

# Agenda

## Councillors

### Herefordshire:

Mrs E M Bew, Mr G W Davis (Chair), Mr K G Grumbley, Brigadier P Jones, Mr R Preece, Mr D C Taylor.

### Worcestershire:

Mr T J Bean (Vice-Chair), Mr M H Clarke, Mr S J Clee, Mrs M L Drinkwater, Mrs D E Dudley, Mr R J Farmer, Mr A Fry, Mr A I Hardman, Mr J Holden, Mr P T Mills, Mr P A Mould, Ms D L Nixon, Mr M M G Oborski, Mrs B Passingham, Mr D W Prodger, Mr C T Smith, Mr R M Udall, Mr J R Webb, Mr G C Yarranton.

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

#### **2. Declaration of Interests (if any)**

To invite any Councillor to declare any interest in any of the items on this Agenda.

#### **3. Confirmation of Minutes**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on Monday 13 June 2005 (copy attached – pink pages).

#### **4. Questions from Members of the Public**

To receive questions previously submitted by members of the public more than five clear working days before the meeting of the Authority.

#### **5. Chief Fire Officer's Report (p.1-15)**

To inform Members of Service activities in the last quarter together with operational and statistical details for the period 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005.

#### **6. Draft 2006 – 2009 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) (p.16-17)**

To seek approval of the Fire and Rescue Authority's draft 2006 – 2009 IRMP and Annual Action Plan for consultation.

#### **7. Urban Search and Rescue (p.18-20)**

To recommend that a request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to take receipt of an Urban Search and Rescue Unit is accepted and to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to progress arrangements.

#### **8. Regional Fire Controls (p.21-22)**

To note the identification of a Regional Fire Control for the West Midlands.

## **Minutes**

### **Present**

#### **Herefordshire:**

Mrs EM Bew, Mr GW Davis, Mr KG Grumbley, Brigadier P Jones, Mr R. Preece, Mr DC Taylor.

**Worcestershire:** Mr T J Bean, Mr MH Clarke, Mr SJ Clee, Mrs DE Dudley, Mr RJ Farmer, Mr A Fry, Mr A I Hardman, Mr PT Mills, Mr P A Mould, Mr MMG Oborski, Mrs B Passingham, Mr CT Smith, Mr RM Udall (Chair), Mr J R Webb, Mr GC Yarranton.

### **Available Papers:**

- A. The agenda paper and appendices referred to (previously circulated).
- B. The minutes of the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 16 February 2005 (previously circulated).

(A copy of the agenda papers will be attached to the signed minutes).

(Mr RM Udall (Chair) in the Chair)

#### **455. (Agenda item 1) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs ML Drinkwater, Mr J Holden, Ms DL Nixon, Mr DW Prodger.

#### **456. (Agenda item 2) Chair**

**RESOLVED: That Mr GW Davis be elected Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.**

(Mr GW Davis in the Chair)

The Chairman paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman Mr Udall, thanking him for his service to the Authority in the capacity of Chairman or Vice-Chairman for the past seven years during which the Authority had met and overcome a number of challenges.

#### **457. (Agenda item 3) Vice-Chair**

**RESOLVED: That Mr TJ Bean be elected Vice-Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year.**

#### **458. (Agenda item 4) Declarations of Interest**

*Mr PA Mould advised the authority that if the Firefighters Pension Scheme was discussed in such detail that it affected his personal position, he would*

*declare a personal and a prejudicial interest. (That proving not to be the case, there was no need for Mr Mould to leave the room during the meeting.)*

**459. (Agenda item 5) Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**460. (Agenda Item 6) Questions from Members of the Public**

There were no questions from members of the Public.

**461. (Agenda item 7) Appointment of Clerk/Monitoring Officer**

The Authority was invited to consider the appointment of a new Clerk/Monitoring Officer to the Authority.

Mr N.M. Pringle explained to the Authority why he wished to step down as Clerk and Monitoring Officer and commended Ms Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor for Herefordshire Council, to the Authority as his replacement.

The Authority thanked Mr Pringle for his guidance to them since the Authority's formation.

**RESOLVED:** the appointment of Ms M.E. Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor and Monitoring Officer for Herefordshire Council, as Clerk/Monitoring Officer to the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority be confirmed with immediate effect.

**462. (Agenda item 8) Allocation of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees and other Bodies**

The Authority considered the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups and authorising the Clerk following consultation with Group Leaders to make appointments to Committees and other bodies.

The report also addressed matters relating to the composition and operation of the Authority's Standards Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) that appointments be made to the offices of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority's Committees as follows:

**Appointments Committee**

**Chair: Brigadier P Jones**

**Vice-Chair: Mrs B Passingham**

**Audit and Budget Committee**

**Chair: Mr PA Mould**

**Vice-Chair: Mr TJ Bean**

**Best Value Policy and Performance Committee**

**Chair: Mr RM Udall**

**Vice-Chair: Mrs ML Drinkwater**

**Urgent Decisions Committee**

**Chair: Mr JR Webb**

**Vice-Chair: Mr SJ Clee**

- b) that the Clerk be authorised following consultation with Group Leaders to take any necessary action to give effect to proportionality requirements, determine the numbers of seats on Committees and make appointments to those Committees in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders;**
- c) the appointment of a Members Steering Group comprising Group Leaders or their nominees as an informal advisory body to work on the development of the Integrated Risk Management Plan be confirmed;**
- d) that arrangements be made to appoint up to 2 additional Independent Members to the Authority's Standards Committee;**
- e) it be confirmed that one of the Independent Members should take the chair of the Standards Committee with another Independent Member being appointed Vice-Chair, with the Chair alternating each year between a Herefordshire based Independent Member and a Worcestershire based Independent Member;**
- f) it be confirmed that Group Leaders, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority, should not serve on the Standards Committee;**
- g) that the redundancy of the Disputes Resolution Panel be noted and a report on a future model for conflict resolution be made to the Authority in due course;**
- h) it be confirmed that the Authority adhere to its previous view that representation and voting on the Local Government Association be as follows:**
  - (i) that the Authority's representatives on the Local Government Association should be the Group Leaders or their nominees;**
  - (ii) that the 13 Service votes on the Local Government Association Assembly be allocated between its representatives on a politically proportionate basis; and**
  - (iii) the corporate vote on the Local Government Association Assembly be exercised by the Chair or his nominee.**
- i) that the Chair or nominee should hold the place and vote available to the Authority on the LGA's Fire Service Forum; and**
- j) that the Chair, Vice-Chair and Leader of the Conservative Group should be the Authority's appointments to the Regional Management**

**463. (Agenda Item 9) Chief Fire Officer's Report**

The Authority was informed of Brigade activity in the last quarter together with operational and statistical details.

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report. He highlighted that as part of his induction process he had set out to meet as many members of staff and staff representatives as possible. Key issues raised were being collated and detailed feedback would be provided to the Authority in September.

In the course of discussion the following principal points were made:

- A question was asked about whether there was a concentration of incidents in particular areas. In reply the Chief Fire Officer commented that work on the Fire Services Emergency Cover Model, as required by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, was nearing completion and should be reported to the Authority in September. This involved an analysis of incident patterns and whether the Service needed to realign its resources.
- It was noted that the accident rate for employees showed a decrease. The Chief Fire Officer advised, however, that, whilst welcome, it was not possible at this stage to be certain that this represented a trend.
- In response to a request it was agreed that Members who had not yet seen the new headquarters building should be given the opportunity to do so.

**464. (Agenda Item 10) Community Safety Update**

The Authority was informed of progress on a range of Community Fire Safety initiatives.

The Chief Fire Officer commented on the successful completion of the Local Public Service Agreements and the improvements to service delivery which had been achieved as a result.

The Authority welcomed the progress which had been made and asked that its thanks to those involved in the work should be recorded.

**465. (Agenda Item 11) 2005/06 Fire Authority Performance Plan**

The Authority considered its Performance Plan for 2005/2006, a copy of the draft Plan having been circulated separately to Members of the Authority.

It was noted that the document was still being finalised.

**RESOLVED: that the Brigade's Performance Plan for 2004/05 be adopted, subject to the Chief Fire Officer being authorised to finalise the document following consultation with the Chair.**

**466. (Agenda item 12) Annual Report of the Standards Committee**

The Authority received the annual report of the Authority's Standards Committee.

It was requested that the Independent Members on the Standards Committee should be thanked for their work on the Authority's behalf.

**RESOLVED: that the annual report of the Authority's Standards Committee be noted.**

**467. (Agenda Item 13) Budget Outturn 2004/2005**

The Authority received information on Revenue and Capital outturn for 2004/05 and final details of re-billing costs.

The Treasurer presented the report. He commented that after a difficult year, following the requirement to reset the 2004/05 revenue budget on the instruction of the Deputy Prime Minister, the expected underspending of £0.087 million was a creditable achievement. It was proposed at paragraph 9 of the report that this underspend should be transferred to balances.

Paragraph 10 of the report noted that the cost of the Council Tax rebilling exercise required as a result of the Deputy Prime Minister's instruction had amounted to £365,927.

Paragraph 16 of the report set out a proposed revised capital budget for 2005/06.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the transfer of the underspend to general balances as referred to in paragraph 9 of the report be confirmed; and**
- (b) that the increase in 2005/06 Capital Budgets arising from expenditure slippage in 2004/05 as set out in paragraph 16 of the report be approved.**

**468. (Agenda Item 14) Firefighter Pensions and Parental leave**

The Authority considered adopting a policy to permit employees to buy-back pension service in respect of parental leave.

The report noted that whilst paternity, maternity and adoption leave were covered by Regulations amending the Fireman's Pension Scheme, parental leave was not. It was proposed that a local determination be made to treat pension service buy-back in respect of parental leave should be treated in the same way as paternity leave. The financial implications were small and favourable to the Authority.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the adoption of a local policy to permit the Chief Fire Officer to approve requests for Pension service buy-back in respect of Parental Leave be approved;**
- (b) that it be approved that the arrangements be consistent with the treatment of Paternity leave under the present Pensions Regulations; and**

- (c) **it be approved that the arrangements cease, and be reviewed, should the Regulations be further amended in respect of Parental Leave.**

**469. (Agenda item 15) Civil Contingencies Act 2004**

The Authority noted the provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and progress being made within the Service to enable compliance with it.

The meeting ended at 11.30 am.

Chair.....

**9. Comprehensive Performance Assessment Results (p.23-25)**

To provide an update on the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment result.

**10. 2006/07 Grant Distribution (p.26-38)**

To consider the Government's proposals on changes to the Formula Grant Distribution Mechanism.

**11. New Headquarters (p.39-40)**

To inform Members of the progress on the New Headquarters project.

**12. Community Safety/LPSAs update (p.41-44)**

To inform Members of Service activities in the last quarter together with Education and Prevention details.

**13. Integrated Personnel Development System (IPDS) (p.45-46)**

To inform Members of the progress on the implementation of the IPDS in the Service.

**14. Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business (p.47)**

To review the Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business.

