



# **HEREFORD & WORCESTER**

## **Fire and Rescue Authority**

### **Standards Committee**

# **AGENDA**

Thursday 17 March 2011  
10.30am

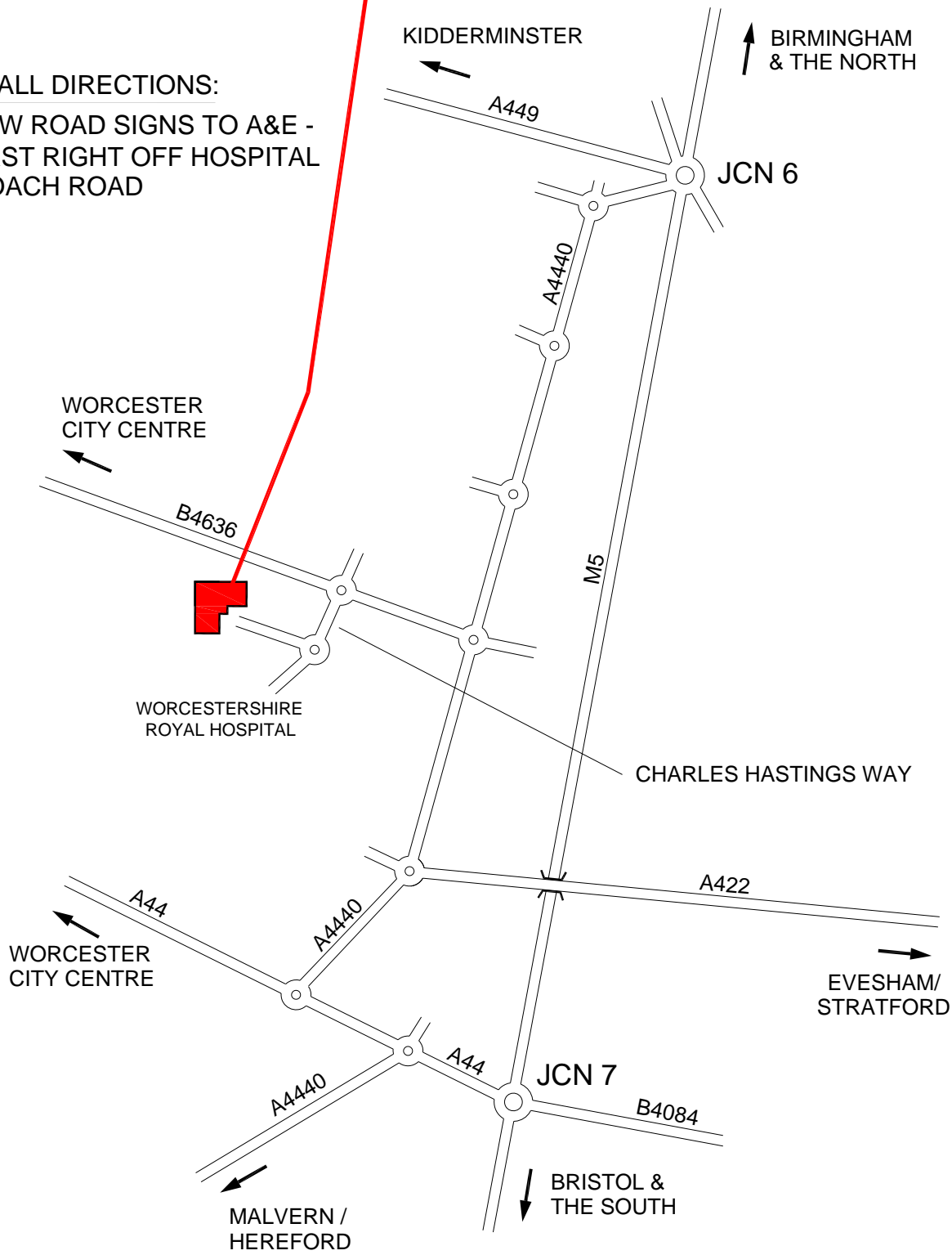
Conference Suites 2 & 3,  
Headquarters,  
2 Kings Court,  
Charles Hastings Way,  
Worcester  
WR5 1JR



