replace our Time and Attendance, Fleet and Asset Management systems. This will digitally transform our working in these areas and deliver mobile and secure systems as well as enhanced reporting.

- The initial focus of this project has been to identify a replacement time and attendance system as our existing suppliers have given us notice of withdrawal of support.

11. **Sustainability**

11.1 We are proactively taking steps to meet the needs of the community to tackle the symptoms of climate change and to meet our net zero responsibilities.

- 11.2 We have a commitment to sign the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group Charter, as the principles behind it directly align to our developing Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework which is shaping our sustainability strategy. As part of our ESG framework, Operational adaption and resilience to climate change is our first defined theme. We understand that our role is not just in responding to the effects of climate change but also engaging and influencing our communities through our protection and prevention work. Educating them on the changes they can make to help mitigate the progress and effects of climate change through circular economy, better waste management, energy efficiency and community spirit, amongst other things.
- 11.3 We have a corporate membership with Sustainability West Midlands, providing us a network to share and develop best practice specific to our communities and have representation at local and regional sustainability groups.

12. **Communications and Engagement**

12.1 **Rewards and Recognition**

- 12.1.1 West Midlands Fire Service paused Reward and Recognition (R&R) events during the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, a large backlog of awards and honours developed, specifically with Long Service and Good Conduct (LSGC) awards. Following our exit from the pandemic this calendar year has seen several different R&R events taking place with some key events scheduled to take place prior to the year end.
- 12.1.2 The year has seen over 200 recipients being awarded 20 Year LSGC, and 30 recipients receiving their 30 Year awards. Friends and families are invited to personalise these ceremonies as much as possible, meaning only 15-20 recipients receive their awards at one sitting.
- 12.1.3 We have more of these planned for the end of this year and throughout next year as well. In addition, we have a more formal Recognition event scheduled in December that will see many staff thanked and recognised for their contribution to keeping the

West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier. More details on this event will follow in due course. Our annual Carol Concert is also scheduled for Sunday 11 December.

13 **Resourcing**

13.1 **Funding, Budget Preparation and Monitoring**

- 13.1.1 Ongoing budget monitoring continues to take place and is reported on a monthly basis. Any in year budget pressures or opportunities are identified by budget holders and are actively managed through adjustments and in collaboration with other budget holders supported by the Finance Team. The six-month budget revision process that takes place in October of each year is a planned milestone for the wider budget to be reviewed.
- 13.1.2 Budget pressures are being experienced in the current year for a range of reasons which include price increases linked to supply chain difficulties. In addition, there are budget concerns relating to pay award levels, linked particularly to the 'Cost of Living' crisis, given the budgeted pay award assumption of 2%. This matter will require specific focus with a report being prepared for the Fire Authority to proactively consider options and approval.

14 **Planned Procurement**

- 14.1 Whilst supply chain issues continue to present challenges across several goods and services there has been a marked improvement in the supply of smoke alarms, which was a particular concern highlighted to the Authority some time ago. Through pro-active contract management by the WMFS Corporate Procurement Team on behalf of the Fire Sector, the level of smoke alarms available both locally and nationally has removed any immediate concerns around smoke alarm supplies and the related impact this could have on prevention-based activity. The WMFS Corporate Procurement Team have received a number of positive messages from FRSs expressing their thanks to the positive way the situation has been managed over the last 12 months.

As referenced above there is an impact on the supply of some digital devices due to the global 'chip' shortage.

15. **Vehicle Replacement Programme**

15.1 During July and August six new PRLs were commissioned at the following Fire Stations:

- Handsworth
- Billesley
- Sheldon
- Brierley Hill
- Solihull
- Smethwick

Response

16. **National Operational Guidance (N.O.G.)**

16.1 National Operational Guidance is the foundation for developing operational policies, procedures, and training to support firefighters to deal with incidents effectively and safely. It is 'industry good practice' for all Fire and Rescue Services to draw on. As of April 2022, WMFS have now implemented all 44 pieces of national guidance and associated training packages in relation to operational procedures and now established a dedicated Team to implement N.O.G. for Fire Control procedures.

17. **Organisational Assurance - Fire Standards**

17.1 The Fire Standards Board was created to deliver industry standards to the UKFRS which ranges across all areas of FRS functions. WMFS have been involved in the development of a number of these standards in Operational Preparedness, Fire Investigation and Prevention. To date 12 standards have been released and an extensive gap analysis has been completed on 11 of these, with no areas of concerns raised around WMFS compliance. The standard for Data Management has just been released and is going through a gap analysis to identify any areas of focus for the Service.

17.2 Two Leadership and People Fire Standards have just been through a consultation period and are due to be released in December 2022, with a further five Fire Standards are currently in development; envisaged by the Fire Standards Board to be delivered by the end of next year (2023).

18. **Grenfell Outcomes**

18.1 The Service continues to monitor the outcomes of the Grenfell Inquiry and conducting the necessary assurance work against any findings.

18.2 The Service has recently identified and approved a supplier for BA (Breathing Apparatus) Radio replacement, this will ensure that fire fighters wearing helmets and BA can effectively communicate, including when operating in high rise buildings. It is anticipated delivery of radios is November 2022.

19. **BA Procurement**

19.1 We are currently in the process of tendering for the procurement of new Breathing Apparatus (BA) sets as part of our BA SET Replacement Process. Our specification will challenge the sector to ensure that we have access to the most innovative, technologically advance BA Sets which will future proof ourselves in the years to come. The tender for this is due to begin in early 2023 and is being developed collaboratively with our regional FRS partners.

20. **DICE Considerations**

20.1 At the end of 2021 work was commissioned by CFO to review the Services uniform policy, specifically around facial hair with a view to enabling uniformed personnel who are not likely to be required to wear BA to wear facial hair.

20.2 Providing greater flexibility for staff to have facial hair would be more inclusive to certain faiths who on religious grounds would like to have facial hair, but also includes those who have medical reasons which may make it difficult to shave regularly. This policy

is progressing towards consultation.

20.3 The review of our uniform policy also extends to what our people choose to wear. We understand that members of staff, including operational employees, may consider the wearing religious or cultural dress and symbols an important expression of an individual's religion, belief, or identity and WMFS will, wherever reasonable, support these wishes. Some individuals may also wish to avoid certain materials in their clothing/dress due to a belief or lifestyle choice. Each circumstance will be judged on its own merit and consider an appropriate risk assessment.

21. PEOPLE PROGRAMME – HIGHLIGHTS

21.1 Managing Vacancies and SHL

21.1.1 A review of the Managing Vacancies policy has taken place enabling inclusive contribution and feedback to ensure a policy which creates openness and transparency in this process. The new policy provides for consistency from a sector perspective and is aligned to our behavioural framework and associated toolkit.

21.1.2 The newly launched Managing Vacancies policy advises how temporary vacancies will be managed with behavioural assessments introduced to support the identification of positive behavioural indicators which would support candidates enter a supervisory recruitment process (Crew Commanders).

21.1.3 Behavioural assessments are currently on hold to enable a review and feedback from those that have undertaken the assessment to support how this approach develops for the future.

22. Oracle HR Help Desk

22.1 As part of our commitment to digital transformation and our investment in Oracle we are continually designing and implementing new features and functionality that will maximise our financial investment through service value.