**(A glossary of abbreviations and terms used in these agenda papers is to be found at the end of this document.)**

## 5. CHIEF FIRE OFFICER'S REPORT

### Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of Service activities in the last quarter together with operational and statistical details for the period 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005.
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### First Impressions – Presentation by Chief Fire Officer

2. Since appointment as Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, I have placed great emphasis on meeting as many members of staff as possible, discussing with them a range of issues impacting our Service. The final tally was in excess of sixty five separate visits and discussions. All were different, but all invaluable for me in trying to get an early “feel” for the organisation.
3. In asking people what they thought about Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, I had been warned to expect a barrage of questions and comments, including some “old chestnuts” that are wheeled out whenever someone new arrives. However, the visits were really positive, and even where individuals raised justifiable frustrations, these inevitably arose out of their commitment and dedication to the Service, rather than any other motive.
4. The visits very clearly demonstrated the quality and professionalism of all our staff, whether in an operational or non-operational role, full or part-time. Although discussions have been wide-ranging, I asked three key questions of every group:
  - “What are you most proud of and/or what works already?”
  - “What causes you the most frustration in trying to do your job, or stops you from doing your job as well as you would like?”
  - “If you could change a single thing to make you or the Station/team more effective, what would it be?”

### What Makes us Proud/What Works Well?

5. The key issue raised by every staff group, operational or non-operational, was pride in their professionalism, the job they do for the public, and their teamwork. Operational staff also told me that they were proud of the investment the Fire and Rescue Authority had made in their PPE and equipment and of the growing links they are building with their local communities.

### What Causes the Most Frustration in Trying to do your Job?

6. Although different staff groups raised points of specific interest to them, many issues were common amongst all staff. For example, in one form or another, most groups raised issues around communications, culture and uniform.
7. Officers and Managers were most frustrated at what they perceive as a lack of trust and support, feeling that in some areas they are expected to seek permission before they can take management decisions. Whilst they recognise that we have capacity

issues in areas such as IT and Human Resources, they believe that with a little more support and empowerment, they could become much more effective in managing at a local level.

8. Most non-operational personnel were concerned about barriers and status issues between uniformed and non-uniformed staff. In short, they often feel undervalued by the Service. They were also concerned about communications between departments, although many believed that this would be addressed, in part at least, by the consolidation of departments within a new Headquarters.
9. Issues raised by Station-based personnel were very similar, regardless of whether they worked a 42 hour or retained duty system. There were several common themes around uniform, hand held radios, IT provision, mobile telephones for appliances, the administrative/training burden and “management speak” in official communications. More specific issues affecting 42 hour staff were changes to the current shift patterns and maintenance of rider numbers. Key issues affecting retained duty system staff include the current retained recruitment system, retained to wholetime system, training support and a perceived lack of public awareness/appreciation.
10. Visits to Fire Control coincided with imminent expectations of a government announcement about the future of Regional Fire Control rooms. This, understandably, is the key cause of their frustrations and concerns. These issues are now being reassessed in the light of the recent announcement of the Regional Control Centre site.

### **Summary of my First Impressions**

11. My first impressions are that Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has much to be proud of. If anything, we have a number of initiatives that can genuinely be described as “cutting edge”. Whilst I do not underestimate the challenges that lie ahead in meeting government and community expectations in terms of “modernisation”, I believe we have all the foundation stones in place for creating a vibrant Service very much focussed on the future.
  - **Great People** - proud of the job they do.
  - **Great Frontline Kit** – past investment has paid off.
  - **We are Providing a Great Service** – my overall first impressions are supported by current statistics and public satisfaction levels.
12. **However:** there is still room for improvement:-
  - in terms of our **communications**, both within the Service and with our communities.
  - in terms of **investment**, for example in our support services, premises and IT infrastructure to ensure that they are fit for our future needs.
  - in terms of managing **people and change issues**, we have to ensure that managers at all levels have the skills and support they need, and are empowered to manage.
  - in terms of **culture** – its time to “modernise”.

### **What Happens Next?**

13. The outcomes from the process have also been discussed with the Chairman and Group Leaders, representative bodies will be published in the Service Magazine, "Grapevine".
14. The full list of issues raised have been discussed with key managers to enable them to be addressed through our existing business planning processes. Many of these issues, such as investment in IT and premises, already have detailed investment plans delayed by capping; we simply need to re-energise them.
15. Other, more immediate issues have been addressed through efficiencies within existing budgets. For example, fire appliances reporting radio problems with neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services in border areas have been fitted with mobile telephones as an emergency back up.
16. Cultural and communications issues will be picked up through existing reviews and CPA improvement planning processes, extended as necessary to address the issues raised.
17. Any significant changes will be communicated and consulted upon separately through existing mechanisms such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

### **Operational Activity**

#### **Brave Action Earns Award**

18. A brave twelve year old whose quick thinking saved his family's home from being destroyed in a fire is to be rewarded. The young boy knew exactly what to do when he found his home full of smoke – remembering the advice of the Firefighters when they visited his school two years earlier. He covered his mouth and nose with a towel and located the fire in his bedroom, closing all doors and windows to avoid the fire spreading. He then checked there was no-one else in the house and dialled 999. It is pleasing to note that it really works when schools are visited.

#### **Pupils taught a Harsh Lesson**

19. A fatal car crash was reconstructed at the launch of a hard-hitting campaign 'Dying to Drive' that aims to increase young people's awareness of the devastating consequences of reckless driving. Further information on this item is located in Agenda item 12: Community Safety/LPSAs Update

#### **Social Club Blaze**

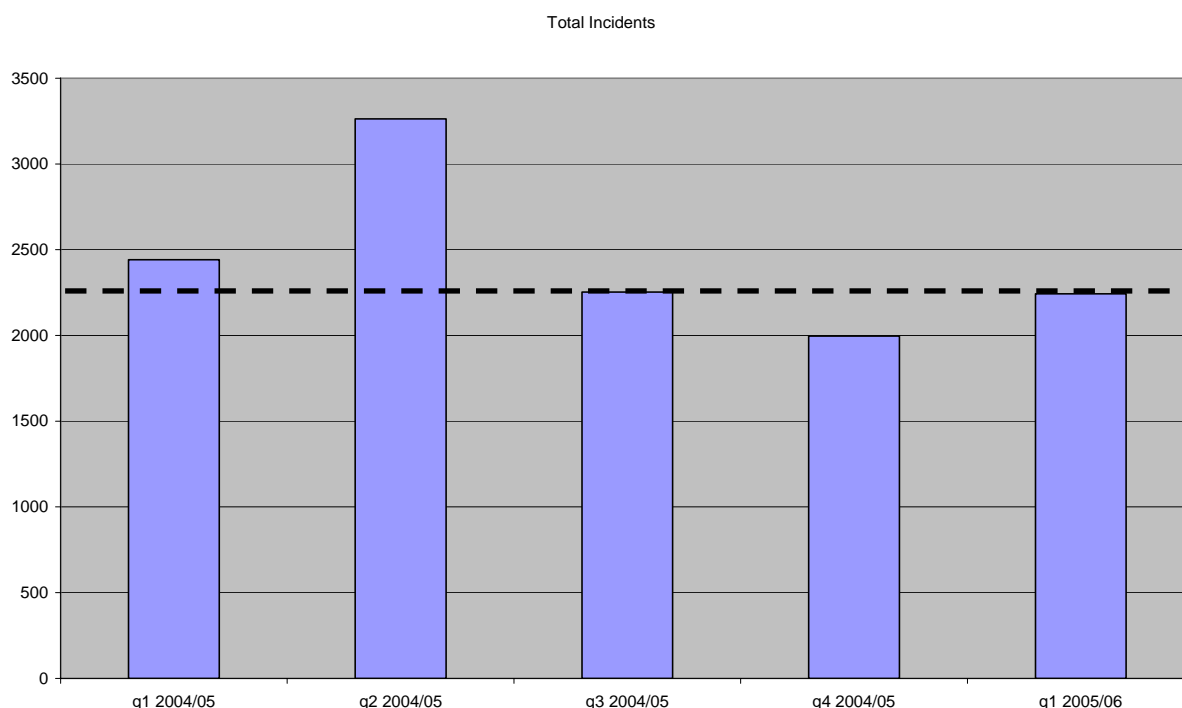
20. A massive blaze ripped through a social club on 1 August 2005 at 4.40am. Crews from Redditch and Studley Fire Stations were called to the scene using five pumps and a hydraulic platform to extinguish the fire which destroyed the function room and caused other extensive damage.

## **Operational Statistics**

21. Members are requested to note the levels of operational activity experienced for the period 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005.
22. In comparing our performance with the same quarter last year, there is a welcome reduction in every classification and it is hoped that this trend will continue, however, members will be aware that this is largely subject to seasonal variations.
23. As well as the summary tabulation below, a graphic has been included that demonstrates the profile of call statistics over the last 5 quarters.
24. The Service will continue to operate its preventative strategies and will report on their impact over the year.

## **Summary**

Quarter	All Fires	Special Service Incidents	All Fire Alarms	Total Incidents
<b>q1 2004/05</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>2442</b>
q2 2004/05	1686	511	1066	3263
q3 2004/05	755	476	1022	2253
q4 2004/05	721	385	891	1997
<b>q1 2005/06</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>2243</b>



### **Arrangements for Managing Major Incidents**

25. In the light of the recent bombings in London, our practices and procedures for dealing with potential terrorist events and major incidents were reviewed and additional Officer and Control staff briefing sessions carried out to ensure staff were ready to respond to any emergency. We have paid particular attention to communication and command structures for dealing with major incidents, and the practical and support arrangements required to deploy resources from Hereford & Worcester in support of a major incident elsewhere in the country. This work included reviewing the arrangements for receiving and handling security information with our partners in West Mercia Constabulary.
26. On the evening of Saturday 9 July 2005, a bomb scare necessitated the evacuation of over 20,000 people from Birmingham City Centre. In line with our new protocols, I and the duty Assistant Chief Fire Officer established an operations command centre at Service Headquarters, Worcester to liaise with colleagues operating from the West Midlands Multi-Agency "Gold" Command. Contingency arrangements were made for the mobilisation of specialist resources from Hereford and Droitwich should they have been required. We were updated by the West Midlands Gold Command Centre throughout the night before being stood down at 0400hrs. Although the incident proved to be a false alarm and no resources were eventually deployed from Hereford & Worcester, the advantages of having improved command and communication links with colleagues across the region was clearly demonstrated.

### **The Management of Major Flooding Events**

27. Increasingly frequent devastating flood events, both in the UK and around the world, have raised a number of issues for Emergency Services. An international conference on the management of major flooding events was recently held at the Royal National Lifeboat Institution Headquarters in Poole, Dorset seeking to identify best practice in dealing with these types of incidents. The Chief Fire Officer has been extensively involved in this area of work, and was invited to address the conference, outlining progress being made within the UK to manage incidents of this type. Other speakers came from North Carolina in the United States, sharing the lessons they had learnt from managing the consequences of widespread flooding following hurricanes.
28. There is a growing international interest in how major flooding events can be managed, both to save lives and to mitigate the long-term consequences for the communities affected. The subject will be raised at this year's national Fire Conference in Manchester, and the Chief Officer has been invited to chair the session. His American colleagues will also be addressing the conference, and whilst visiting the UK, will be coming to Hereford & Worcester to evaluate our practices and procedures with a view to establishing best practice guidelines.
29. A local seminar will be held at Service Headquarters on 31 October 2005, providing an informative insight in to the risks posed by major flooding events, and identifying current best practice for dealing with them. The addition of our international speakers will ensure that the seminar will be both informative and entertaining, with first-hand anecdotes of the problems faced in dealing with hurricane season. The event is

intended to share information with colleagues from Emergency Services, Health and Local Government who are designated Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act. Given that the natural geography of Herefordshire & Worcestershire places many of our communities at risk from significant flooding events, the Seminar will also be of interest to members of the Fire and Rescue Authority. Further details will be circulated to Members as soon as the programme has been confirmed.

