



# Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service**

**Paul Hayden MA, MSc, MIFireE  
Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive**

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Date as postmark

Dear Member

**Standards Committee – Friday, 21 November 2008, 10.30am**

Please find enclosed the following reports, in relation to the agenda for the above meeting:

- Item 4 – Member Training 2007/08
- Item 5 – Local Assessment Update

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Committee Services

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Vision Statement  
To make Herefordshire and Worcestershire safer  
from fire and other hazards and to improve  
community well-being

[www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk)

## **4. Member Training 2007/2008**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To inform the Committee of the Member Training sessions held in 2007/2008 and to present the Member Development Plan for discussion.
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### **Background**

2. The Authority adopted a Code of Corporate Governance in March 2003. Following a review of elements of the Code by the Standards Committee in March 2004, a training programme was developed. The programme aimed to improve the support and information available to Members.
3. The Code of Corporate Governance requires that arrangements are put in place to ensure that Members are properly trained for their roles and have access to all relevant information, advice and resources necessary to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.
4. A package of support has been provided for Members, which includes
  - An induction pack of information
  - Induction seminars
  - Annual Members Training Programme
  - A programme of Members visits to stations and departments

### **Member Training Sessions in 2007/2008**

5. The 2007/2008 Member Training Programme contained a variety of themes to support Members in their role on the Fire Authority. A detailed breakdown of the areas covered and Member attendance is attached at Appendix 1. In addition, information is also provided on the training sessions that have been undertaken in 2008/09 to date. As there are elections in June 2009, it has been agreed by Group Leaders that Member Training for 2008/09 is to cease in February 2009.
6. The average attendance rate for the 2007/2008 programme was 28% (approx. 7 Members per session, with 13 being the highest attendance and 3 the lowest). In order to maintain good corporate governance it is important that Members attend training sessions, to improve their understanding in relation to the work of the Service and inform their decision-making.

### **Future Member Training**

7. We are now planning the Member Training Programme for 2009/10. An outline plan (attached at Appendix 2) has been developed which sets out the key objectives and principles which underpin the Member Training Programme.
8. It is proposed that the following sessions are undertaken on annual basis:
  - an Induction session for new and existing Members to include the legislative

framework and the Members Code of Conduct

- a core programme for all Members concentrating on the following key issues:
  - Comprehensive Area Assessment / Performance Framework
  - IRMP / Planning including Risk Management / Business Continuity
  - Financial Control and Budget Setting
  - Equality & Diversity / Ethical Framework
  - HR / Training
  - Community Safety / Service Activity
- essential and more focussed sessions for Members in key roles e.g. Group Leaders, Committee Members, Member Champions
- opportunities for all Members to remain up to date with operational developments in service delivery

## **Recommendation**

**The Chief Fire Officer and Clerk recommend that the report be noted and the Member Development Plan endorsed.**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – 2007 / 2008 Member Training Programme  
Appendix 2 – Member Development Plan

## **Background papers**

Code of Corporate Governance

## Appendix1 – 2007/2008 Member Training Programme

The sessions provided for Members from June 2007 to May 2008 were:

### Members Induction - 13 August 2007

This session covered Members Allowances, the Command Room, Standards/Ethics, Risk Management, Business Continuity, Freedom of Information Act and provided an Introduction to the Legislative Framework

Attendance: 13

### Improvement Planning – 11 September 2007

This session provided Members with information regarding the IRMP process and planning for improvement.

Attendance: 6

### Financial Management – 4 October 2007

Information provided to Members included the Budget Context, 2006/07 Budget Analysis, Financial Management Arrangements

Attendance: 3

### Ethical Framework – 14 November 2007

This session provided Members with an update on the role and purpose of the Ethical Framework and how it was used throughout the organisation

Attendance: 5

### Retained Firefighters – 7 February 2008

The seminar informed Members about how the retained system works, the role of the retained firefighter, retained pay and recruitment.

Attendance: 9

### Audit Committee Training (specifically for Audit Committee Members) – 6 March 2008

This session highlighted the core function and purpose of the Committee and the skills knowledge and experience necessary for Members.

Attendance: 4

### CAA and Performance Framework – 13 March 2008

Proposed assessment regime for the fire and rescue service, operational assessment of service delivery, performance indicators, use of resources, direction of travel

Attendance: 8

### Community Safety – 24 April 2008

Authority's community safety strategy and how we deliver each element of it, Firefighting, Water Rescue, Road Safety, terrorist or natural disaster operations

Attendance: 9

In addition, since May 2008 to date, sessions have been provided for Members on:

### Equality & Diversity

What is diversity, legislative background, HWFRS approach to delivery equality, achievements, next steps.