Awarded for excellence

HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
HEADQUARTERS  
2 KINGS COURT  
CHARLES HASTINGS WAY  
WORCESTER. WR5 1JR  
TEL: 0845 12 24454

FROM ALL DIRECTIONS:  
FOLLOW ROAD SIGNS TO A&E -  
HQ FIRST RIGHT OFF HOSPITAL  
APPROACH ROAD



This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service 100029587 2005

## **ACTION ON DISCOVERING A FIRE**

- 1 Break the glass at the nearest **FIRE ALARM POINT**.  
(This will alert Control and other Personnel)
- 2 Tackle the fire with the appliances available – **IF SAFE TO DO SO**.
- 3 Proceed to the Assembly Point for a Roll Call –  
**CAR PARK OF THE OFFICE BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.**
- 4 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

## **ACTION ON HEARING THE ALARM**

- 1 Proceed immediately to the Assembly Point  
**CAR PARK OF THE OPTIMUM BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.**
- 2 Close all doors en route. The senior person present will ensure all personnel have left the room.
- 3 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS**

### **Security**

Upon arrival, visitors are requested to proceed to the barrier and speak to the reception staff via the intercom. There are parking spaces allocated for visitors around the front of the building, clearly marked. Upon entering the building, you will then be welcomed and given any further instructions. In particular it is important that you sign in upon arrival and sign out upon departure. Please speak to a member of the reception staff on arrival who will direct you to the appropriate meeting room.

### **Wheelchair access**

The meeting room is accessible for visitors in wheelchairs.

### **Alternative formats**

For information regarding requests for papers in alternative formats, please contact Committee Services on 0845 12 244554 or by email at [committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk)

**Smoking** is not permitted.

**First Aid** -please ask at reception to contact a trained First Aider.

**Toilets** – please ask at reception.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION – YOUR RIGHTS

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Your main rights are set out below:

- Automatic right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings unless the business if transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, on request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral divisions of members of the Authority with details of membership of Committees.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending the meetings of the Authority and Committees.

If you have any queries regarding this agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of these rights of access to information please contact Committee Services on 0845 12 244554 or by email at [committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk).

## WELCOME AND GUIDE TO TODAY’S MEETING

These notes are written to assist you to follow the meeting. Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Members** who are democratically elected representatives and they will be advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals. The Fire and Rescue Authority comprises 25 Councillors and appoints committees to undertake various functions on behalf of the Authority. There are 19 Worcestershire County Councillors on the Authority and 6 Herefordshire Council Councillors.

### Agenda Papers

Attached is the Agenda which is a summary of the issues to be discussed and the related reports by Officers.

### Chairman

The Chairman, who is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting, sits at the head of the table.

### Officers

Accompanying the Chairman is the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authority who will advise on legal and procedural matters and record the proceedings. These include the Clerk and the Treasurer to the Authority.

### The Business

The Chairman will conduct the business of the meeting. The items listed on the agenda will be discussed.

### Decisions

At the end of the discussion on each item the Chairman will put any amendments or motions to the meeting and then ask the Councillors to vote. The Officers do not have a vote.

## Agenda

**Members:**

**Independent**

Mr R Gething (Chairman)

**Non-elected Members:**

Mr C Emeny, Dr M Mylechreest, Mr R Rogers,  
Mr D Stevens.

**Members appointed  
by the Authority:**

Cllr J Goodwin  
Cllr G Hopkins

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. Named Substitutes**

To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.

**3. Declaration of Interests (if any)**

The Members' Code of Conduct requires Members to declare any interests against an Agenda item, the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. If a Member has a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay, take part and vote in the meeting. If a Member has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is and leave the meeting room for the duration of the item.

This item allows the Chairman to invite any Member to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2010 (copy attached).

**5. The Future of the Local Government Standards Framework**

To consider the present outlook for standards and ethics in local government and the future role of the Committee

**6. The Code of Conduct and Standards - Recent Decided Cases**

To update Members on recent case decisions.