### **West Midlands Regional Management Board (WMRMB)**

30. A meeting was held on Tuesday 26 July 2005 at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters. Minutes of this meeting are available on request.

### **Award Ceremony 2005**

31. On 2 July this year, the Service held its Annual Award Ceremony at the Service Training and Development Centre, Droitwich. This year's event was a great success with fourteen Long Service and Good Conduct Medals, six Outstanding Service Medals, sixteen Thirty Years Service Plates and three Protection of Life from Fire Certificates being presented. The event was well supported by all concerned. The Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Mr Michael Brinton, kindly presented the medals and awards on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen.
32. The High Sheriff's Award was presented to the most improved Young Firefighter Emma Nicholls (Droitwich YFA).
33. The Ivor Owen Award was presented to this year's "Top Recruit" - Retained Firefighter David Healey.
34. The Protection of Life from Fire Certificates presented to members of the public were Ronald Whitcombe, Peter Whitcombe and PC Val Ferreira
35. The afternoon also included a demonstration of firefighting by members of Droitwich Fire Station's Young Firefighters' Association and music from the West Midlands Fire Service Band.

### **Equality and Diversity**

#### **The Equality and Diversity Strategy**

36. Progress is continuing against the objectives outlined in the strategy, including the recruitment strategy, induction, and the Rights and Responsibilities document. This document has been expanded to include an employee code of conduct.
37. Following the review of the Race Equality Scheme (outlined below), and in preparation for the 'positive duty' on disability due next year, an "Equalities Scheme" will be developed from the existing Equality and Diversity Strategy, and the current Race Equality Scheme, thus consolidating the two pieces of work into one document. This approach follows recent advice received from the Worcester Race Equality Council (WREC).

### **The Disability Discrimination Act**

38. Following the access audits undertaken by the organisation, consultants have approved the audit methodology and outcomes. They are currently analysing the results to establish priorities for change which maximise the support for people with disabilities, and ensure the Service has a considered and positive approach to making adjustments to premises based on need.

### **The Race Equality Scheme**

39. The review of the Race Equality Scheme has been completed, and a report of findings, progress and recommendations is being devised. This will include the strategy for incorporating the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 into a single "Equalities Scheme".

### **The Fairness at Work Advisory Group (FAWAG)**

40. The group is currently considering revisions to the Authority's Equal Opportunities policy, including a new harassment and bullying policy.
41. A women's network has been established as a sub-group of FAWAG.
42. The cultural practices questionnaire has now been approved and has been distributed amongst staff. In parallel with this activity, research is currently taking place to identify how the results of the survey can be used to assess what actions the organisation can take to change the culture of the Service. Further progress on this topic will be reported at the Authority's next meeting.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Stress**

43. As part of our long term commitment to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees, the organisation has recently engaged with every employee and circulated a 'Stress in the Workplace' questionnaire based on Health and Safety Executive Management Standards, to measure our performance in managing potential causes of stress in the workplace. The questionnaires' results have been collated and an audit report has been submitted. The organisation is developing an action programme and establishing a Stress Review Team drawn from all levels of employees to assist in the development of a long term strategy.

### **Collaboration with the HSE**

44. We have been liaising with the HSE on the national Reducing Manual Handling Injuries campaign, Backs! 2005, and we are in the process of developing a pilot training package for delivery to operational personnel.

### **Training**

45. Department staff have recently undertaken the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) QSA Auditors Course to assist with the organisation's ambition to attain Level 5 of the RoSPA Award Scheme.

## **Accidents and Injuries**

46. The accident rate for the first quarter shows a significant decrease compared with the preceding year's first quarter (17 compared to 21); however, there has been an increase in the rate compared to the immediately preceding quarter (17 compared to 13). The number of RIDDOR reportable accidents (3) is slightly lower than the preceding quarter of the current year (4). However, when the accident/RIDDOR percentage rate is taken into consideration (17 injuries/3 RIDDOR) RIDDOR reportable injuries still account for over 17% of all accidents.
47. Analysis of the causal factors for this quarter's accidents has shown that a high number of injuries were the result of slips, trips and falls. A proportion of this type of accident can be attributed to lack of care when carrying out certain activities and failure to undertake a thorough visual inspection of the environment before proceeding – these simple measures can have a dramatic effect on the reduction of accidents.

	<b>Accidents</b>	<b>RIDDOR</b>	<b>% Rate on Establishment</b>
April – June 2004	21	4	2.6
July – September 2004	26	8	3.1
October – December 2004	23	6	2.7
January – March 2005	13	2	1.65
<b>April – June 2005</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.1</b>

## **Training and Development Centre**

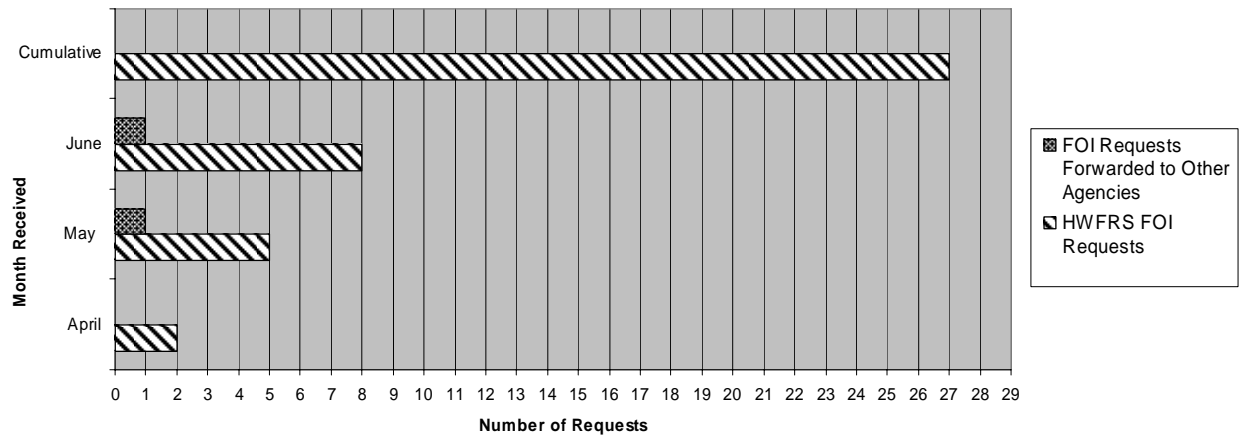
48. The last quarter of the year was a very busy period for the Training and Development Centre and this level of activity continues. The Modernisation Agenda and the Integrated Risk Management Plan continues to be the focus of our employee development. New Dimensions, Working at Height and Water Safety are all issues driving our development programmes during the coming months.
49. Also, due to the changes in the Appointments and Promotions Regulations, the Service has recently trained twelve in-house Assessors who are qualified to assess candidates at supervisory and middle management levels which will now allow us to participate in Regional Assessment and Development Centres.
50. Following the first full year of the Personal Development Review of all individuals within the organisation; over 1500 development needs have been identified.
51. The Centre continues to work closely with the Local Government Association West Midlands to provide additional development opportunities for our staff. Courses such as 'Budget Planning and Control' and 'Time Management' have been allocated.
52. An internet based Information Technology training package is currently being developed to provide our staff with easy access to several training packages including Microsoft Word, Outlook and Excel. A three month pilot scheme is due to be established in September 2005.

53. Work is progressing well with the Real Fire Training Facility at Kidderminster. Once completed, this will provide an in-house training facility thus providing greater flexibility in the delivery of this type of training. Course dates have now been programmed into 2006 and this should ensure that the training target for student throughput is achieved.
54. In collaboration with Regional colleagues, a new (Phase 1) recruit training course has been developed. The structure of the course is designed to enable Wholetime and Retained Duty System staff to follow the same development programme. We have also developed an 'Emerging Leader' course which is intended to provide individuals who display the potential, with the effective skills to take a leadership role.
55. The Commercial Training Department has increased its collaboration with other Fire Services during the last few months and is soon to reap the rewards of this. For a number of years, we have been part of a steadily growing group of commercial training staff from Fire Services all over the country, who initially met to exchange ideas and compare training course materials, etc, and there are now approximately twenty one Fire Services involved. Lothian and Borders Fire Service, who are part of this group, have secured a contract to deliver fire safety training to the Royal Bank of Scotland nationally, and have "sub-contracted" work to the other members of the group, ourselves included. The training needs to be completed within two years, at the end of which, the Royal Bank of Scotland are keen to advertise the fact that UK Fire Services have collaborated in order to undertake their fire safety training.
56. We continue to train Guinness Fire Brigade recruits, from Dublin. In June, they were joined by a new member of the industrial fire team from Roxel , Kidderminster. This was a very successful mix and we hope to run a similar course again in the future.

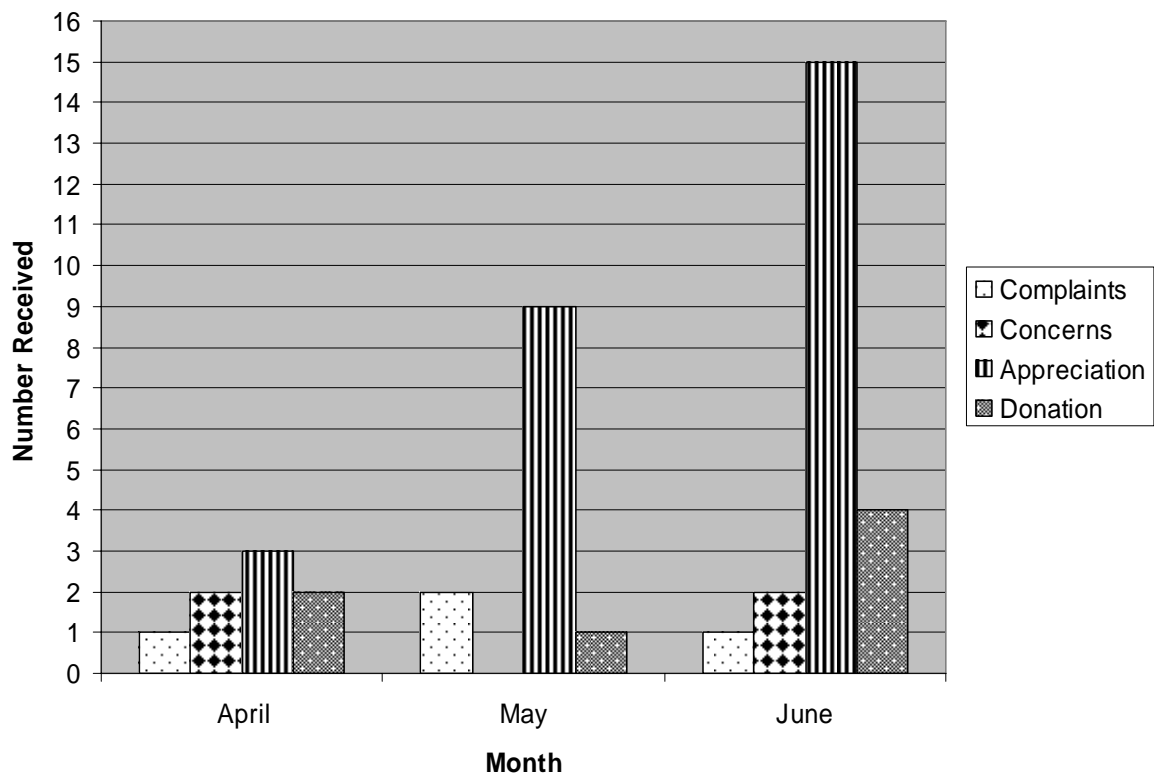
<b>Summary of Courses: 01/04/05 – 30/06/05</b>			
Operational Courses	44	750	Training Days
Commercial Courses	20	282	Students Trained
Meetings & Seminars	67	551	Attendees

### Freedom of Information Requests

Freedom of Information Requests Received April - June 2005



### Letters of Appreciation/Donation/Complaints/Concerns



57. I will arrange for all letters to be made available for Members' perusal at the meeting.

### **Meetings of the Authority's Committees**

58. **The Audit and Budget Committee** met on 20 July, 2005 and considered the following matters: Treasury Activities 2004/05, the 2004/05 External Audit Plan, the interim audit report for 2004/05, the report produced on the audit of the 2004/05 financial statements under Statement of Auditing Standard (SAS) 610, the Authority's Statement of Accounts for 2004/05, the Internal Audit Plan 2005/06 and the Budget Monitoring report.
59. **The Best Value Policy and Performance Committee** met on 6 July, 2005 and 13 September, 2005 and considered the following matters: performance statistics, the annual performance plan 2005-2006, best value and policy review Work, arrangements for operational assurance post the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, its work programme and the Service Planning Process.
60. Copies of the Minutes of these meetings have been or will be circulated to Members of the Authority.