- 22.2 Most recently we have implemented an Oracle tool called HR Helpdesk, that enables all members of staff to raise a support ticket against any areas relating to people support services, time and attendance and other help services.
- 22.3 This has been live for approximately four months and has already seen over 900 tickets of support raised with almost 700 of these tickets being resolved i.e., help provided.
- 22.4 This ongoing approach will provide robust business intelligence enabling us to identify support themes to address through organisational intelligence, measure and improve the speed of response providing a more enhanced employee experience and finally enable us to move critical processes into this system like grievances and disciplines that will help with consistency and policy driven timeframes.

23. **Core Code of Ethics – Mission to Mars**

- 23.1 With the release of the NFCC Core Code of Ethics and the creation of 'Our Values' within the service, we designed the 'Mission to Mars' project to find some excellent role models that could help to bring 'Our Values' to life.
- 23.2 We received 135 nominations, with a number of our colleagues receiving multiple nominations, all in all there were nearly 100 different colleagues nominated, which was a fantastic response. From those 100 colleagues nominated a group of stakeholders from across the service and from the Representative Bodies came together and selected, based on a robust criteria, the final 15 individuals who will be the Mission to Mars: Value Champions.
- 23.3 An event has been organised to celebrate all the nominations and the final 'crew' will be announced after that. Once the winners have been informed, we will then move on to the next stage where we get final 15 value champions to discuss their approach, work etc relating to their specific value so that we can start to bring these values to life through positive role models.

24. **Emerging Risks**

- 24.1 The third Technical Rescue Station at Sutton Coldfield went live in May 2022, this helps to enhance the Service's ability to deliver a specialist response capability, whilst retaining the ability to respond to high risk (Category 1) incidents in the area. The project has allowed increased diversity and positive action initiatives to be undertaken.
- 24.2 Another element of the Project profiled as an emerging risk, was to review and assess our current level of involvement with (and understanding of) 'Prevent' as an organisation. Prevent is a government led programme which aims to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. The review has identified and proposed some key training requirements to ensure all of our staff and volunteers are able to recognise signs of radicalisation exhibited by some of the most vulnerable in our communities and then to refer any concerns confidently, this will help to create a safer, stronger and Healthier West Midlands.

25. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 25.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out because the matters contained in this report will not lead to a policy change.
- 25.2 Areas of policy changes that are identified in Project(s) are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment

26. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 26.1 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.

27. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 27.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

28. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

28.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Portfolio Management - Fire Authority Report June 2022
10706222 FRA Portfolio Management (3PT).docx

The contact name for this report is Richard Stanton, Portfolio Strategic Enabler, contact number 07973 810054

PHIL LOACH
Chief Fire Officer

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**10 October 2022****1. BUSINESS CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT Authority note the increase in Corporate Risk 6.1 relating to Business Continuity, as reported verbally to Audit and Risk Committee on 18 July 2022 and further discussed at Audit and Risk Committee on 26 September 2022.

1.1.1 Corporate Risk 6.1 concerns a situation where “The Fire Authority is unable to provide business continuity arrangements, to maintain delivery of core functions, as a result of extensive disruption to normal working arrangements, including national and international deployments, significant and major events, resulting in increased community risk; reduced confidence; increased reputational damage; and external scrutiny.”

- 1.2 THAT Authority considers the potential impact of Industrial Action on business continuity given the increase in Corporate Risk 6.1.
- 1.3 THAT Authority consider options to mitigate Corporate Risk 6.1 outlined in section 7 in order to decide on next steps.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide Fire Authority with further information regarding the increase in Corporate Risk 6.1 to 16 (Red) based on an increased likelihood of Industrial Action, as detailed in section 3 of the report.
- 2.2 To bring to the attention of Fire Authority the significant risk for the Fire Authority being unable to meet its statutory duties to provide provision for responding to incidents, as outlined in the Fire and

Rescue Service Act 2004 and the Civil Contingences Act 2004, during a period of Industrial Action based on current business continuity arrangements, which are reliant exclusively on volunteers.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The National Framework outlines that Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.
- 3.2 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingences Act 2004 outline the legal and statutory duties of an FRA in relation to provision for responding to incidents and the maintenance and management of the provision of business continuity plans to ensure that an FRA can deliver key services in the event of an emergency. Such emergencies include periods of Industrial Action.
- 3.3 In line with the National Framework every FRA must assess foreseeable risks that could affect their communities and states that regard must be had to Community Risk Registers (CRR) produced by Local Resilience Forums (LRF).
- 3.4 The Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP) process continually identifies risk locally, regionally, and nationally, and this includes the scenarios identified in the National Security Risk Assessment. These identified risks are delivered through the FRA Strategy. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) is accountable to the FRA and community for ensuring the Service delivers against the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Act, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, Civil Contingencies Act and the National Framework in an assertive, effective, and safe way.
- 3.5 All risks are recognised and managed through the WMFS Corporate Risk Register and reported monthly to the CFO, and a quarterly and six-month review to the Fire Authority via the Audit and Risk Committee.
- 3.6 Both the Fire Authority and Officers provided a response to 'Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service' White Paper published by the Home Office earlier this year. The response provided by the Fire Authority indicated that it had confidence that business continuity arrangements were satisfactory, which is in direct

contrast with the officer-led service response which indicated a lack of confidence in these arrangements.

4. **CORPORATE RISK 6.1**

- 4.1 Corporate Risk (CR) 6 relates to Business Continuity and Preparedness. CR 6.1 concerns a situation where “The Fire Authority is unable to provide business continuity arrangements, to maintain delivery of core functions, as a result of extensive disruption to normal working arrangements, including national and international deployments, significant and major events, resulting in increased community risk; reduced confidence; increased reputational damage; and external scrutiny.”
- 4.2 In September 2019, the Strategic Enabling Team as part of the review of Corporate Risk and to enhance business continuity resilience arrangements, engaged with third party providers. The recommendations were presented to the Fire Authority through a scrutiny process, by the CFO.
- 4.3 In November 2019, the CFO presented to the Fire Authority a recommendation to engage an external provider to enhance business continuity and resilience arrangements, to enable the Fire Authority to meet expected resilience level. It was also recommended that the Fire Authority approve the funding to implement the required business continuity option. The recommendations were not approved by the Fire Authority based on the resolution of the Scrutiny Committee, which recommended that the Fire Authority continues to use existing arrangements for business continuity arrangements using volunteers from existing staff.
- 4.4 As a consequence of this decision, Corporate Risk 6.1 was raised to 12 (Impact 4, Likelihood 3) in December 2019. This was as a result of the impact rising from 3 to 4 due to the limited capability offered by the agreed business continuity approach.
- 4.5 In June 2022, Corporate Risk 6.1 was reviewed again, and the likelihood of industrial action increased from 3 to 4. This resulted in the overall risk rating of Corporate Risk 6.1 increasing from 12 to 16 (the highest possible rating). Corporate Risk 6.1 currently remains at 16. This was verbally reported to Audit and Risk Committee in July 2022 and again in the form of a formal report in September 2022.