**7. Exclusion of Public and Press**

**In the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority, the meeting will not be, or is likely not to be, open to the public and press at the time item 8 below is considered, for the reasons stated:**

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

**Pages**

**1 – 3**

**4 – 10**

**11 – 19**

- (b) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

## **8. Applications for Dispensations**

**Glossary**

**20 - 23**

**Please note that these minutes will remain as a draft until formally confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting and signed by the Chairman.**

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority  
Standards Committee  
21 September 2010**

## **Minutes**

### **Members in Attendance:**

#### **Independent**

Mr R Gething, (Chairman), Dr M Mylechreest,  
Mr D Stevens

#### **Members:**

### **Members appointed by the Authority:**

None in Attendance

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

Mr R Rogers, Mr D Stevens, Cllr G Hopkins and Cllr J Goodwin.

#### **2. Named Substitutes**

None.

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

No Member declared a personal or prejudicial interest in any of the items on this Agenda.

#### **4. Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

#### **5. Proposals for Change following Review of Committee Structure**

The Clerk presented the proposals for a review of the structure of the Authority's Committees and their Terms of Reference. She pointed out that since the papers had been issued to Members of the Standards Committee that the proposals had been amended to expand the Audit Committee Membership to 10 in order to afford greater opportunities for Members to participate in Authority business at Committee level.

***RESOLVED that the Standards Committee supports the proposals for a review of the structure of the Authority's Committees and their Terms of Reference.***

#### **6. Governance Review Proposals – changes to the Standards Committee's Terms of Reference**

The Clerk presented to the meeting the proposed revised Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee which will be considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 28 September.

**Please note that these minutes will remain as a draft until formally confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting and signed by the Chairman.**

The meeting supported the proposals and suggested the following amendments:

In "Rules and Procedures", paragraph 10, delete "review".

Any references to "Lay Member/s" to read "Independent Members".

Any reference to "un-elected" to read "Appointed".

***RESOLVED that the Standards Committee supports the proposed changes to their Terms of Reference.***

## **7. The Future of Standards for England and the Standards Framework**

The Clerk updated the Committee on recent Government announcements on the future of Standards for England and the Standards Framework, and the Meeting noted that it was likely that Standards for England and the current Standards regime would cease sometime between 31 December 2011 and 31 March 2012.

***RESOLVED that the report be noted.***

## **8. Exclusion of Public and Press**

The Clerk told the Committee that in her opinion the meeting should not be open to the public and press at the time item 9 was considered, for the reasons stated:

- (a) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- (b) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

***RESOLVED that the public and the press be excluded from the Meeting for the consideration by the Committee of Item number 9: "Applications for Dispensations".***

## **9. Applications for Dispensations**

The Clerk recommended to the Committee that a dispensation be granted to Members of the Authority who have requested same to enable them to consider matters as set out in the attached report .

The Committee considered the nature of the issues in question and the applications for dispensation which had been received from the following Members:

Mrs P Andrews, Mr T Bean, Mrs M Bunker, Mr J Champion, Mr J Cairns, Mr S Clee, Mrs L Duffy, Mrs L Eyre, Mr J Goodwin, Mr A Hardman, Mrs L Hodgson, Mrs G Hopkins, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mrs F Oborski,

**Please note that these minutes will remain as a draft until formally confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting and signed by the Chairman.**

Mrs J Potter, Mr D Prodger MBE, Mr C Smith, Mr T Spencer, Mr. D Taylor, Mr K Taylor, Mr J Thomas, Mr R Udall, Mr P Watts and Mr G Yarranton.

The Committee noted that Mr D Greenow had indicated he had applied for a dispensation in the same terms as the other Members, although the paper work had been posted it had yet to be received as at the date of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- I. That dispensations be granted to each of the Members named above including Cllr David Greenow upon receipt of his written application. The dispensation will allow Members to take part in and vote on the issue set out in the report; and***
- II. That all of the dispensations granted in this matter will expire on 31 March 2011.***

The Clerk thanked the Members for their support in this matter and for attending the Meeting at relatively short notice.