### **Background Papers**

None

Incident Statistics – Comparative Data 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005

		Quarter 4 2004/05			Quarter 1 2005/06		
District	Station	Total Fires	Total Special Service (SS) Incidents	Total False Alarms	Total Fires	Total Special Service (SS) Incidents	Total False Alarms
South	21 Worcester	112	57	189	162	72	193
	26 Droitwich	34	27	45	29	40	48
	28 Evesham	30	8	52	40	15	51
	29 Pebworth	5	1	1	7	3	2
	30 Broadway	5	0	6	9	3	8
	31 Pershore	14	8	15	13	14	15
	32 Upton	5	4	10	9	6	15
	41 Malvern	28	11	46	43	20	43
	53 Tenbury Wells	7	6	5	2	1	6
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>381</b>
North	22 Stourport	44	14	29	49	17	33
	23 Bewdley	13	9	4	12	4	5
	24 Kidderminster	73	45	118	92	50	115
	25 Bromsgrove	65	32	59	74	37	98
	27 Redditch	117	47	129	148	76	152
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>403</b>
West	42 Ledbury	17	12	17	16	10	33
	43 Fownhope	1	2	4	6	2	10
	44 Ross on Wye	12	6	15	13	6	15
	45 Whitchurch	11	5	1	1	1	0
	46 Hereford	70	43	103	64	51	79
	47 Ewyas Harold	6	1	2	2	2	1
	48 Eardisley	3	2	1	3	4	1
	49 Kington	1	1	0	3	1	0
	50 Leintwardine	6	4	0	2	2	0
	51 Kingsland	11	5	5	4	6	5
	52 Leominster	11	12	24	11	5	12
	54 Bromyard	11	20	8	10	11	12
	55 Peterchurch	9	3	3	3	3	2
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>170</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>954</b>

Fire Statistics 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005

District	Station	Primary Fires (FDR1)	Secondary Fires (FDR3)	Chimney Fires	Total Fires	Rescues at Fires	Casualties at Fires	Fatalities at Fires
South	21 Worcester	62	98	2	162	1	4	0
	26 Droitwich	18	9	2	29	0	1	0
	28 Evesham	22	17	1	40	0	0	0
	29 Pebworth	2	5	0	7	0	0	0
	30 Broadway	3	5	1	9	0	0	0
	31 Pershore	4	8	1	13	0	0	0
	32 Upton	3	6	0	9	0	0	0
	41 Malvern	19	23	1	43	0	0	0
	53 Tenbury	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
<b>District Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	
North	22 Stourport	9	38	2	49	0	0	0
	23 Bewdley	5	7	0	12	0	0	0
	24 Kidderminster	33	58	1	92	0	0	0
	25 Bromsgrove	26	47	1	74	0	3	0
	27 Redditch	67	79	2	148	2	7	0
<b>District Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	
West	42 Ledbury	4	11	1	16	0	0	0
	43 Fownhope	2	3	1	6	0	0	0
	44 Ross on Wye	4	7	2	13	0	0	0
	45 Whitchurch	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
	46 Hereford	24	39	1	64	0	1	0
	47 Ewyas Harold	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
	48 Eardisley	0	3	0	3	0	0	0
	49 Kington	1	1	1	3	0	0	0
	50 Leintwardine	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
	51 Kingsland	2	1	1	4	0	2	0
	52 Leominster	5	4	2	11	0	0	0
	54 Bromyard	6	2	2	10	0	0	0
	55 Peterchurch	1	1	1	3	0	0	0
<b>District Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>326</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>

Special Service Incident Statistics 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005

District	Station	Emergency Special Services	Non-emergency Special Services	Total Special Service (SS) Incidents	Rescues at SS Incidents	Casualties at SS Incidents	Fatalities at SS Incidents
South	21 Worcester	72	0	72	18	10	1
	26 Droitwich	40	0	40	3	3	0
	28 Evesham	15	0	15	1	1	0
	29 Pebworth	3	0	3	1	0	0
	30 Broadway	3	0	3	0	0	0
	31 Pershore	14	0	14	1	1	0
	32 Upton	6	0	6	1	8	1
	41 Malvern	20	0	20	0	0	0
	53 Tenbury	1	0	1	0	0	0
<b>District Total</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	
North	22 Stourport	17	0	17	0	7	0
	23 Bewdley	4	0	4	0	1	0
	24 Kidderminster	50	0	50	25	5	3
	25 Bromsgrove	37	0	37	2	1	0
	27 Redditch	76	0	76	2	3	2
<b>District Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	
West	42 Ledbury	10	0	10	0	0	0
	43 Fownhope	2	0	2	0	0	0
	44 Ross on Wye	6	0	6	0	2	0
	45 Whitchurch	1	0	1	0	0	0
	46 Hereford	49	2	51	10	10	0
	47 Ewyas Harold	2	0	2	0	0	0
	48 Eardisley	4	0	4	1	5	1
	49 Kington	1	0	1	0	0	0
	50 Leintwardine	2	0	2	0	0	0
	51 Kingsland	6	0	6	0	8	0
	52 Leominster	5	0	5	1	0	0
	54 Bromyard	11	0	11	1	8	1
	55 Peterchurch	3	0	3	0	0	0
<b>District Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>460</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>9</b>

False Alarms & Fire Safety Statistics 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005

District	Station	False Alarm Malicious	False Alarm Good Intent	False Alarm Apparatus	Total False Alarms
South	21 Worcester	9	36	148	193
	26 Droitwich	1	5	42	48
	28 Evesham	0	12	39	51
	29 Pebworth	0	1	1	2
	30 Broadway	1	1	6	8
	31 Pershore	0	2	13	15
	32 Upton	0	9	6	15
	41 Malvern	1	10	32	43
	53 Tenbury	0	0	6	6
<b>District Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>381</b>
North	22 Stourport	3	12	18	33
	23 Bewdley	1	2	2	5
	24 Kidderminster	11	16	88	115
	25 Bromsgrove	3	26	69	98
	27 Redditch	12	41	99	152
<b>District Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>403</b>
West	42 Ledbury	0	6	27	33
	43 Fownhope	0	0	10	10
	44 Ross on Wye	2	2	11	15
	45 Whitchurch	0	0	0	0
	46 Hereford	3	19	57	79
	47 Ewyas Harold	0	0	1	1
	48 Eardisley	0	0	1	1
	49 Kington	0	0	0	0
	50 Leintwardine	0	0	0	0
	51 Kingsland	0	0	5	5
	52 Leominster	0	3	9	12
	54 Bromyard	1	3	8	12
	55 Peterchurch	1	1	0	2
	<b>District Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>954</b>

<b>Fire Safety Inspections 1 April 2005 to 30 June 2005</b>	
Full inspections	15
Re-inspections	349
Plan inspections	40
Follow-up inspections	80
Specific inspections	854
Building Regulations Plans/Consultations	549

## **6. DRAFT 2006 – 2009 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP)**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To seek approval of the Fire and Rescue Authority's draft 2006 – 2009 IRMP and Annual Action Plan for consultation.
- 

### **Background**

2. Fire Service Circular 7/2003 required the Fire and Rescue Authority to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan.
3. The Fire and Rescue National Framework states that all Fire and Rescue Services must produce an IRMP. The Framework also states that Fire and Rescue Authorities should produce annual action plans on which they have fully consulted with their local communities, allowing twelve weeks for consultation.
4. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 clause 21(7) states that Fire and Rescue Services must have regard to the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework in carrying out their function.

### **Draft 2006 – 2009 IRMP**

5. The 2006 – 2009 draft IRMP was developed under the leadership of the FRA IRMP Steering Group and contains updates on progress made to date regarding objectives contained in the original 2004/05 IRMP. Many of the original objectives have either been completed or become Statutory Duties under the new Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and are now core activities for the Service.
6. Those that have not yet been completed are ongoing and are contained in the Annual Action Plan at the rear of the Plan.
7. The draft IRMP document has previously been forwarded to Members and is available to the public on request. Members will be aware that the main themes of the proposals in the draft plan are to:-
  - Strengthen our capacity to improve community safety and reduce risk;
  - Ensure that our operational resources are best aligned to areas of greatest risk and need;
  - Realign management resources in order to improve support to frontline services.
  - Update our incident command structures and arrangements to assess operational performance;
  - Provide improved support to our Fire Stations in rural areas and those Firefighters who work the retained duty system;
  - Prepare for anticipated changes to fire safety legislation and enforcement, principally the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order; and

- Ensure that our Fire Stations are appropriately located and have the necessary facilities to provide an efficient, effective and economic service in compliance with our statutory duties.
8. The plan contains five new objectives in support of these proposals which include:
- Changing the crewing arrangements for the second fire appliances at Kidderminster and Redditch;
  - Relocating a number of Fire Stations within the Service area;
  - Reducing the number of staff conditioned to the flexible duty system;
  - Improving the management and support to Retained Stations and rural areas; and
  - Improving our capacity to deliver fire safety in support of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.