- 4.6 The likelihood rating was increased in June 2022 from 3 to 4 due to the increased likelihood of limited capability of business continuity arrangements.
- 4.7 There is growing discontent regarding fire service staff pay given high level of inflation and its subsequent impacts on cost of living. Wage growth within the fire and rescue service has been below inflation for several years, but the recent high level of inflation has increased the gap significantly.
- 4.8 The above is coupled with concerns about the overall industrial relations environment in the public sector, where several unions have balloted for or begun strike action over pay.
- 4.9 The “Reforming our Fire Service” - White Paper presented in May 2022 outline the desire of Government to have greater assurance around business continuity arrangements and for them to be independently assured.
- 4.10 In July and August 2022, National Employers and Representative Bodies failed to reach agreement on the 2022/23 pay offer, and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) rejected a 2% pay offer. In early September 2022 the FBU announced their intention to ballot their members for Industrial Action in October 2022 on the issue of pay.

5. **NATIONAL RESILIENCE ASSURANCE TEAM SURVEY**

- 5.1 In August 2022 a survey was commissioned by the Home Office and undertaken by the NRAT on preparedness for Industrial Action, which will be used to RAG rate (Red, Amber, Green) Fire and Rescue Services according to the resilience of their Business Continuity Arrangements in the event of industrial action.
- 5.2 WMFS responded to the survey in August 2022 and have subsequently shared this survey response with the Audit and Risk Committee. The survey collected detail of current Business Continuity plans, planning assumptions, expected appliance availability and crewing numbers.
- 5.3 Within the response, it is made clear that **“Resilience arrangements for industrial action rely on non-striking operational staff [and] there is currently limited confidence or understanding of the predicted cover that might be achieved for future periods of Industrial Action.”**

5.4 The Home Office provided their outcome to the survey in September 2022. They acknowledge that WMFS are unable to provide information about the number of staff that would be available during a period of firefighter industrial action and consequently no information about the number of fire & rescue response assets, we expect to maintain available to respond to incidents during Industrial Action. Without clarity and detail in respect of these areas the Home Office is unable to conclude at this time that WMFS arrangements to maintain an effective emergency response in the event of firefighter industrial action are suitable and sufficient and therefore must conclude that WMFS arrangements would be considered **red, high risk**.

5.5 The Home Office have also confirmed the next steps will be outlined in due course in correspondence to the Chair of the Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

6. **CURRENT POSITION**

6.1 Current business continuity arrangements for loss of staff due to industrial action involve the use of non-striking operational and support staff (including Fire Control). Appliances are then strategically placed across the West Midlands, using tools such as the Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT). Some appliances are 'dual staffed' to ensure National Resilience capabilities are maintained during industrial action i.e., DIM capability, USAR and MTA (light).

6.2 Analysis has previously been completed of business continuity arrangements based on two previous periods of industrial action as a result of the West Midlands trade dispute that was registered on 11th April 2018. Pre-planned coverage for a scheduled period of industrial action (30th July 2018) demonstrated WMFS were not able to meet the Home Office target of 30% appliance availability.

6.3 Through implementing business continuity arrangements, a request for volunteers was made to WMFS non-striking operational staff. Whilst not eventually needed, a minimum of 12 PRLs and 1 BRV was achieved (representing 26% of total staff availability and 22% total appliance availability). It is unknown what additional staff and resources may have been made available during the industrial action period.

- 6.4 This analysis was based on actual volunteer numbers from 2018, however, several factors have changed since then. The profile of the workforce has changed considerably since 2018, the current level of communications and feedback from staff is one of growing dissatisfaction regarding national pay, therefore, we can reasonably assume these figures will reduce for future periods of industrial action.
- 6.5 It is the view of the Chief Fire Officer and Strategic Enabling Team that the current business continuity approach in the event of industrial action does not provide sufficient assurance that the Authority can meet its statutory obligations under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

7. **POSSIBLE MITIGATION ACTION**

- 7.1 Below are two actions the authority could take to mitigate CR6.1. Further commercially sensitive information regarding these options will be provided in a separate paper to be discussed in closed session.

7.2 **Retention of external resilience provider**

7.2.1 On 30 August 2022, the Strategic Enabling Team recommended, given the status of CR 6.1, that the Chief Fire Officer seek to engage the services of an external provider to provide 25 resilience staff (able to crew five PRLs) to provide support in addition to whatever capability is provided by non-striking volunteers.

7.2.2 This option could be implemented relatively quickly, with external providers maintaining the competency of contingency workers on an ongoing basis and therefore requiring only seven days' notice to provide the resources. Contingency workers would utilise WMFS equipment and appliances.

7.2.3 This approach would provide high levels of assurance for WMFRA to meet the statutory requirements through business continuity arrangements with less ongoing management. External contractors have been used during previous periods of industrial action by other FRS.

7.3 Contingency or resilience contracts

7.3.1 Existing staff operating on “resilience” contracts or contingency staff trained by the service and employed on a retainer are already used by a number of other fire and rescue services to provide business continuity.

7.3.2 This would enable WMFS to ensure standards of training and competence directly but would take longer to implement than using an external provider and staff would need to be recruited and trained from scratch.

7.3.3 If implementing resilience contracts for existing staff, training and skills would not be an issue but there is no guarantee as to how many would agree to sign such contracts and they could choose to withdraw from them.

8. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

8.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The WMFRA have a legal duty as detailed in Part 2, section 7-9 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act, 2004, the FRA must make provision for responding to fires, road traffic accidents and emergencies.

9.2 The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA), 2004 also requires Category 1 responders to maintain business continuity plans to ensure that they can continue to deliver key services in the event of an emergency.

9.3 Under the CCA, CFOs have target duties to mitigate community risk and if, having taken all available steps, the arrangements are not satisfactory then CFOs have a legal duty to declare this position via the Local Resilience Forum.

10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Both options 7.1 and 7.2 outlined above would require additional expenditure. In the case of option 7.1 this would constitute

spending above the current £250,000 limit identified under the scheme of delegations as requiring Authority approval.

10.2 Any additional costs of implementing potential mitigation measures outlined in section 7 are not currently included within the agreed service budget for 2022/23, so these costs would be in addition to existing expenditure plans. As it stands no additional funding is available from central government in the event of strike action.

10.3 A separate report will be considered in closed session that contains commercially sensitive details of the potential costs associated with measures outlined within section 7.

11. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Environmental implications would be considered as part of the tendering process for the measures outlined in section 7.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

The contact for this report is Deputy Chief Fire Officer Wayne Brown
wayne.brown@wmfs.net

Phil Loach
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**10 OCTOBER 2022****1. MONITORING OF FINANCES**

Report of the Treasurer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the report be noted.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report deals with the monitoring of the finances of the Authority in the current financial year and covers revenue expenditure and the Capital Programme.

- 2.2 Expenditure is compared with a profile of the Authority's budget.

3. BACKGROUND**3.1 Revenue Expenditure**

- 3.1.1 The Authority's 2022/2023 Council Tax requirement is £49.405 million and the revenue budget is £108.303 million.

- 3.1.2 Appendix A compares the revenue budgeted to the end of August 2022 with the actuals to that date. Devolved budgets are managed by the Section responsible for incurring the expenditure as opposed to corporate budgets, which are managed by the named Section on behalf of the Brigade as a whole.