The Meeting agreed to cancel the next meeting scheduled for 20 October and to meet again, as scheduled, on 17 March 2011 unless, in the meantime, there were further developments regarding the future of the Standards regime which required the Committee to re-convene.

The meeting finished at 11.53 am.

Signed:.....

Chairman.

Date:.....

## 5. The Future of the Local Government Standards Framework

### Purpose of report

1. To consider the present outlook for standards and ethics in local government and the future role of the Committee.
- 

### Recommendation

***The Clerk recommends that the report be noted and the Committee consider how best to advise the Authority on the future maintenance of ethical standards.***

### Introduction and Background

2. The Government announced its intention to abolish the Standards Board regime on 20 May 2010. The Localism Bill has recently been published and is being considered in detail at committee stage. The aim of the government is to have the new arrangements in place by late 2011 and the Authority will therefore need to consider what arrangements, if any, it needs to put in place for an ethical framework and the way in which it deals with complaints about Councillors.

### Key Considerations

3. The Decentralisation and Localism Bill has the following provisions:
  - The 'predetermination' rules – The Bill will end the situation where Councillors are prevented from acting on local issues because of the risk of challenge that they are biased.
  - The Standards Board regime – The Bill will abolish the regime and allow authorities to make their own arrangements to govern propriety and behaviour and empower the local community to hold their elected representatives to account.

### Predetermination

4. The Following is an extract from the explanatory notes to the relevant sections of the Bill:

***Clause 13 - prior indications as to view of a matter not to amount to predetermination***

5. *Clause 13 clarifies how the common law concept of "predetermination" applies to Councillors in England and Wales. Predetermination occurs where someone has a closed mind, with the effect that they are unable to apply their judgment fully and properly to an issue requiring a decision. Decisions made by Councillors later judged to have predetermined views have been quashed.*

6. *The clause makes it clear that if a councillor has given a view on an issue, this does not show a closed mind on that issue. Accordingly, if a councillor has campaigned on an issue or made public statements about their approach to an item of authority business, he or she will be able to participate in discussion of that issue in the council and to vote on it if it arises in an item of council business requiring a decision.*
7. *Clause 13 applies to all councils in England and Wales but not to the Fire Authority. (Paragraph 144)*

## **Standards**

8. The Following is an extract from the explanatory notes to the relevant sections of the Bill:

### **Clause 14 - Amendments of existing provisions**

9. *Clause 14, and the Schedule it introduces, abolishes the Standards Board regime, which consists of the Standards Board for England, standards committees of local authorities, the jurisdiction of the First Tier Tribunal in relation to local government standards in England and a codes of conduct for Councillors. The abolition of the Standards Board for England and revocation of the codes of conduct will take place on a date appointed by the Secretary of State. None of the functions of the Standards Board for England are to be preserved. The power for the Secretary of State to issue a model code of conduct and to specify principles to govern the conduct of Councillors of relevant authorities is removed together with the requirement for relevant authorities to establish standards committees. The First Tier Tribunal loses its jurisdiction over councillor conduct issues.*
10. *The Schedule contains provision for the Secretary of State to make an order regarding the transfer of the assets and liabilities from the Standards Board for England. It also makes provision for the Secretary of State to issue directions in connection with the abolition, including directions about information held by the Standards Board for England and makes provision for the final statement of accounts for the Standards Board for England to be prepared by the Secretary of State.*

### **Clause 15 - Duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct**

11. *Clause 15 places a duty on a relevant authority to ensure that Councillors and co-opted Councillors maintain high standards of conduct. Fire Authorities are included in the descriptor of a relevant authority for this chapter.*

### **Clause 16 - Voluntary codes of conduct**

12. *Clause 16 provides that a relevant authority may adopt a voluntary code of conduct. If an allegation of a breach of a code is made in writing, the authority must take a decision on whether or not to investigate the allegation and, if it is considered that an investigation is warranted, investigate in any way the authority sees fit.*