### **Recommendation**

**The Chief Fire Officer recommends that the Fire and Rescue Authority's draft 2006 – 2009 IRMP and Annual Action Plan be approved for consultation.**

### **Background Papers**

Fire Service Circular 7/2003  
The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004  
2004/05 Fire and Rescue National Framework

## **7. URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE (USAR)**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To recommend that a request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to take receipt of an Urban Search and Rescue Unit is accepted and to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to progress arrangements.
- 

### **Background**

2. The New Dimension Programme is providing the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) with a national capability to respond to major emergencies involving chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) events, search and rescue, major flooding incidents and major transport incidents. This national capability is augmenting existing local and specialist capacity based on nationally assessed risk and planning assumptions taking account of the wider Civil Contingencies Framework. This capability is also available for use by the FRS locally without the necessity of an incident being defined as a major emergency.
3. The New Dimension programme has already delivered a range of equipment and specialist training to deal with public mass decontamination, with units provided to every UK Fire and Rescue Service. Hereford & Worcester has been provided with two such units, based at Droitwich and Hereford. We are also about to receive a high volume water pumping unit, which will be based at Kidderminster and provide support at both a regional and national level.
4. The next stage of the New Dimension programme is to replace the current interim arrangements with the development of a national Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability by January 2007.
5. Based on a national risk assessment, 16 Fire and Rescue Authorities are being asked to take provision of USAR facilities that will provide local, regional and national levels of response. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has been identified as one of those authorities, largely based upon to its geographical location but also due to its ability to deliver.
6. The strategic objectives of the USAR project are as follows:
  - To enhance the capability of the Fire and Rescue Service to respond to and manage two simultaneous and large-scale structural collapse incidents.
  - To enable the Fire and Rescue Service to respond and deal with a wider range of incidents with enhanced safety.
  - There will be a tiered structure of response to incidents.
  - There will be equipment and procedural guidance provided relevant to each level of response.
  - There will be defined skills, knowledge and understanding for each level of response.

- A personal development programme will support the acquisition, application and maintenance of skills, knowledge and understanding.
  - A robust management structure will exist to ensure the continued development of the search and rescue capability within England and Wales.
  - Appropriate arrangements will be in place to ensure that information and intelligence that supports operations are established.
  - Welfare arrangements will be in place.
7. Each USAR unit is comprised of five modules, consisting of four large containers and a van for canine transport. The containers will carry a range of equipment for heavy lifting, shoring, lighting, cutting and drilling.
8. However, a formal request to host a USAR unit was received on 16 August 2005, we had already been in discussions with ODPM officials for some time in order to research and consider the requirements. During that time we have been able to evaluate the details of such a project and can now advise Members of its implications.

## **Implications**

### **Staffing Requirements**

9. To date, New Dimension equipment and training has been fully funded by the ODPM, but no provision has been made for additional crewing as this was not considered necessary. However, the provision for USAR will require dedicated crewing arrangements to be made due to the level of specialist training required.
10. The USAR programme will provide funding to ensure that each Fire and Rescue Service may secure the services of up to:
- 16 wholtime USAR technicians.
  - 14 on call USAR technicians.
  - 1-2 Search and Rescue Canines.
11. The primary role of USAR technicians will be to respond to a range of major incidents, providing specialist technical knowledge and skills. There may, however, also be a requirement to undertake assessment, preparatory and prevention work.
12. We have considered a number of options for crewing arrangements and believe that we can meet both the ODPM expectations and our own local needs within the allocated revenue budget. Details will need to be progressed in consultation with the appropriate Trade Unions, though initial discussions have already been held with staff representatives to make them aware of the outline proposals.
13. The USAR project will place a considerable new workload upon our existing resources due to a wide range of issues relating to matters such as operational procedures, crewing, conditions of service, staff welfare and accommodation. In particular, the operations, personnel, property, equipment and fleet management departments will all need to contribute to the USAR project and we will need to monitor workloads closely in order to minimise the impact upon the rest of the Service.

### **Financial Arrangements**

14. Fire Service Circular 10/2005 confirmed that, in addition to the provision of vehicles and equipment, a grant of £612,000 per annum will be paid to USAR Authorities to fund the revenue costs associated with providing dedicated crewing. This will be a long-term government commitment, paid in the short term in the form of a Section 31 grant and added to the general revenue support grant in the future. This has subsequently been reaffirmed in correspondence from the ODPM .
15. For the current financial year, we have received an interim sum of £459,000 to enable us to commence work on the project should the Fire and Rescue Authority agree to accept the ODPM's request.

### **Location of USAR Team**

16. A number of possible sites have been considered for the USAR team and a report submitted to ODPM officials. This confirmed that, without significant investment, none of our existing Fire Station sites offer ideal accommodation for the team. We have, therefore, investigated possibilities for the provision of a specific site for USAR. There is more work to do before we can confirm these arrangements; however, we are very hopeful that a partnership arrangement with Police colleagues will provide an ideal location for the team. Although this site could be funded through the revenue support we are to receive from the ODPM for crewing, we are currently investigating an additional capital allocation from ODPM to provide a regional transport and storage "hub" for the project.

### **Conclusion**

17. We will need to review the Authority's Priorities and Non-Priorities document in order to reflect this new workload.

### **Recommendation**

#### **The Chief Fire Officer recommends:**

- (a) **that the request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to take receipt of an Urban Search and Rescue Unit be accepted; and**
- (b) **that the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to progress arrangements.**

### **Background Papers**

Fire Service Circular 10/2005

## 8. REGIONAL FIRE CONTROLS

### Purpose of Report

1. To note the identification of a Regional Fire Control for the West Midlands.
- 

### Background

2. Members of the Authority will be aware that on 10 August 2005, Government announced the location of the Regional Fire Control for the West Midlands. The new Control will be built on the Wolverhampton Business Park, Wolverhampton. Work on the new site will begin in 2006 and a national project is currently underway to procure the infrastructure that will provide the state-of-the-art technology for the national Control network. It is anticipated that the new Control in the West Midlands will be fully operational by 2008-09.
3. The site announcement was made to Control staff by the Chief Fire Officer as soon as the news was received, and press statements previously agreed by a steering group comprising of the Chair and Group Leaders of the Authority along with the Chief Fire Officer, were distributed to the media.
4. We recognise that the chosen location for the regional Control may not be favourable for many of the staff working at our current Worcester Control and we are currently working with staff and their representatives to determine how best to support them both in the short and long term.
5. Government expectations are that the project will deliver a much improved service, not only at a local level, but when dealing with major or widespread incidents. In particular, the new arrangements are designed to enhance our abilities to deal with major terrorist acts, major industrial accidents, and natural disasters such as widespread flooding. Like any major project, the Fire Control project has a number of risks, which have been identified by government and are being addressed and controlled by their national project team.
6. However, it also presents a number of significant local risks for the Authority in the short to medium term, which must be fully understood and controlled. Significant internal risks fall into one of four categories;
  - **In relation to maintenance of our existing control and communications provision.** *We must maintain and support all of our existing staff, systems and equipment at 100% operational capacity right up until the moment when the Regional Control formally takes over.*
  - **In relation to our continued ability to deliver locally determined and locally accountable services to our communities.** *We have been assured that technology will allow a Regional Control within a national infrastructure to continue support for local Integrated Risk Management Plans. However,*

*achieving the delivery of locally determined and accountable services from a regional centre will be challenging. We must ensure that, whilst strengthening the Service's resilience at a regional level, the new Regional Control Centre supports the delivery of service which continues to respond effectively to the differing needs of our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.*

- **In relation to costs, both during the project phase, and over the long term.** *During the next three to four years, we will face increased costs in retaining key staff, supporting legacy radio and mobilising systems, and supporting regional project work to resolve the many practical issues arising. It is unclear for the moment how much of this new and additional cost will be borne by the government's "New Burdens" fund. Our eventual contributions towards the running costs of the Regional Control are unknown at the moment. Ongoing operating costs for a replacement radio system are also unknown, as unlike our current radio system which has no call charges, a replacement system is likely to have a cost element for usage.*
  - **In relation to medium and long term plans.** *Much of the detail of the Fire Control Project is still awaited. Without this, the Service is unable to finalise its plans including service delivery, ICT, property and finance issues to minimise risks and ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements.*
7. We are working at both an Officer and Member level to identify and manage these risks and resolve the practical issues arising. They are not unique to Hereford and Worcester, and teams at a local, regional and national level are working hard to ensure that that the project is delivered successfully.
  8. It will be particularly important throughout this process that we play a full and active role in the Regional Management Board, as this body will have a significant role to play in resolving the many issues arising. Managing the risk emanating from this project will be a complex and time consuming task, likely to pose a significant additional burden on the Authority in the next few years. However, its success is fundamental to the ongoing ability of the Fire Authority to meet its statutory and moral obligations.
  9. A CD presentation from the Officer of the Deputy Prime Minister on the West Midlands Regional Control Centre will be on display at the meeting.
  10. The Chief Fire Officer will be making regular reports to the Authority on this matter.

## **Background Papers**

None

## **9. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To update Members on the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) result.
- 
2. On 28 July 2005, the Audit Commission published the results of its independent assessment of the Service. We are pleased to report that Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has been rated as a “good” Service. This is a very positive result with third party assessors recognising our good standard of performance across the Service. A table showing the results is appended
  3. Areas for improvement are being addressed through our Performance Plan and we plan to run further workshops based on our self assessment process in 2004 in the Autumn to consider progress to date and inform plans for future years.
  4. A thank you is due to all Hereford & Worcester Members and staff who through their hard work and support have contributed to this success. In particular, thanks must go to those who gave up their time to be involved in our Self Assessment process (which was particularly complimented through the Peer Review and our CPA assessment). Also those who supported the Peer Challenge and CPA team visits.
  5. The CPA of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service found that the Fire and Rescue Authority is doing well in some areas:
    - it has a strong performance culture, which has led to significant successes including a reduction in accidental dwelling fires of 35 per cent over the past five years;
    - it has developed key strengths through appointing experienced and committed specialists, particularly in community safety; and
    - it operates well at a strategic level, taking a risk management approach to determining priorities with plans that relate closely to the government's national framework
    - decision making is effective, with a good relationship existing between members and senior management.
  6. The assessment also found room for improvement:
    - engagement with staff is hindered by the traditional hierarchical culture that exists within the Authority. Cultural change has not kept pace with other changes in the modernisation agenda; and
    - limited resources have created pressures on the Authority's support services, such as Human Resources, ICT and Finance.
  7. Further work to ensure areas for improvement are addressed will be undertaken via the Best Value, Policy and Performance Committee in readiness for the CPA Round Table meeting during September 2005.

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority**  
**Friday 23 September 2005**

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8. Whilst we are delighted with the results, I can assure the Members that we shall continue to strive to further improve our Service, making Hereford and Worcester a safer place for our communities and staff alike.

Fire CPA ratings according to Audit Commission (18 August 2005)

<b>Government Office Region</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>East Midlands</b>		1	2	1		<b>4</b>
<b>East of England</b>		2	3	1	1	<b>7</b>
<b>London (LFEPA)</b>		1				<b>1</b>
<b>North East</b>			4			<b>4</b>
<b>North West</b>	1	2	2			<b>5</b>
<b>South East</b>	1	4	2		1	<b>8</b>
<b>South West</b>		3	4	2		<b>9</b>
<b>West Midlands</b>		5				<b>5</b>
<b>Yorkshire and Humberside</b>		2	1	1		<b>4</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>

9. If anyone would like to discuss the documents or require further information regarding CPA, please contact Deputy Chief Fire Officer Brian Tregunna, Director of Corporate Services Lucy Tye or Performance Improvement Manager Mark Perrin.