- 3.1.3 Actual spend to August 2022, including commitments, was £44.278 million compared to a projected budget of £43.789 million, an overall adverse variance of £0.489 million.

- 3.1.4 The overall adverse variance is mainly due to an overspend on Operational pay budgets and an increase in utility and fuel costs.

- 3.1.5 As part of the Authority's 2023/24 budget setting process, the current year's budget will also be fundamentally reviewed and particular focus will be given to those areas reflecting an overspend to consider specific and overall funding arrangements.
- 3.1.6 In addition, the commentary above and information contained within Appendix A does not reflect the revenue budget pressures anticipated to arise from pay awards in the current year. This matter is considered in a separate report later on the Agenda.
- 3.1.7 Appendix B provides statistical data relating to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

3.2 **Capital Expenditure**

- 3.2.1 The Authority's approved capital programme for 2022/2023 is £6.580 million. A scheme analysis is shown on Appendix C. Expenditure to the end of August 2022 is shown as £1.823 million.
- 3.2.2 The main forecast variances within the capital programme relates to the deferral of an additional burn room and welfare facility at Coventry Fire Station along with several other drill tower refurbishments.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report, an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out because the matters contained in this report do not relate to a policy change.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 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.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 These are contained in the body of the report and the attached Appendices.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Authority's Budget and Precept Report – February 2022
Finance Office Budget Monitoring Files

The contact officer for this report is Wayne Brown, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, telephone number 0121 380 6907.

MIKE GRIFFITHS
TREASURER

REVENUE MONITORING SUMMARY TO AUGUST 2022

	BUDGET 2022/2023 £'000	PROFILED BUDGET £'000	ACTUALS + COMMIT -MENTS £'000	VARIANCE TO PROFILED BUDGET £'000
DEVOLVED BUDGETS				
Corporate Management	1,126	452	460	8
Corporate Charges	0	-120	-119	1
Portfolio & Organisational Intelligence	1,696	744	754	10
Operations	2,471	1,035	1,124	89
Fire Control & Business Continuity	1,700	717	671	-46
Prevention	2,219	893	807	-86
Protection	4,923	2,109	2,095	-14
Response, Policy & Organisational Assurance	1,473	586	633	47
Resourcing	6,047	2,714	2,783	69
Digital & Data	7,009	3,752	3,812	60
Communications & Engagement	909	386	382	-4
People Support Services	620	260	268	8
Employee Relations	154	85	83	-2
Organisational Development	58	24	25	1
Organisational Learning & People Development	4,221	1,819	1,961	142
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	2,548	1,151	1,133	-18
CORPORATE BUDGETS				
Prevention	24	10	9	-1
Protection	-31	1	-8	-9
Response, Policy & Organisational Assurance	-116	-20	-22	-2
Resourcing	18,603	5,085	5,100	15
Digital & Data	132	-20	-20	0
People Support Services	2,315	1,172	1,169	-3
Employee Relations	130	55	63	8
Organisational Learning & People Development	125	59	64	5
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	48,508	20,253	20,455	202
Other Income & Expenditure	1,439	587	596	9

OFFICIAL

Appropriation to Reserves	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT)	108,303	43,789	44,278	489
Core Funding	-58,898	-26,561	-26,561	0
TOTAL (COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT)	49,405	17,228	17,717	489

OFFICIAL

Ref. AU/2022/Oct/12109225

FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES

NON-FINANCIAL INFORMATION	2022/23 PROJECTION				ACTUAL POSITION AS AT AUGUST 2022			
	1992 FPS	2006 FPS	2015 FPS	TOTAL	1992 FPS	2006 FPS	2015 FPS	TOTAL
Members of FPS at 1 st April 2022	-	-	1,243	1,243	-	-	1,243	1,243
New Members	-	-	70	70	-	-	-	-
Opt-In (including net auto-enrolment)	-	-	12	12	-	-	48	48
Transitional Members during year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers from Other Pension Schemes	-	-	5	5	-	-	-	-
Transfers to Other Pension Schemes	-	-	-2	-2	-	-	-	-
Retirements	-	-	-55	-55	-	-	-25	-25
Opt-Out	-	-	-12	-12	-	-	-	-
Leavers	-	-	-12	-12	-	-	-1	-1
Ill-Health Retirements	-	-	-3	-3	-	-	-1	-1
Members of the Fire Pension Schemes as at 31 st August 2022	-	-			-	-	1,264	1,264

CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT 2022/23

Scheme	Year 2022/23	Latest Budget £'000	Actuals August 2022 £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
<u>LAND & BUILDINGS</u>					
Boiler Replacement Programme	Ongoing	15	-	-	-15
Roof Replacements	Ongoing	1,091	120	1,091	-
Windows/Door Replacement	Ongoing	683	11	669	-14
Rewires	Ongoing	175	-	175	-
Drill Tower and Burn Facility	5 of 5	635	4	195	-440
Other Building Modifications	3 of 3	11	10	10	-1
Security Works	4 of 4	47	-	47	-
HQ Alterations	2 of 2	120	27	120	-
OHW Works	4 of 4	17	2	12	-5
Aston Fire Station	8 of 8	61	6	61	-
<u>VEHICLES</u>					
Vehicle Replacement Programme	Ongoing	3,576	1,618	3,576	-
<u>ICT & EQUIPMENT</u>					
C&C Upgrade-Vision 4/ESMCP	5 of 5	149	25	149	-
Grand Total		6,580	1,823	6,105	-475
<u>Funded By</u>					
Prudential Borrowing		0		0	-
Capital Grants/Contributions		74		74	-
Capital Receipts to be Applied		0		0	-
Revenue Financing/Earmarked Reserves		6,506		6,031	-475
TOTAL		6,580		6,105	-475
SURPLUS(-)/DEFICIT(+)					

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

10 OCTOBER 2022

1. WMFRA CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2022-2023 AND MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2022-2023

Report of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Authority approve the calendar of meetings for 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 THAT the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 2, be approved.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is submitted for the Authority to determine its Calendar of Meetings and Members Allowance Scheme for 2022/23.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Calendar of Meetings was brought to the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on Monday 27 June as part of a wider Governance Paper which was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting.
- 3.2 The West Midlands Fire Authority Constitution allows provision for the Chair of the Committees to approve its committee dates outside of Fire Authority. All Chairs were contacted and approved the dates outlined within appendix 1. The same provisions within the Constitution do not allow for full Fire Authority dates to be agreed outside of a Fire Authority meeting. Instead, the Chair is able to call an extraordinary meeting, which is what has occurred in this instance to allow for Fire Authority business to be conducted as scheduled.

- 3.3 The dates held within the proposed calendar of meetings, as per **Appendix 1**, has not been changed since its last publication. The only step taken is to remove dates that have already passed.
- 3.4 Under the current flexible approach, Joint Consultative Panel, Policy Planning Forum and Pension Board will continue as fully digital meetings throughout. All other Committees will utilise the hybrid approach with the expectation of all members attending in person. Exceptions will continue to be made on medical grounds.