## **Clause 17 - Disclosure and registration of Councillors' interests**

13. *Clause 17 provides for the establishment and maintenance of a register of Councillors' and co-opted Councillors' interests by the local authority by giving the Secretary of State power to make regulations to specify what interests must be recorded in that register. The regulations may make provision for restrictions on taking part in the business of the authority to be imposed on a member or co-opted member with a registered or declared interest. The regulations may require the register to be available to the public and may make provision about exempting sensitive information from it.*

## **Clause 18 – Offence of breaching Regulations under Clause 18**

14. *Clause 18 makes it a criminal offence to fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with obligations imposed by regulations under clause 17 to register or declare personal interests or to take part in authority business when prevented from so doing by such regulations. The penalty that the magistrates' court may impose upon conviction is a fine of up to £5,000 and an order disqualifying the person from being a member of a relevant authority for up to five years. A prosecution for the offence may be brought within 12 months of the prosecuting authorities having the evidence to warrant prosecution, but only by or on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions.*

## **Issues arising**

15. *Whilst the effect of the changes will not be known until the proposals have been further debated and the contents of any secondary legislation are known, doubts have been raised about how complaints which fall short of criminality will be handled.*
16. *These concerns are shared by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. Its Chairman, Sir Christopher Kelly, feels that the lack of a national code of conduct and an independent complaints mechanism in the proposed new regime risks lower standards and a decline in public confidence. Sir Christopher also said:*
17. *"The Committee has long argued for proportionate ways of upholding strong ethical standards at local level and we recognise the problem in the existing regime of vexatious or politically motivated complaints. But the proposed stripping back of the current structure to virtually nothing loses sight of some important principles.*
18. *The proposals go well beyond the abolition of Standards for England. They involve the abolition of the national code of conduct for local authority Councillors and remove the obligation on local authorities to maintain standards committees, chaired by independent people, to monitor standards and sanction aberrant behaviour. In future it appears that the only way of sanctioning poor behaviour between elections will be the criminal law or appeals to the ombudsman where someone's interests are directly affected by a decision.*
19. *The Bill refers to a duty on local authorities to promote and maintain high standards. If this is to mean anything, in the Committee's view it is essential that there remains a national code of conduct so that both councillors and – most importantly – the public can judge what is acceptable behaviour and what is not.*

*Leaving it up to each local authority to decide whether to have their own code and - if so - what it should contain, risks confusion. National codes of conduct govern the behaviour of MPs, civil servants and others in public life. Why are councillors judged to be different?*

20. *Nor is it acceptable that the new regime leaves no independent mechanism for dealing with complaints about the behaviour of an individual councillor aside from the criminal law— which will leave no way of responding between elections to behaviour which is seriously in breach of acceptable limits but not appropriate for criminal prosecution.*
21. *The Committee welcomes the intention to make regulation more proportionate. But we believe that a national code and an independent complaints mechanism – however achieved – need to be retained to ensure that the public can have confidence in the integrity of the behaviour of our locally elected politicians."*
22. The Department for Communities and Local Government has provided the following information:

### ***Proposed transitional measures***

23. *Any cases in the system at the appointed day will make their way through a transitional regime. This would meet the expectation of those who had made allegations that their allegations would be properly dealt with. It also enables that if a member has an allegation made against them, they should have the opportunity to clear their name.*
24. *The Government proposes that any investigations being undertaken by Standards for England transfer, on the appointed day, to the local authority that referred the investigation. It will be for that local authority to arrange for the conclusion of the investigation. The local authority's standards committee will remain established until the last complaint it is considering, referred either internally or from Standards for England, has been dealt with.*
25. *Any cases with which the First-tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England) is dealing on the appointed day will be concluded by that tribunal. It will not receive any appeals against standards committee rulings after that date.*
26. *The right of appeal will not exist for those cases standards committees deal with as they work their way through the transitional system. The Government considers that the risk of protracted proceedings justifies this approach. The sanctions available to standards committees are significantly less severe than the sanctions available to the First-tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England).*
27. *Further, the Government proposes that the suspension sanction is removed from standards committees for the transitional period. Hence the most a standards committee could do is, for instance, to issue a councillor with a censure or a request that they undergo training.*