**Background papers**

None

Appendix to Agenda Item 9

Authority	Type	Score	Leadership & priorities	A balanced strategy	Capacity: Governance & management	Capacity: Resources & value for money	Capacity: People	Performance management	Achievement of objectives	Achievement of improvement	Future plans	Raw score
<b>Excellent</b>												
Merseyside	Metropolitan	Excellent	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	33
Kent	Combined	Excellent	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	31
<b>Good</b>												
Greater Manchester	Metropolitan	Good	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	30
Royal Berkshire	Combined	Good	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	30
Dorset	Combined	Good	3	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	4	28
Hereford and Worcester	Combined	Good	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	28
Staffordshire	Combined	Good	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	28
West Midlands	Metropolitan	Good	3	3	4	3	2	2	3	4	4	28
Cambridgeshire	Combined	Good	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	27
Cheshire	Combined	Good	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	27
North Yorkshire	Combined	Good	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	27
Oxfordshire	County	Good	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	27
Warwickshire	County	Good	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	27
West Yorkshire	Metropolitan	Good	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	27
Devon	Combined	Good	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	26
Leicestershire	Combined	Good	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	26
Norfolk	County	Good	3	3	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	26
Shropshire	Combined	Good	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	26
Surrey	County	Good	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	26
Gloucestershire	County	Good	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	25
Hampshire	Combined	Good	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	25
London	London	Good	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Fair</b>												
Cleveland	Combined	Fair	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	4	3	26
Isles of Scilly	County	Fair	3	4	3	2	2	1	4	4	3	26
Cornwall	County	Fair	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	2	25
Northumberland	County	Fair	3	4	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	25
Durham	Combined	Fair	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	24
East Sussex	Combined	Fair	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	24
Essex	Combined	Fair	1	3	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	24
Hertfordshire	County	Fair	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	24
Humberside	Combined	Fair	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	24
West Sussex	County	Fair	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	24
Cumbria	County	Fair	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	23
Suffolk	County	Fair	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	23
Tyne and Wear	Metropolitan	Fair	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	23
Avon	Combined	Fair	3	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	3	22
Derbyshire	Combined	Fair	2	3	2	2	3	1	3	3	3	22
Lancashire	Combined	Fair	3	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	22
Somerset	County	Fair	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	2	3	22
Nottinghamshire	Combined	Fair	3	3	1	3	2	1	2	3	3	21
<b>Weak</b>												
Northamptonshire	County	Weak	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	21
Bedfordshire	Combined	Weak	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	18
Wiltshire	Combined	Weak	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	2	18
Buckinghamshire	Combined	Weak	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	17
South Yorkshire	Metropolitan	Weak	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	17
<b>Poor</b>												
Isle of Wight	County	Poor	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	14
Lincolnshire	County	Poor	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	12

## **10. 2006/07 GRANT DISTRIBUTION**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To consider the Government's proposals on changes to the Formula Grant Distribution Mechanism.
- 

### **Introduction**

2. The Formula Grant Distribution Mechanism was last reviewed for the 2003/04 Grant Settlement and has been followed by a 3 year formula freeze.
3. In this period however, the data used within the formula has been updated, and there have been several changes to the mechanism by which annual grant changes are smoothed. (Floors & Ceilings)
4. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has now issued a consultation document on possible changes to the Formula on which it is seeking views. In addition to this cyclical review, there is an impact arising from the proposed changes to the Financial Arrangements for Fire-fighters pensions.
5. It is intended that the ODPM will move to a 3 year Grant Settlement, but it is planned that the first of these would only cover 2 years to bring it into line with the Spending Review cycle.
6. For each of the proposals the ODPM has provided exemplification of the impact on 2005/06 Formula Spending Share (FSS). It has not translated this into grant, nor has it shown the effect of combining different options together.
7. Although some of the options may appear to give significant increases in FSS to this Authority, it will be at the expense of other Authorities. There is likely to be a damping mechanism and it is impossible to say how this would translate into actual grant. It should be noted that in 2005/06 2.4% (£0.276m) of the Authority's normal grant entitlement was lost to the damping mechanism.
8. The consultation requests a response on specific questions relating to the proposals. These specific questions (as they relate to the Fire and Rescue Authority) are shown in Appendix 2 and a proposed response is shown in Appendices 3 and 4.

### **Financial Arrangements Firefighter Pensions**

9. In addition to the proposed changes to the Pension Scheme itself, the government is proposing to change the way FRAs account for the Firefighters Pension Scheme. This will necessitate changes to the FSS methodology.
10. Instead of meeting the actual costs of pensions and lump sums from the Revenue Account it is proposed that these should be met from a separate account with each

FRA making a notional employers pension contribution. Any deficit on this Pension Account would be met by direct government grant.

11. The expected effect of this is that FSS (and consequently grant) will reduce for all FRAs. However, in the exemplification there are unexplained variations which result in some FRA's receiving more FSS. There is therefore an apparent in-equitable re-distributional effect from this change.
12. In the case of Hereford & Worcester the exemplified reduction of FSS is £0.797m. However, based on the best current information, the notional pension contributions cost could be £0.870m lower than the current pension deficit. (this depends on the as yet unknown arrangements for financing ill health retirements). Thus it is possible that this adjustment could be neutral for Hereford & Worcester, but could be significantly better than cost neutral for others.

### **Other Fire FSS Changes**

13. There are a further 7 possible changes to the Fire FSS formula which are explained below. The impact is exemplified in isolation for that element only. Consultees are invited to comment on the acceptability of the proposed change. The reference is that used by ODPM:

- FIR2 : A – Risk Areas

The existing formula gives additional resource to A-Risk areas to reflect the greater risk. However, since national risk cover standards were removed, under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, this is no longer a relevant measure.

The proposal is to replace this factor with one based around the number of Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites.

This would appear to be a logical replacement and provides an additional £0.640m FSS to Hereford & Worcester.

However, this option is not simply about reallocating a fixed sum of additional risk money and there are other hidden adjustments being made. e.g. Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service has no A-risk, and no COMAH sites yet has less FSS as a result.

- FIR3/FIR4 : Community Fire Safety

This involves a refinement of data to focus more closely on those relevant to Fire Risk. FIR4 increases the proportion of the formula distributed on this basis.

These have relatively little impact on Hereford & Worcester, £0.041m at current proportions and only £0.019m at the increased level.

- FIR5 : Fire Safety Enforcement Indicator

Proposed replacement of the existing measure, which is based on the number of properties inspected, by an indicator based on property and societal risk

Hereford & Worcester Impact            +£0.247m

- FIR6/FIR7 : Risk Index Indicator

There are two technical modifications to the data. FIR6 proposes extending the averaging from 3 to 5 years and FIR7 is a change to a factor without extending the period.

FIR6 would provide £0.074m additional FSS to Hereford & Worcester, whilst FIR7 would give an extra £0.336m.

- FIR8 : Sparsity

There has been long running pressure about the additional costs of delivering the service to rural areas. These have been made more significant following changes to Retained pay and the new emphasis on prevention and wider community safety.

In the absence of any other measure, the proposal is for an additional FSS top up of 1%. This would provide an additional £0.400m FSS.

14. It is disappointing that there are no changes proposed that reflect the changed statutory duties placed on FRAs. In particular there is nothing to reflect the wider Community Safety issues or Special Service risk.
15. It is also disappointing to see that the significant imbalance in resources produced by the Coastline factor is not being reviewed. There are other potential indicators which could be used to allocate resource in respect of re-enforcement schemes for relevant authorities.
16. The proposals, along with those detailed below, are summarised in Appendix 1. However, it is stressed that some options are mutually exclusive and for others the interdependence will not produce a simple addition of the exemplified amounts.
17. It is also worth repeating that it is not clear how this would translate into grant.

### **Other FSS Changes**

18. Five options are proposed in relation to reform of Area Cost Adjustment (ACA). ACA1-3 represent technical changes to the calculation and ACA4-5 represent a different grouping of Authorities. The relevant amounts are shown in Appendix 1.
19. It should be noted that the changes do not result in this Authority receiving an ACA, but are a consequential re-distribution as a result of changes in existing ACA.

20. Proposals are provided in respect of the Capital Financing FSS.
21. It currently includes an element of Interest to be received in relation to set aside capital receipts. In 1997 the government removed the requirement to set aside a proportion of receipts and it is considered that this element of FSS is now irrelevant. The options relate to how this element is removed.

### **Changes to Grant Mechanism**

22. In addition to the proposed changes to FSS outlined above, which will have an impact on grant levels, further proposals are made in respect of grant itself.
23. There is still no guidance on how government are intending to claw-back the Transitional Grant paid in 2004/05. This is partially because repayment of the grant is not an element of the 2005/06 figures against which changes are exemplified. Earlier in the summer an imminent consultation paper was promised, but has not yet materialised.
24. The problem appears to be that ODPM believes it has no powers to recover the grant in exact proportion to payment and can only recover through the main grant mechanism. This means that some of the biggest recipients of the grant would not have to pay any back. This issue is presumably holding up the proposal.

### **Schools Transfer Effect**

25. As Members will be aware, Government is planning to change the way it funds schools, from funding via LEAs to direct funding of schools.
26. Government has committed to fund schools at their current level of spend, which is in excess of the formula grant currently paid to LEAs. In order to fund this commitment grant reductions to non LEA Authorities are required.
27. The exemplification of the proposed changes to the funding of schools clearly shows significant loss of FSS for some FRAs. In the case of Hereford & Worcester this is a loss of £0.222m, however for some Authorities there is no impact.
28. There is clearly a significant re-distributional impact much wider than the education sector, which will have a significant effect on elements of the council tax increase for specific Authorities, without necessarily impacting on the overall Council Tax. Government should be urged to explain how it proposes to deal with this in respect of capping rules for 2006/07.

### **Other Grant Effects**

29. There are two other areas of proposed change, but these are only indicative as they do not reflect the impact of any changes in FSS. In addition, the two areas are interlinked but the effect of each on the other is also not exemplified.

- Resource Equalisation – This is not the equalisation that is a fundamental part of the current grant regime, but part of a policy to re-distribute resources beyond true resource equalisation. There are 3 proposals to change the way resource equalisation is carried through.
- All have the effect of shifting considerable grant to London and the North from the rest of the country. The possible impact on Hereford & Worcester is shown in Appendix 1 (in this case the % change relates to actual grant in 2005/06)
- Damping Mechanism – There are three proposals to change the way the damping calculations are carried out. These, however, are highly dependent on which changes to FSS are eventually made and are again shown in Appendix 1.

### **Three Year Grants**

30. As Members will be aware it has been the intention to move to 3 year settlements from 2006/07, with certainty about year 2 and 3 grants. The details of this are now emerging:
- The first 3 year cycle will only be 2 years
  - Population data will be taken from an average of 2000-2002 projected, rather than the available 2004 data.
  - ODPM will amend the figures to take account of the 2007/08 tax-base figures ie grant will not be fixed at year 1.
31. It is clear that the 3 year grant regime will not be properly established for several years.

### **Grant Mechanism**

32. There are proposals to make technical changes to the way control totals for individual services are derived. On the face of it these do not appear to have a significant impact, other than serving to make it harder to identify macro-changes in policy.

### **Conclusion**

33. The information contained in the proposals is insufficient to determine what grant the Authority will receive in 2006/07. At this stage the assumption contained in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which was prudent, will continue to be used as the planning tool.
34. It is proposed that the response to the consultation is in two parts:
- the draft letter at Appendix 3, and
  - the technical detail (as an Appendix to the letter) as shown at Appendix 4.
35. It is not likely that there will be any response from the ODPM before the preliminary settlement announcement in late November.