Members' Allowances Scheme

- 3.5 In accordance with Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations), the Authority is required to make and approve a scheme of the payments of members' allowances each year.
- 3.6 The current members allowance scheme contained within the Authority Constitution does not allow for indexing beyond 1 April 2011, and it is proposed that referencing to such indexing is removed in a future revision of the Authority Constitution, given that it is now significantly out of date. Instead, decisions on member allowances will be made by the Authority directly.
- 3.7 The member allowance scheme was last reviewed by an Independent Review Panel and a report presented to the Authority in November 2018. Despite the outcomes of the review the Authority agreed to maintain its current members' allowance scheme for 2019/20 and 2021/22. This scheme continues for 2022/23.
- 3.8 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new local standards framework and replaces independent members of the Standards Committee with an 'independent person'. Independent persons are entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances as appropriate.
- 3.9 The Members Allowance Scheme for 2022-2023 was brought to the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on Monday 27 June but subsequently was not approved. No changes have been made since its last publication and is attached for approval as **Appendix 2**.
- 3.10 The governance structure is unchanged.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report, an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report invites the Authority to determine its decision making and governance arrangements for the coming year taking into account the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Local Government Act 1985 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Provision is made in the Authority's budget to meet costs associated with the operation of the Authority's decision-making structures and the payment of Members' Allowances.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[WMFRA AGM Governance of the Authority Report - 27 June 2022](#)

The contact name for this report is Karen Gowreesunker, telephone number 0121 380 6678

Karen Gowreesunker
CLERK to the Authority

Satinder Sahota
Monitoring Officer

Appendix 1**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**
CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2022-2023

MEETING	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
2022			
OCTOBER			
Fire Authority [Political Groups – 10am]	Monday, 10 October	11:00am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 24 October	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
NOVEMBER			
Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 7 November	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 21 November	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Joint Consultative Panel	Monday, 21 November	14:00pm	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Chairs Agenda Meeting	Monday, 28 November	10:30am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Audit and Risk Committee	Monday, 28 November	14:00pm	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
DECEMBER			
Pension Board	Thursday, 8 December	14:00pm	TBC
Fire Authority [Political Groups – 10am]	Monday, 12 December	11:00am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Collaboration and Transformation	Monday, 12 December	14:00pm	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
2023			
JANUARY			
Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 23 January	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Chair Agenda Meeting	Monday, 30 January	10:30am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 30 January	12:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
FEBRUARY			
Joint Consultative Panel	Monday, 6 February	14:00pm	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Fire Authority [Budget/Precept] [Political Groups – 10am]	Monday, 13 February	11:00am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Collaboration and Transformation	Monday, 27 February	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ

MARCH			
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 6 March	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Pension Board	TBC	TBC	TBC
Audit and Risk Committee	Monday, 20 March	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 27 March	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
APRIL			
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 24 April	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 24 April	14:00pm	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
MAY			
Collaboration and Transformation	Monday, 15 May	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 22 May	11:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Joint Consultative Panel	Monday, 22 May	14:00pm	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
JUNE			
Chairs Agenda Meeting	Monday, 12 June	10:30am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Policy Planning Forum	Monday, 12 June	12:00am	Virtual, Microsoft Teams
Audit and Risk Committee	Monday, 19 June	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
Fire Authority [Annual Meeting] [Political groups at 10am]	Monday, 26 June	11:00am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ
JULY			
Audit and Risk Committee	Monday, 24 July	10:30am	Mosedale Suite, WMFS HQ

*The Appointments, Standards and Appeals Committee will meet as and when required, with the exception of its annual meeting. *

*Please note: these dates may be subject to change. *

APPENDIX 2**Schedule 1****WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY****Schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances 2022/2023**

Responsibility	SRA (£)
Chair	24,500
Vice-Chair	12,250
Leader of Principal Opposition Group	7,350
Collaboration and Transformation Chair	8,575
Collaboration and Transformation Vice Chair	6,575
Scrutiny Committee Chair	8,575
Scrutiny Committee Vice-Chair	6,575
Scrutiny Committee Member	4,900
Joint Consultative Panel Chair	8,575
Joint Consultative Panel Vice-Chair	3,975
Appeals, Standards and Appointments Chair	8,575
Appeals, Standards and Appointments Vice-Chair	3,975
Audit and Risk Committee Chair	8,575
Audit and Risk Committee Vice-Chair	3,975
Elected Member Basic Allowance	3,500
Independent's allowances	
Independent Member of the Audit Committee	350

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

10 OCTOBER 2022

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the minutes of the following minutes of previous public Committee meetings, attached as appendices to this report, be noted:

- Audit and Risk Committee - Monday 6 June 2022 and Monday 18 July 2022
- Collaboration and Transformation Committee - Monday 25 April 2022

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for the Authority to note the minutes of previous public Committee meetings.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous Committee meetings have been approved by the relevant meeting as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Relevant Committee Agenda Packs](#)

[West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority Constitution](#)

The contact name for this report is Karen Gowreesunker, Clerk of the Authority – telephone number 07973810338.

Phil Loach
Chief Fire Officer

Karen Gowreesunker
Clerk of the Authority

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee
--

18 July 2022 at 14:00 hours

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via
Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Miks (Chair) and Councillor Barrie

Virtually: Councillor Miller, Councillor Rizwan Jalil, John Mathews
(Internal Audit), Peter Farrow (Internal Audit), Martina
Doolan, Satinder Sahota.

Officers: Gary Taylor, Kal Shoker, Karen Gowreesunker, Kirsty Tuffin
Mike Griffiths, Paul Gwynn and Tom Embury

Please note: The Audit and Risk Committee was not quorate and
therefore all decision items were deferred to the next
Committee meeting.

83/22 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Spence
and Mr Mike Ager.

84/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest registered.

85/22 **Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 06 June
2022**

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 06 June
2022 was deferred to the next Audit and Risk Committee
meeting.

86/22 **Statement of Accounts 2021-2022**

The Statement of Accounts 2021-2022 was deferred to the next
Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

87/22 **Treasury Management – Annual Report – 2021-22**

The Treasury Management – Annual Report – 2021-22 was deferred to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

88/22 **Approach to be Taken in Respect of Immediate Detriment Cases Under the McCloud/Sargeant Ruling**

The Approach to be Taken in Respect of Immediate Detriment Cases Under the McCloud/Sargeant Ruling was deferred to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

89/22 **Pension Board – Pension Administration Issues**

Tom Embury presented the Pension Board – Pension Administration Issues report that outlined recent issues with the Firefighters Pension Scheme Administration and the steps West Midlands Fire Service had taken to resolve these issues.

The Committee were advised that the report had originally been commissioned by the Independent Chair of the Pension Board prior to his resignation and highlighted the four key issues:

- PAYE
- Aprils pay calculations
- Data Breach (May payment)
- Incorrect figures in communication to Members of the scheme

An independent review of these issues would be commissioned and delegated to the Chair of the Committee. Key findings of this review would be brought back to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Mike Griffiths, Section 151 Officer, advised the Committee that, as per point 3.4 of the report, the data breach had been a result of window envelopes used to circulate payslips that raised concerns from some members. It was confirmed that payslips could be posted in window envelopes in future provided they did not have bank details on them and a covering letter was also circulated alongside the payslip to mitigate any risk.