Attendance: 6

### IRMP

Background provided on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Attendance: 4

### Financial Management

Budget Context & Budget Analysis, Financial Management Arrangements, Anti-Fraud Overview, Financial Benchmarking

Attendance: 5

### Code of Conduct

Attendance: 7 (4 Elected Members, 3 Independent Members)



## Member Training Plan

### 1. Aims

- 1.1 The Member Training Programme aims to improve the support and information available to Members and aims to ensure that Members are properly trained to enable them to carry out their roles as Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

### 2. Principles

- 2.1 The Code of Corporate Governance requires that arrangements are put in place to ensure that Members receive adequate and appropriate training. The ethical content of the Member Training Programme is overseen by the Standards Committee.

- 2.2 The Member Training Plan will link in with the key objectives of the Service:

- Community: we will improve the safety of the community by targeting at risk groups, improving the environment within which we live and by working and engaging with the people we serve
- People: we will ensure the fair and equitable treatment of both our staff and the people we serve, and promote the training and safety of all our personnel
- Business Process and Organisational Development: we will develop and implement systems, procedures and structures to improve efficiency and effectiveness, mitigate risk, enable effective response to emergencies and to review, monitor and measure our performance
- Finance and Resources: we will ensure the economic use of resources, meeting budgetary challenges and maximising funding opportunities in order to deliver value for money services

### 3. Member Training Programme

- 3.1 The programme will comprise of:

- an annual Induction for new and existing Members to include the legislative framework for the fire and rescue services and the Members Code of Conduct
- a core programme for all Members concentrating on the following key issues:
  - Comprehensive Area Assessment / Performance Framework
  - IRMP / Planning including Risk Management / Business Continuity
  - Financial Control and Budget Setting
  - Equality & Diversity / Ethical Framework
  - HR / Training
  - Community Safety / Service Activity

- essential training for Members in key roles e.g. Group Leaders, Committee Members, Member Champions
- opportunities for all Members to remain up to date with operational developments in service delivery

#### 4. Support

##### 4.1 Corporate Support will:

- Identify training needs
- Identify learning opportunities
- Consult and communicate with Members
- Co-ordinate the Member Training programme
- Monitor and evaluate Member Training
- Provide information and support to staff holding briefings and delivering training seminars

#### 5. How we will measure improvement

- 5.1 The Member Training Programme will be monitored and regularly evaluated to establish how we can build on existing improvements.
- 5.2 The programme will be evaluated by assessing areas such as Member attendance, Member feedback and feedback from training facilitators.

#### 6. Review

- 6.1 The programme of training will be assessed and reviewed annually to ensure any new issues or national or local changes are recognised and accounted for if necessary. This will allow the programme to be responsive and effective.

## **5. Local Assessment Sub-Committee Update**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To advise the Committee of the outcome of the meeting of the Assessment Sub-Committee held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008 in respect of their consideration of a report into the alleged conduct of a Member of the Authority recorded as matter number HWFRA 01/08.
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### **Background**

2. On the 27<sup>th</sup> August a complaint was received from the Chief Fire Officer in respect of the alleged conduct of a Member of the Authority. The Complaint referred to a Member's visit to a fire station which took place in July 2008 during which the Member concerned allegedly made remarks to a female Fire Fighter that posts such as hers were unsuitable for women.
3. The female Fire Fighter considered the remarks sexist and felt distressed and upset in that her role had been undermined by these alleged comments.
4. The complainant suggested that if substantiated, the alleged comments may amount to a breach of the Member's Code of Conduct and would be entirely contrary to the Authority's Ethical Framework Policy and indeed the provisions of Section 33 of the Equality Act 2006.

### **The Sub Committee Meeting**

5. The Assessment Sub-Committee met on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008 in order to consider its sole item of business that day namely the aforementioned complaint.
6. The Sub-Committee was chaired by Dr Murray Mylchreest. The Sub-Committee considered the report before it and the materials presented to them. The Sub-Committee found inter alia that in making the alleged comments the Councillor could reasonably be regarded as bringing her office or the Authority into disrepute.
7. In accordance with Section 57A of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) the Sub-Committee decided to refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer for further training to be given to the Councillor within a timeframe of 2 months from the date of the Decision Notice.

### **Implementation of the Decision**

8. The Councillor was notified of the determination made by the Sub-Committee in writing, by the Clerk to the Authority.
9. On the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 the said Councillor wrote to the Clerk accepting the decision and seeking an appropriate appointment for informal training.
10. On 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008, in compliance with the Sub-Committee's direction, the Councillor met with Mr Kevin O'Keefe, Solicitor and received one-on-one training in respect of the Member's Code of Conduct and also the Fire Authority's "Delivering Equality For All" strategy. Earlier that same day the Councillor had attended a Member Seminar on the

Code of Conduct at Fire Brigade Headquarters, also presented by Mr O'Keefe.

### **Recommendation**

**The Clerk recommends that the report be noted.**