### **Future Timetable**

36. As in previous years there is a timetable of Authority meetings and workshops established to discuss budget proposals
- 25-Nov-2005 : Audit & Budget Committee : Initial expenditure proposals
  - 06-Dec-2005 : Members Budget Seminar : Grant Impact
  - 15-Dec-2005 : Fire and Rescue Authority
  - 20-Jan-2006 : Audit & Budget Committee
  - 15-Feb-2006 : Fire and Rescue Authority : Precept Setting

### **Recommendation**

**The Treasurer recommends that the response to the consultation, on the Formula Grant Distribution Mechanism, as set out in appendices 3 and 4 to this report be approved.**

### **Background papers**

Local Government Finance: Formula Grant Distribution : A Consultation Paper  
ODPM July 2005

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority**  
**23 September 2005**  
**Summary of Proposed Changes to FSS and Grant**

**FSS Options**

		<b>£m</b>	
<b>2005/06 Actual Total FSS</b>		<b>22.221</b>	
FIR 1	Pensions Arrangements	(0.797)	
<b>Adjusted Total FSS for comparison</b>		<b>21.424</b>	
<b>Fire Options</b>			
FIR 2	A-Risk	0.640	3.0%
FIR 3	Community Fire Safety	0.041	0.2%
FIR 4	Community Fire Safety	0.019	0.1%
FIR 5	Fire Safety Enforcement	0.247	1.2%
FIR 6	Risk Index	0.074	0.3%
FIR 7	Risk Index	0.336	1.6%
FIR 8	Sparsity	0.400	1.9%
<b>Area Cost Adjustment Options</b>			
ACA 1	Full ASHE data set	0.017	0.1%
ACA 2	abolition of Rates adjustment	0.091	0.4%
ACA 3	updating of rates adjustment	0.015	0.1%
ACA 4	lower limit at average	0.352	1.6%
ACA 5	lower limit at lowest	(0.031)	-0.1%
<b>Capital Financing Options</b>			
CF 1	Removing Interest Receipts element	0.273	1.3%
CF 2	CF1 funded from Capital Chgs FSS	0.189	0.9%
CF 3	CF1 funded from non-Capital Chgs FSS	(0.225)	-1.1%

**Grant Options**

The impact of the change to Pension Arrangements on grant is not shown and as a result ODPM grant effect exemplifications are not consistent with the FSS ones.

		<b>£m</b>	
<b>2005/06 Actual Total Grant</b>		<b>11.263</b>	
<b>Schools Transfer</b>		(0.222)	-2.0%
<b>Resource Equalisation</b>			
RE 1		(0.142)	-1.3%
RE 2		(0.119)	-1.1%
RE 3		(0.195)	-1.7%
<b>Damping Mechanism</b>			
DMP 1	removing Capital Adjustment	0.010	0.1%
DMP 2	damping based on tax-base	0.153	1.4%
DMP 3	damping based on basic amt per head	0.046	0.4%

### FSS Consultation

#### List of Questions (Extract)

##### Chapter 2 Schools Transfer

Question 2: Do you have comments on the Government's other proposals, to adjust the base using spend figures and to isolate police, fire and shire district authorities from the effects of the transfer?

##### Chapter 9 Fire and Rescue

Question 16: Do you think that the weight of the fixed element for community fire safety should be doubled to 6% (FIR3 and FIR4)?

Question 17: Do you agree with the proposal (FIR5) to use a property and societal risk indicator to replace the fire safety enforcement indicator? If not, what would you prefer?

Question 18: Which proposal (FIR6 or FIR7) would you prefer to see used as the risk index indicator?

Question 19: Do you agree with the proposal to include a fixed element for sparsity (FIR8)?

##### Chapter 12 Capital Financing

Question 25: Do you think we should remove the Interest Receipt elements?

Question 26: If we retain one or both of the Interest Receipt elements, do you have any views on how they should be distributed?

Question 27: If so, should we reduce other FSS totals to compensate, or not? And if we reduce other FSS elements, where should we make the reductions?

##### Chapter 13 Area Cost Adjustment

Question 28: Do you have any comments on our intention to use the full ASHE data set to calculate the ACA?

Question 29: Do you think that we should remove the very small rates cost adjustment, or do you think that we should update the weighting of the RCA in line with 2003/4 expenditure data?

Question 30: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to retain the current method of setting the lower limit for options ACA1-3?

Question 31: Do you think that we should calculate a separate ACA factor for each upper tier authority?

Question 32: If we implement the change above, which option for setting the lower limit do you prefer?

### **Chapter 14 Additional Resource Equalisation**

Question 33: Do you think we should increase resource equalisation?

Question 34: Which of the options do you prefer?

### **Chapter 15 Floor Damping**

Question 35: Do you consider that the capital adjustment should be abolished?

Question 36: Which approach for paying for damping you prefer (i.e. the existing method, DMP2 or DMP3)?

**DRAFT LETTER TO ODPM**

Dear Sir,

FSS Consultation

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority wish to make it absolutely clear that it cannot afford to see resources diverted away from Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The following facts warrant consideration:

- 5.3% of the land area of Combined Fire Authorities is protected by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- 3.3% of the resident population of Combined Fire Authorities live in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- 3.1% of the total net budget requirement of the Combined Fire Authorities is attributable to Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
- 2.5% of the total Revenue Support Grant and redistributed non-Domestic Rates allocated to the Combined Fire Authorities is payable to Hereford and Worcester.
- Of the 24 Combined Fire Authorities 5 (21%) have a higher Band D tax.
- 14 (58% ) have a higher cost per citizen
- 22 (92%) have greater government grant per citizen.

Any diversion of resources cannot be balanced by adding to the Council Tax burden or jeopardizing public safety by budget cuts.

There are a number of technical observations to make and these are included in an appendix to this letter.

The fundamental point remains that Council tax-payers in Herefordshire and Worcestershire are already financing a disproportionate share of Fire and Rescue Service expenditure compared to other parts of the country.

Yours etc.

## **Technical Response to FSS Consultation Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority**

### **Overall**

It would have been helpful if there was a clearer identification of source data. For example the actual 05/06 FSS quoted does not equal the actual FSS in the settlement and it has not proved possible to identify the difference.

The technical nature of some of the adjustments clearly has re-distributional effects outside the particular sub-block and again it is not clear if these would follow through or are merely the result of a statistical exercise.

It would have been helpful if the impact on grant could have been exemplified or indicated. It is extremely difficult to forward plan Council Tax when there are very large changes to FSS proposed only 5 months before precepts have to be agreed.

### **Schools Transfer**

As a single purpose Authority (not delivering Education) we are disturbed to see that these proposals have a significant effect on our Grant.

The figure exemplified represents 2% of our actual grant and would add 1.4% to our Council Tax.

There is a significant cross-service resource switch arising from this proposal which will have a significant impact on individual Authorities element of any Council Tax increase, without necessarily impacting on the overall Council Tax.

Government should make clear how this will be reflected in any capping criteria, otherwise there could be a major impact on other services.

**Question 13** : Non-Education Authorities should be isolated from this service specific adjustment and should suffer no impact in current, or future grant.

### **Fire Pensions FSS**

Although the principles of this adjustment were well documented, there appears to be no recognition of the significant re-distribution effects of this proposal. This is in spite of comments made in relation to the exemplification (based on 03/04 data) shown in the earlier consultation.

It is in-equitable that some FRA's receive significantly greater FSS (and presumably grant) although charges to their Revenue Accounts should reduce.

## Fire FSS Options

It is very disappointing that none of the proposals reflect any fundamental change in the FSS to reflect the changes in statutory responsibilities brought about by the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. Indeed all the top up elements still relate to Fire risk and not the greater Community Risk which is now a statutory duty.

It is also of concern that there is no reflection of the statutory duty to attend RTCs, in the amended formula as this is having a significant impact on resource demands.

Concern is also expressed that the distorting effect of the Coastline factor has not been reviewed. On the basis that it was initially introduced as a stop-gap to deal with the issue of re-enforcement arrangements, it is disappointing to see that alternative measures have not been investigated.

FIR2: The principle of the move away from A-risk is welcomed, and the use of the COMAH sites related index is an acceptable substitute. However, there is clearly more to this than a simple re-allocation of this block. For example another FRA which had no A-risk has a reduction in FSS as a result of the proposal. This is not logical.

**Question 16** (FIR3/4): The fixed element for Community Fire Safety should not be increased, but there should be a specific element for other aspects of Community Safety.

**Question 17** (FIR 5): The change in this indicator is welcomed as it reflects the Risk Based Inspection Process (RBIP) that is required under the Regulatory Reform Order.

**Question 18** (FIR6/7): The proposal to increase the averaging to 5 years is illogical. The absolute value of the element will at worst remain constant and will probably actually decline. Any proposal to increase the average to include earlier periods will further remove the value of the element from current levels. (This is particularly relevant with 3 year settlements). If the proposal is to extend the average to more recent periods then these should be used in lieu of the present 3 years. Average persons per room would seem to be a better indicator of risk than the age of the property.

**Question 19** (FIR 8): It is welcome that the costs of sparsity are recognised and in the absence of any better information the proposal seems sensible. However, there should be commitment to further research on a more robust indicator. It is suggested that the methodology used to distribute Rural Policing Grant (which is based on population density by emuneration district) might be a workable alternative.

## **Capital Financing Options**

**Question 25/26** : As there is no longer any specified set aside for capital receipts it is wrong to assume interest from this is the FSS and this element should be removed.

**Question 27** : As the removal of these elements is not a redistribution of capital financing costs it should be adjusted against non-Capital Financing FSS elements.

## **Area Cost Adjustment**

**Question 28** : It would seem sensible to use the full ASHE data set. To use only part of it would put in doubt the objectivity of the calculation.

**Question 29** : Given that it is such a small element of expenditure it would be sensible to simplify the calculation by removing this adjustment.

**Question 30-32** : As the change for this Authority is consequential on changing the ACA methodology for those Authorities in receipt of ACA, the technical arrangements are irrelevant. However, as would be expected, the Authority would favour the option that switched more resource from ACA into the general pool.

## **Resource Equalisation**

**Question 33/34** : It is illogical to introduce a further element of resource equalisation, when there is such inertia in the present floors methodology (to be made worse by 3 year settlements) that some Authorities are still not in receipt of their full grant entitlement and others are still being protected from having to operate with their lower one.

## **Floor Damping**

**Question 35** : The capital adjustment should be abolished. It is a hangover from an adjustment to favour particular authorities.

**Question 36** : The present damping method of groups of authority is perverse as they did not all enter the regime on an equal basis. A methodology based on tax-base would be more equitable, but consideration needs to be given to the cross-service subsidy effect of different floors for different classes of authority.

## **11. NEW HEADQUARTERS**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To inform Members of the progress on the New Headquarters project.
- 

### **Background**

2. Members may recall that in July 2001 the Authority supported a proposal to amalgamate its central support services onto one site. At that time external consultants had undertaken a review of the Service property portfolio and the main strategic options available to it. The study concluded that the Headquarters accommodation was too small, and was facing significant costs of upkeep due to its age, as well as problems relating to access and car parking. The division of central support staff split over three sites was increasing costs and reducing efficiency. The best strategic option with the lowest long-term cost to the Authority was recommended to be relocation to a new site, with a new building; this was supported by the Authority which resolved *'that further work be undertaken to identify and procure an appropriate site to locate a new Brigade Headquarters'*.
3. In their April 2002 inspection report HMFSI highlighted the priority which the Authority should attach to this project *'there is no doubt that the disparate HQ facilities need to be drawn together onto one site to provide a streamlined, cohesive and effective HQ function'*.
4. Locating and securing suitable premises has proved challenging. An options appraisal in October 2004 identified a high quality, modern and cost effective facility in a good, central location for the Service situated close to the motorway network in Worcester.
5. As reported to the Authority on 16 December 2004, the Urgent Decisions Committee agreed in October 2004 to approve the purchase and fit out of 2 Kings Court, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester to accommodate the Authority's Headquarters and support staff.