The Chair of the Committee advised that she had been working with officers following members of the scheme raising their concerns via email and asked officers why the service had moved to the new Oracle system. Mike Griffiths confirmed that

the reasons for moving had been that systems had been outdated and had not aligned with each other, for example, the Finance and Payroll systems had previously been provided by Sandwell Council. All staff had been trained on the system in which the investigation would also look into.

90/22 **Pension Board – Appointment of Independent Chair**

The Pension Board – Appointment of Independent Chair report was deferred to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

91/22 **Confirmation of Auto-Enrolment Date**

Paul Gwynn, Payroll and Pensions Manager, presented the Confirmation of Auto-Enrolment Date report that outlined the requirement for Auto-Enrolment that ensured compliance with the rules of the Pension Scheme and Workplace Pensions Regulations.

The Committee were advised that under the Pensions Act 2008, all employers had been required to put staff that qualified onto a workplace pension, also known as Auto-Enrolment. The first enrolment by the Service had taken place on 1st August 2013 and the latest enrolment had been 1st June 2019. Therefore, the service had to auto-enrol members eligible between 1st March 2022 – 31 August 2022. It had been agreed that the service would undertake their auto-enrolment on 1st August 2022.

Following queries around the number of schemes, Paul Gwynn confirmed that the service had two schemes: one for operational staff and one for non-operational staff. The service used the local government pension scheme (LGPS) for those in non-operational roles.

92/22 **Update on Topical, Legal and Regulatory Issues (Verbal Report)**

Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, advised the Committee that a change had been made to the risk level for Risk 6.1, since the last update to the Committee on 6 June 2022. The risk had been increased from 12 to 16 and likelihood changed from 3 to 4, given the range industrial action undertaken in the rail and

legal sectors and discontent on the standard of living. The Committee were advised that given these changing factors a detailed update on Corporate Risk 6.1 would be brought to the next meeting. The Chair of the Authority agreed this would be the best approach.

Mike Griffiths confirmed he had no topical, legal, and regulatory issues to raise to the Committee.

93/22 **Draft Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan 2022-2023**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk, presented the Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023 that outlined the planned agenda items for future scheduled Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

Gary Taylor advised that the SIRO report had been duplicated in both November 2022 and March 2023 and confirmed it would be brought to the March Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.

The meeting closed at 14:47 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin
Strategic Hub
0121 380 6906
Kirsty.tuffin@wmfs.net

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee

Item 11

06 June 2022 at 10:30 hours

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Miks (Chair), Councillor Padda, Councillor Barrie

Virtually: Councillor Spence, Councillor Miller, Mr Mike Ager, Kal Shoker, Peter Farrow (Internal Audit), Avtar Sohal (Grant Thornton), Harkamal Vaid (Grant Thornton), Neil Chamberlain (Chair of Pension Board), Satinder Sahota, Kash Singh

Officers: Gary Taylor, Martina Doolan, Mike Griffiths and Kirsty Tuffin

Observers: Steven Price-Hunt, Alan Tranter

67/22 **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence received.

68/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest registered.

69/22 **Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 21 March 2022**

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 March 2022, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

70/22 **Request for a decision on action to be taken in respect of immediate detriment cases under the McCloud Sergeant Ruling**

Gary Taylor, SIRO – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the Request for a decision on action to be taken in respect of Immediate Detriment cases under the McCloud Sergeant Ruling report.

The Committee were advised that although the report had not been an officer report but a report from the Committee itself in

their capacity as Pensions Scheme Manager under the Fire Authority Delegations, Gary Taylor would provide an overview of the report on behalf of CFO, who had prepared the information within the report to support the Committee review their current position on the processing of Pension Immediate Detriment payments.

On 7 December 2020, the Audit and Risk Committee, in its role as Scheme Manager for the Firefighters' Pension Schemes, took the decision to instruct the scheme administrator to act upon guidance issued by the Home Office in August 2020 to make payment to Immediate Detriment cases. Whilst payments were being made, there were still a number of outstanding technical questions being considered nationally. In October 2021, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding which provided a more substantial framework for the processing of cases. On 29 November 2021, the Home Office withdrew their guidance. The key reason for withdrawal of the guidance was uncertainty on the power of Section 61 of the Equalities Act 2010 and issues around tax relief on member contributions.

The withdrawal guidance highlighted financial risks for FRS's and quoted further concerns from Her Majesty's (HM) Treasury that Services would not be provided with additional funding for costs associated with Immediate Detriment, which are paid outside of the pension account and prior to secondary legislation being passed. As a consequence, the Audit and Risk Committee met on the 6 December 2021 and a decision was taken to pause the payment of Immediate Detriment cases whilst awaiting additional guidance and clarity.

In an attempt to support the Fire Sector, on 17 December 2021 the Chair of the Firefighters' Pensions Scheme Advisory Board wrote to HM Treasury asking for further clarification on the tax issues highlighted by the Home Office. HM Treasury responded to this letter on 23 March 2022 and reinforced the uncertainty cited by the Home Office and stated that, "the Government's view remains that processing Immediate Detriment cases before all the necessary legislation is in place, could give rise to

significant consequences for schemes and members, although that ultimately is a decision for individual Scheme Managers”.

The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill had now received royal assent and had been made into an Act and will come into force no later than 1 October 2023 and will remedy the discrimination between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The Act will be supported in due course by Treasury directions which was the responsibility of the Home Office to draft and lay these regulations by 1 October 2023. The HM Treasury letter referenced a set of principles which appeared to relate to clauses within the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 and its interaction with section 61 of the Equality Act. The clauses, which may allow for some progress on this matter, were due to come into law from late May 2022. It is therefore possible but in no way certain, that the Home Office may issue updated guidance later in the year but there was no guarantee that the Home Office would take any action and no further clarity had been received to date.

On behalf of the Fire Sector and in discussions with the FBU, the LGA was exploring whether any adjustments could be made to the framework to assist FRAs in being able to process Immediate Detriment cases under that framework. As an outcome of these discussions a joint letter was sent to the Home Office and HM Treasury from the FBU and the LGA, seeking a resolution on immediate detriment issues.

In addition to this joint letter, the NFCC and LGA are also seeking clarity to enable cases to be progressed. Clarity had not yet been provided but work had been undertaken to develop an option to make payments to affected members prior to 23rd October 2023 which could be adopted by the sector. Whilst this would not remove all of the risks and uncertainties, it would provide a consistent framework across the sector and potentially identify a lower scale of financial exposure if cases were progressed.

The Authority seeks to avoid discrimination in the work place and had a legal duty to give due consideration to the impact of any policy decision in respect of Equality Act.

If the Committee decided to process Immediate Detriment claims and lift the current 'pause', the disadvantage to affected Scheme Members would be reduced but not fully removed until the relevant tax legislation is introduced in October 2023.

A legal risk does exist due to ongoing disadvantage. If Employment Tribunal claims were received from affected Scheme Members, the Service would seek a 'stay' or 'suspension' of these claims until the legislation comes into force in October 2023. These ET claims would be for ongoing disadvantage by affected Scheme Members. It is likely the Employment Tribunal would agree to this approach of a 'stay'.

It is open to the Committee to resolve the ongoing disadvantage suffered by affected Scheme Members by lifting the current pause and processing Immediate Detriment payments. Any such decision to lift the 'pause' would need to be balanced against the uncertainties relating to this matter and the associated difficulty in accurately forecasting the financial liability the Fire Authority would incur in advance of the Finance Act 2022 and tax regulations due in October 2023.

