

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **CORPORATE RISK: AUDIT COMMITTEE BRIEFING**

#### **Trade Dispute & Action Short of Strike**

Members will be aware that there is an ongoing review of the Shared Fire Control Function as determined by the Service Level Agreement when the Shared Fire Control was established. The outcomes of the review were presented to Shared Fire Control Governance Board (which has representation from both Staffordshire and West Midlands Authorities) in October 2015 with direction given to proceed with the planned changes.

The key aims of the review were to:

- Reduce personnel costs associated with Shared Fire Control (in the region of £430,000)
- Provide a more balanced level of supervision across the function

To support the achievement of the above a review of systems and processes continues to take place.

#### **Trade Dispute**

Despite the commitment of the Service to open and regular communication and negotiation with the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) on this matter, the Shared Fire Control review was a constituent part of the ongoing wider trade dispute linked to staffing.

Following a ballot FBU members voted in favour of taking industrial action in the form of action short of strike (commonly known as ASOS). This included Fire Control staff and the specific ASOS planned to be utilised was a ban on personnel volunteering for overtime shifts.

#### **Impact upon Service Delivery Model - The Risk**

There is the potential that there will be a shortfall in numbers of personnel required to maintain an effective Fire Control function leading to delays in deploying our resources. This would directly affect our ability to meet attendance times and therefore have an impact on outcomes for the community; most notably survivability at our highest risk (Category 1) incidents.

ASOS was utilised on a night shift on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016 for a period of 13 hours. This ASOS had no impact with staffing levels being high on that particular night shift.

### **How we are responding to the Risk**

- The Service continues to maintain its commitment to communication and negotiation with representative bodies. There are regular meetings with the FBU and the Service with positive progress being made to reach a negotiated agreement.
- A revised offer taking on board feedback from staff and the FBU has been produced on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016 and is currently being consulted upon through FBU branch meetings.
- The Service has in place effective day to day workforce planning arrangements to identify and manage potential shortfalls in staffing. In the event of ASOS being used we would still be able to maintain a Fire Control function with reduced numbers on a short term basis.
- Only 35% of FBU members voted for this course of action. This is a minority and means that 65% of eligible staff have either not felt they can support Industrial Action or have not had the opportunity to register their view.
- Business Continuity arrangements have been reviewed for suitability and we have retrained some ex-members of Fire Control and agreed flexibility from other members of Fire Control to cover any shortfalls.

### **Impacts upon Corporate Risks**

Industrial action and the risk controls in place to prevent (likelihood) and mitigate against the impacts should it occur within Fire Control are recorded, monitored and managed against a number of our Corporate Risks, namely:-

1. The Fire Authority would be unable to maintain the positive engagement of its employees, resulting in an inability to deliver its key priorities and objectives.
5. The Fire Authority would be unable to deliver the core objectives of preventing, protecting and responding effectively as a result of extensive disruption to normal working methods.
6. The Fire Authority would be unable to ensure that operational incidents are dealt with safely and effectively using appropriate levels of resources and personnel.

11. The Fire Authority would be unable to maintain its command and control function, resulting in an inability to receive process and respond to emergency calls effectively