### **Benefits**

6. The new Headquarters project supports the Authority in achieving a range of strategic objectives and is critical to the development of its Asset Management Strategy. Benefits include increased efficiencies, reduced costs, improved communications and better working conditions for staff. The CPA assessment team commented particularly positively on this project, its impact on improving the culture and working conditions for staff, and its key role in releasing Authority assets to support the outcome of the Fire Services Emergency Cover process.

### **Progress to Date**

Excellent progress on this project to date includes:

- Successful completion of a complex building purchase, including the co-ordination of separate leasehold assignment and freehold purchases by April 2005
  - Successful completion of the office fit out, including the installation of a sprinkler system during September 2005
  - Significant updating of IT networks and hardware is now underway. This element of the project is improving the resilience, speed and capability of systems available to support staff
  - Reception at 2 Kings Court is now operational with the migration of some 100 staff due to be completed by 24 October 2005.
7. The project continues to be on programme and within budget, with the official opening by the High Sheriff to be held on 7 November 2005. Staff, particularly those on the project team, are to be commended for their hard work and commitment which has ensured the success of this project to date.

### **Background Papers**

None

## 12. COMMUNITY SAFETY/LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

### Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of Service activities in the last quarter together with Education and Prevention details.
- 

### Education Activity

#### **'Dying to Drive'**

2. The initial pilot of the new road safety initiative 'Dying to Drive' was held at Bishop Perowne School, Worcester in July. This programme, led strategically by ourselves, is designed to highlight a range of road safety issues in a hard hitting format in which pupils watch a mock RTC. The scene is deliberately graphic as pupils watch passengers cut from a car. The crash is then followed by a series of workshops in which all of the agencies involved put across their specific message. The pilot proved to be highly successful attracting a great deal of media attention and support from partner agencies. Evaluation from pupils confirms that the programme is extremely effective and that pupils were likely to remember the key messages. Pupils were particularly impressed with the Fire and Rescue Service input. The Steering Group plans to meet again in September with a view to running a further three target schools in the next academic year. Following the immense success of the pilot, all partner agencies are fully committed to the programme ensuring input from West Mercia Police, YOT, Worcestershire County Council, Road Safety Team, Ambulance Service and the Casualty Union.

#### **Key Stage 3 Programme**

3. The first year of our new Key Stage 3 programme is now complete and has reached 6869 Year 8 pupils. The programme was piloted successfully at the start of the academic year and is proving to be an extremely popular extension of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's prevention activity in schools. This furthers our spiral learning approach by extending our input to the higher age group and dealing with the issues of arson and hoax calls. Demand is high for the programme with visits booked into 2006. A full evaluation will be carried out at the start of the new academic year in September.

#### **After School Club – 'Hot Squad'**

4. The highly successful After School Club – 'Hot Squad' piloted in three target schools: Woodrow First School - Redditch; Leominster Junior School - Hereford; Madley Primary School - Hereford in the last academic year has provided extensive opportunities for partnership working and will be targeted to a range of schools in the next academic year who are currently suffering a range of problems. Again, this idea has been extremely well received by Headteachers, staff and parents and will hit the heart of local communities, providing safety information from a range of agencies in a fun and informative way.

### **New Work Experience Programme**

5. A new work experience programme was piloted in July at Redditch Fire Station specifically aimed towards disaffected pupils. The programme was designed in partnership with Worcestershire Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) business development manager to raise the expectations and self esteem of Year 10 pupils and in particular those from ethnic minorities. The pupils took part in a range of practical and operational exercises including team building and discipline and also assisted the organisation in the 'Dying to Drive' initiative. The week concluded with a passing out parade attended by teachers, governors and parents and was extremely successful having produced a noticeable difference in the youngsters involved. Again, demand is high from schools wishing to undertake a similar programme. It is planned that this provision will be continued following the successful recruitment of a 'Youth Services' post as identified in the Service's Youth Strategy.

### **Higher Education**

6. A number of initiatives have been introduced into local Higher Education institutes in order to reduce the disproportionate high number of false alarm calls received by the Service from these premises. We will be maintaining a high profile during Freshers Week and the colleges involved have agreed to inflict harsh penalties on any offenders. We will also be speaking to students as part of the introduction to their accommodation and drawing attention to our key safety messages.

### **Special Needs Provision**

7. The Community Safety Team is continuing research into provision for Special Needs Pupils. We will be working closely with a number of other Fire and Rescue Services and have formed a close working relationship with local schools. It is hoped that this relationship will be further enhanced by our contribution to two partnership schemes in the north of the Service area. Firstly we will be supporting the 'Technology Tree' initiative in partnership with Connexions and Hunters Hill School. This residential school provides for young people with a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties, frequently excluded from mainstream. It is hoped that by embarking on this scheme, we can provide support to pupils and teachers and get our messages across to this key target group. We will also support the 'Young Enterprise Scheme' at Chadsgrove School for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties. This scheme will encourage pupils to set up and run their own business and give them an insight into the business world. Again it is hoped that we will be able to prepare the pupils for independent living and work closely with specialist teachers.

### **Marketing**

#### **National Campaign**

8. The Service attended a briefing hosted by the NCFSC to launch the next national fire safety campaign which will commence in September 2005. The theme of this campaign is, **"A Fire Doesn't Have To Kill You To Take Your Life"**. This campaign will involve a range of high profile television, radio and press advertising which will be supported locally by posters and banners placed in strategic locations.
9. Part of this campaign will promote DIY Home Fire Safety Checks. The Services' Marketing Officer is working closely with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service to jointly promote the Fire Service Home Fire Safety Check Scheme to our 'at risk

groups' within the individual service areas across the greater West Midlands Region. It is planned that this campaign will commence from late September 2005 onwards and make best use of the bigger regional broadcast media (such as Heart FM which covers the majority of our high risk areas) in conjunction with our local media.

## **Fire Safety**

### **Licensing Act 2003**

10. Following the introduction of the new style of License, under the above Act, for commercial premises that have held either drinks licences or other forms of entertainment licences, Fire Safety Officers have been involved in the conversion process which allows existing premises to obtain the new style licence. As previously reported, there was a concern that applications would be concentrated at either the beginning or end of the period to convert. This has resulted in a rush of applications being received during the end of July and early August to meet the deadline for the conversion process of 7 August and as such Officers have dealt with some 1200 applications over this period.
11. Information received from the various Licensing Officers across the two Counties suggests that of the known premises, only about 60% have so far converted to the new Licence procedure. The remaining premises will need to make new applications to the relevant Authorities by 24 November or will be in a position where they will have to cease trading.

### **Local Public Service Agreement – Second Generation (LPSA2)**

12. In March 2005 Worcestershire County Council put forward 13 priorities in its initial proposals under the LPSA2 bid. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service are heavily involved in three of the priorities to improve the quality of life of people living in identified hotspot areas. Working in partnership with the Police and the Crime and Disorder Safety Partnerships in Wyre Forest, Redditch and Worcester, projects have been developed to tackle crime, deliberate fire setting and environmental issues affecting some of our communities. The Service also expressed the wish to be fully involved in Herefordshire Council's LPSA2 bid but as that Agreement has been developed the Service will only be involved in a supporting role.
13. At present we are negotiating with ODPM to stretch our BVPI 206 target (deliberate fires) for the three-year duration of the project and determining the necessary pump-priming funding for the partnership targets. The project will have a cost benefit to the community and is likely to be linked to the forthcoming Local Area Agreements.

### **Number of Home Fire Safety Checks from 1 April 2005 – 30 June 2005**

Number of visits	Recorded Hours on HFSCs	Smoke alarms fitted	Replacement batteries fitted to existing smoke alarms
574	2046	759	83

**School Visits from 1 April 2005 – 30 June 2005**

	KS1	KS2	KS3	<b>TOTALS</b>
Watches	51	53	5	<b>109</b>
Audience	1499	2035	118	<b>3652</b>
Education Assistants	25	13	32	<b>70</b>
Audience	1257	543	1837	<b>3637</b>

**Background papers**

None

## **13. INTEGRATED PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (IPDS)**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Members of the progress on the implementation of the IPDS in the Service.

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### **Background**

2. Results of the CPA audit demonstrate the Service's progress in IPDS implementation since the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Audits have been maintained at a 'Good' level. This tracked the performance during 2004/5 where 74% of the original objectives were completed but capping prevented completion of the full project plan.
3. Details of specific activities which have been completed and work in progress is as follows:-
  - Maintenance of 'AA' rating and 'Direct Claims' status for its Approved Centre.
  - Continued delivery of IPDS communications using various means; the Service Bulletin, Human Resources and 'Training' publications, etc.
  - The 'Personal Development Review' system (appraisal) was implemented for the whole Service during 2004/5. This is now being developed towards full compliance with the IPDS, a process that is targeted for completion in 2006/7. Members will be interested to note that the Service continually strives to ensure the system meets the needs of the individual and the Service. This will be achieved through its development in a fully collaborative and inclusive manner with all staff groups.
  - Delivering Firefighter and Supervisory Management Development programmes, applicable to all working groups, working with regional partners (this covers 84% of all staff).
  - Implementation of a new 'Individual Development Record' allowing personnel to record workplace activities in a more effective fashion, allowing more efficient utilisation of training time. Eventually this will need to encompass the use of internet and intranet based technology which it is hoped will realise cost savings on the individual and replace specific 'bespoke' systems, currently in use.
  - Adoption of a regional approach to Assessment and Development Centres. This will greatly benefit the potential of our staff to fulfil individual requirements in meeting the needs of the Service. During 2005/6 and 2006/7 it is anticipated that the project will be extended to cover all levels - Supervisory; Middle and; Strategic Managers.
  - Linking staff skills needs to the achievement and implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan. This is a dynamic process, enabling the Service to 'move' with the needs of the community.

- Identification of a training facilities strategy reflecting the needs of the modern Fire and Rescue Service. This covers the type of training premises as well as 'simulators' for command development.
- Creation of a 'Workforce Development' strategy that will integrate the concept of IPDS within the overall approach to staff development. When complete, this will conclude the specific allocation of resources to the IPDS.

### **Background Papers**

None

## **14. STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To review the Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business.
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### **Background**

2. In September 2002, the Authority adopted a set of Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business.
3. The Authority's Code of Corporate Governance cites the Standing Orders as evidence to demonstrate compliance with various aspects of that Code. The Standards Committee was advised in March 2005 that the Standing Orders would be reviewed and a report made to the Authority in September 2005.

### **Issues**

4. No concerns have been expressed to the Clerk about the operation of the Standing Orders and it is the Clerk's view that the Standing Orders remain fit for purpose.
5. The Chair of the Authority has requested that the Authority revert to use of the word Chairman rather than Chair which would require a minor series of amendments.

### **Recommendation**

**The Clerk and Chief Fire Officer recommend that the Standing Orders for Business be revised to reflect the use of the term "Chairman".**

### **Background Papers**

None