Should the Committee decide to maintain the pause in processing pensions ID payments until the legislation was in place October 2023 or there is prior agreement, there would be no additional costs incurred.

The Authority had 37 pensioners who are affected by this situation, and it was predicted that approximately a further 100 members would retire before the new regulations were in place. There would be potential for legal cases to be brought against the Authority if the pause in processing ID payments remained and the cost of legal action was estimated at circa £25K.

An exercise has been undertaken to forecast the potential scale of the financial risk if the Authority were to proceed with remedy prior to the legislation being in place by October 2023 or there is prior agreement. The scale of impact has been estimated at circa £2 million based predominantly on the tax related issues associated with pension contributions but it must be highlighted that there are significant legal and financial uncertainties relating to this matter and so a high degree of caution should be applied

to this indicative figure. No funding is in place to meet costs of this nature and so General Balances would need to be used if payments were made at this stage.

Following discussions, Gary Taylor advised the Committee that due to the growing complexity around pensions governance and management and the proposal to review our current arrangements in Policy Planning Forum, if the Committee wished to change the way these matters are processed in the future and strengthen the governance arrangements, the committee could make a recommendation to place the Chief Fire Officer as the Pensions Scheme Manager which could be considered as part of the current review of delegations. The Chair advised that more information would need to be provided before a decision could be made.

Steve Price-Hunt and Alan Tranter, requested to ask questions on the report, as members of the public. The Chair of the Committee advised that no questions would be allowed.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that in its role as scheme manager, the committee approved to resume making payments on Immediate Detriment Cases.

71/22 **Corporate Risk Update**

Gary Taylor, SIRO – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the Corporate Risk report that summarised the corporate risks for quarter 3 2021/22 and quarter 4 2021/22 covering a 6month period.

The Committee were advised that each corporate risk had been assigned to a Strategic Enabler as its risk owner. The risk owner would have full responsibility of each risk and would monitor the progress made in managing each risk on a monthly basis. The key risks highlighted, as per the report, were:

1. Risk 5.2 – a result of staffing levels. Recruitment had now occurred to mitigate this risk and a review of fire control would take place.
2. Risk 6.1 – would continue to be reviewed but confidence was given that the arrangement in placed would be resilient.

3. Digital and data risks 7.1 and 7.2 – had been a global risk and an additional risk on cyber-attacks would be addressed in the next report on the agenda.

Gary Taylor advised the committee that some of the risks in red had been resolved and the next report would be more positive.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Corporate Risk summaries (quarter 3, 2021/22 Appendix 1 and Quarter 4, 2021/22 Appendix 2) be approved.
2. That it be agreed that the management of corporate risk through and emerging from the business continuity arrangements be noted.

72/22 Creation of Additional Corporate Risk Related to Cyber Security

Gary Taylor, SIRO – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, and Martina Doolan, Data and Governance Manager, presented the Creation of Additional Corporate Risk Related to Cyber Security report that outlined the rationale for the inclusion of a separate distinct category within the current corporate risk report related to cyber security.

The Committee were advised that following discussions around the concerns were raised at the last Audit and Risk Committee, regarding the risk of cyber security attacks increasing, it was proposed to create a corporate risk 7.3 to govern and manage this significant risk. Martina Doolan advised the committee that, as per the report, national cyber security guidance had been issued to help assist organisations with the increase of cyber-attacks and the service had been following all national guidance and best practice to build its defence. The following elements of Corporate Risk 7.1 would be merged with the new 7.3 Cyber Attack risk:

1. 7.1.1 – appropriate cyber security governance processes are not in place
2. 7.1.7 – highly privileged accounts are compromised by a common cyberattack
3. 7.1.8 – common cyberattack is undetected

4. 7.1.9 – the organisation does not have a defined, planned and tested response to cyber security incident that impact sensitive information or key operational services
5. 7.1.10 – the organisation does not have well defined and tested processes in place to ensure the continuity of key operational services in the event of failure or compromise.

The Committee were advised that senior individuals would receive appropriate training and guidance on cyber security and risk management. Following queries, the Committee were advised that the main focus had been the Russia/Ukraine crisis however, passage from other countries had still been monitored and blocked if required.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the change to corporate Risk 7, with the additional of a distinct category for Cyber Risk 7.3 to provide greater focus and assurance, be noted.

73/22 Internal Audit Annual Report 2021-22

Peter Farrow, Internal Auditor, presented the Internal Audit Annual Report 2021-22 that outlined the work of the internal auditors throughout 2021-22 and provided an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the authority's governance, risk management and internal control processes.

The Committee were advised that based upon the work conducted and the implementation by management of the recommendations made, the internal audit provided a reasonable assurance that the Fire Authority had adequate and effective framework of governance, risk management and control. The key issues that arose during the year, as per the report, were:

1. Management of fuel
2. Environmental protection targets
3. Absence management follow up
4. Workforce planning
5. Governance
6. Risk management

Peter Farrow advised the committee that no negative opinions had been given. No questions were raised.

The Chair of the Committee thanked the internal audit team for all their hard work and contributions.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Internal Audit Annual Report be noted.
2. That it be agreed that an update regarding the Fire Authorities plan and the workforce planning issues be provided at the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

74/22 **Governance Statement 2021-22**

Mike Griffiths, (WMFS) Section 151 Officer, presented the annual Governance Statement 2021-22 report that outlined identified risks faced by the Authority in its achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives and the likelihood of those risks and how they would be managed.

The Committee were advised that the governance statement would coincide with the Statement of Accounts and would be taken to the next Fire Authority meeting. The Governance Statement would require the signature of the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

Mike Griffiths advised the Committee that the Authority had produced a Corporate Strategy that set out objectives and provided regular performance monitoring to measure the Authorities objectives. The Audit and Risk Committee provided the independent assurance to the Authority for the risk management and internal control. The excellent relationship with both internal and external auditors was also highlighted.

No questions were raised.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Governance Statement 2021-22 be approved.

752/22 **Audit Plan 2021-22**

Harkamal Vaid, Grant Thornton – External Auditor, presented the Audit Plan 2021-22 report that outlined the work Grant Thornton would undertake in respect of the audit of the authority's financial statements and delivery of its value for money conclusion.

The Committee were advised that the external audit would commence in July 2022, with the audit planning having taken place between February and March 2022. The significant risks identified that required special audit consideration were:

1. Management override of controls
2. Valuation of land and buildings
3. Valuation of net pension fund liability
4. Implementation of a new ledger system

The materiality had been approximately 2% of the authorities your gross expenditure for the year, as per the appendix to the report, but would be subject to the accounts. No risks had been identified with the value for money, but the committee would be kept up to date throughout the audit process through the risk assessment report. The deadline for the external audit had been extended to 30 November 2022.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Audit Plan 2021-22 be approved.

76/22 **Monitoring Policies on Raising Concerns at work – whistleblowing standing orders 2/20 and regulation of investigatory powers act 2000**

Satinder Sahota, Monitoring Officer, presented the Monitoring Policies on Raising Concerns at work – whistleblowing standing orders 2/20 and regulation of investigatory powers act 2000 report that outlined (if any) whistleblowing allegations reported through the whistleblowing policy for the periods from 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022.

The key figures highlighted were:

1. 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 – There were no whistleblowing allegations received.

2. 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2021 – there was 1 whistleblowing allegation received.
3. 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 – there were no whistleblowing allegations received.
4. 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022 – there were no requests to enact the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Gary Taylor advised the Committee that the authority had been in a positive position and reflected good governance.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022 be noted.
2. That it be agreed that the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2021 be noted.
3. That it be agreed that the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 be noted.
4. That all three periods that did not receive requests to enact the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 be noted.
5. That it be agreed that the content of the Whistleblowing Standing Order 2/20 (appendix 1) and the Management of Information Framework, standing order 1/5, appendix 4 (appendix 2 of the report) be noted.

77/22 Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2021-22

The Chair of the Committee presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2021-22 that outlined the work conducted by the Committee throughout 2021-22.

The Chair thanked Members for their participation, attendance and hard work over the last year.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee be noted and submitted to the next Authority meeting.

78/22 Pension Board Minutes – 10 December 2021

Neil Chamberlain, Chair of Pensions Board, presented the Pension Board minutes for the meeting that took place on Friday 10 December 2021.

The committee were advised that the Board had met on Friday 10 December 2021 and 28 March 2022 and would be meeting on Friday 10 June 2022. All meetings had been well attended and supported by both employee/employer representatives. Some concerns had been raised by its members on the administration of a new system and the affects this had on pensioners. A discussion had been held between Neil Chamberlain, as Chair of the Board and Mike Griffiths as Section 151 Officer, and a report would be going to Pension Board on Friday 10 June to discuss the concerns further. An update would be provided to Audit and Risk Committee if necessary, following this meeting.

Neil Chamberlain advised the Committee that he would be retiring at the end of June and therefore stepping down as Chair of the Board. His replacement had been determined as Pete Gillett. Thanks was given to Neil for all his hard work and dedication to the Board over the years.

Alan Tranter, with the Chairs approval, advised the Committee that members of the Pension scheme had submitted an IDPR that had been going through the organisations process and highlighted action 6 under resolved in item 7 of the Pension Board Minutes.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the pension board minutes – 10 December 2021, be noted.

79/22 **Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan 2021-2022**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk, presented the Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan for 2021-2022 that outlined the planned agenda items for future scheduled Audit and Risk Committee meetings.

The Committee were advised that following the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on Monday 27 June 2022, the dates of Audit and Risk Committee would be agreed and the workplan would be updated for 2022-23 accordingly.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Audit and Risk Committee work plan 2021-22 be noted.

80/22 **Update on Topical, Legal and Regulatory Issues**

Mike Griffiths advised the Committee that the government were looking at making the membership of an Independent Member of Audit and Risk Committee a mandatory obligation instead of good practice.

81/22 **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Members of the press and public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

82/22 **Workshop for Members on 2021/22 Statement of Accounts**

Members attended a workshop relating to the draft statement of accounts.

The meeting closed at 16:11 hours.

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Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee

25 April 2022

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Dehar (Chair), Councillor Kirat Singh (Vice-Chair), Councillor Hogarth.

Virtual: Councillor Locke, Councillor Miks, Simon Brake, Richard Castello

Officers: Phil Fellows, Stephen Timmington, Tom Embury, Kirsty Tuffin.

Please note: The meeting was not quorate and was discussion only.

01/22 **Apologies**

No apologies for absence were received.

02/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

03/23 **Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 06 December 2021**

Resolved:

1. That the Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 06 December 2021 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

04/22 **Collaboration and Transformation Committee 2022-2023**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority and Phil Fellows, Team Manager - Strategy and Risk, presented the Collaboration and Transformation Committee 2022-2023 Report that provided an update on Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and outlined suggested proposals for priorities

for the Collaboration and Transformation Committee for 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that as part of the inspection, the Chief Fire Officer delivered the Strategic Briefing to the Lead Inspector and their team on 23 March 2022, that focused upon West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) transformation journey, aligned with the revised Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) objectives.

As per appendix 1 of the report, the Committee were advised that alongside time spent with inspectors on CRMP, external research had been conducted through a specialist Strategic Group who had determined the 6 CRMP objectives:

1. Emerging Risks
2. Risk Based Crewing
3. Automatic Fire Alarms
4. Blended Fleet
5. Reducing Health Inequalities
6. Dynamic Mobilising

The Committee were advised, as per appendix 1 of the report, that following Fire Authority approval on Monday 14 February 2022 of the Strategic Priorities, WMFS were collaborating with Local Authorities and other Blue Light organisations to improve services and reduce the number of incidents. Safe and Wells had developed through the pandemic with a blended approach of face-to-face and conducted remotely through the Tymly platform. As part of the Protection strategy, Safe and Strong visits had been delivered with businesses and had clear audit processes in place.

8532 Safe and Strong contacts had been made and 833 Audits by the Fire Safety Inspectorate, since January 2021. The legal case management since November 2018 had been:

- 15 cases
- 29 Defendants
- 7 fines
- 2 suspended sentences

- 2 immediate custody

Following questions, it was agreed that further details on the legal cases could be brought to the Committee and an update on the review of the Safe and Wells by the Scrutiny Committee at the next Committee meeting.

Tom Embury advised the Committee of the areas for consideration for the Collaboration and Transformation Forward Plan, as per the report. Following concerns raised regarding ambulance services and the desire to assist them where possible, it was agreed that the committee would consider fire-ambulance collaboration under the Health and Social Care aspect in future meetings. It was agreed that a report on the Ambulance Service, Police and WMFS collaboration that included the Blue Light collaboration work of other Fire Services would be brought to the next Committee meeting. It was agreed that Environmental Sustainability and Serious Violence Duty Report would also be included on the Forward Plan.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Committee Members note the content of the recent strategic briefing to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as it relates to Collaboration and Transformation.
2. That it be agreed that Committee Members consider areas of focus for a 2022/23 Collaboration and Transformation Committee Forward Plan.
3. That it be agreed that further details on the legal cases would be brought to the Committee.
4. That it be agreed that an update on the review of Safe and Wells by the Scrutiny Committee, be brought to the Committee.
5. That it be agreed that collaboration with the ambulance service would be looked into under the Health and Social Care aspect in future meetings.
6. That it be agreed that a report on the collaboration work with the Ambulance Service, Police and WMFS, that included the Blue Light collaboration work of other Fire

Services would be brought to the next Committee meeting.

7. It was agreed that Environmental Sustainability and Serious Violence Duty Report would be included on the Forward Plan.

05/22

Collaboration and Transformation Work Plan 2021-2022

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Collaboration and Transformation Work Plan 2021-2022 that outlined the planned agenda items for future Collaboration and Transformation Committee meetings that align with the Committees Terms of Reference.

The Committee were advised that the White Paper had not been published so no further update had been available and deferred to the next Committee meeting. There had been no further information available on the Health Inequalities and Digital Update therefore, had been deferred to the next Committee meeting. The additions agreed, as per agenda item 4, would be added to the Work Programme in readiness for the next Collaboration and Transformation Committee.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Collaboration and Transformation Work Plan 2021-2022 be noted.

The meeting finished at 13:40 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906