## ***The conduct regime in a post-Standards Board world***

28. *The Government is committed to maintaining high standards of conduct in office and will ensure that, in the absence of a statutory code of conduct, councillors do not abuse their office for personal gain by putting their personal interests before those of the general community or local area that they represent. Councillors will be required to continue to register and declare personal interests and will not be allowed to use their position improperly for personal gain. The Government intend that wilful failure to comply with these requirements will constitute a criminal offence.*
29. *The requirement for local authorities to adopt a model code of conduct and for local authority councillors to abide by that code will be abolished. However, local authorities will be free to adopt their own, voluntary code of conduct should they so wish.*
30. *The requirement to maintain a standards committee will be abolished. However, local authorities will be free, should they choose, to establish voluntary standards committees to consider complaints about the conduct of elected and co-opted Councillors. Such committees will, according to authorities' local constitutions, be able to censure but will not be able to suspend or disqualify Councillors from authority."*

### **Key Points Summary**

31. The Decentralisation and Localism Bill includes proposals to abolish the Standards Board regime.
32. The Committee has previously considered some of the implications the proposed arrangements will have on the way ethical standards will be maintained and complaints dealt with in the future.
33. Until such time as the new legislation is passed, the statutory framework remains operative and complaints are still being dealt with in the same way.
34. The Bill was introduced to the House of Commons on 13 December 2010 and gives limited guidance about the arrangements that could be put in place locally to deal with matters when the Standards Board regime ceases.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

35. To note the emerging information about the Government's planned Decentralisation and Localism Bill on the Standards for England and the ethical standards framework.
36. Numerous questions are raised about the proposals, interim arrangements and the adoption of a local procedure. Careful consideration will be given to these points and there will be further reports submitted to the Committee about them.

## Financial Considerations

| Consideration   | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no. |
|---|--------|--|
| There are financial issues that require consideration | N      |  |

## Legal Considerations

| Consideration   | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.  |
|---|--------|---|
| There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration | Y      | The whole report (It is important to ensure that the community at large is aware that the statutory framework remains operative.) |

## Additional Considerations

37. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

| Consideration   | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.  |
|---|--------|---|
| Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).                        | N      |   |
| Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact). | N      |   |
| Risk Management/Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).             | Y      | There is a need to ensure that, until otherwise known, the statutory framework is adhered to. Ethical standards are important to the Authority and, following the abolition of this framework, the effectiveness of the new statutory regime needs to be monitored. |
| Consultation with Representative Bodies   | N      |   |

## **Supporting Information**

Background papers - DCLG information release dated December 2010 and Ministerial Statement dated 13 December 2010.

## **Contact Officer**

Anne Brown – Deputy Monitoring Officer/Clerk  
(01432 260266)  
Email: [abrown@hwfire.gov.uk](mailto:abrown@hwfire.gov.uk)

## **6. The Code of Conduct and Standards - Recent Decided Cases**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To update Members on recent case decisions.
- 

### **Recommendation**

***The Clerk recommends that the Committee notes this report.***

### **Background**

2. The Standards Board regime remains in place and it is helpful for Members of Standards Committees to be aware of the results of recent cases regarding the Code of Conduct and Standards matters. The Board also publishes Guidance Notes on topical issues and matters which they deem of importance to Committees to assist them in their functions.
3. Standards for England publishes the outcomes of selected cases and other related information to assist Standards Committees and Officers involved with them.
4. Appendix 1 (attached) gives an outline of some of these cases under the following headings:
  - Use of Authority resources
  - Acting in official capacity
  - Behaviour at Meetings
  - Member/Officer Relations
  - Access to, and use of, Information
  - Personal and Prejudicial Interests
5. Full details of all the cases mentioned in the Appendix can be found on the Standards for England website: [www.standardsforengland.gov.uk](http://www.standardsforengland.gov.uk).

### **Supporting information:**

Appendix 1 – A selection of recent cases reported by Standards for England

### **Contact Officer**

Anne Brown – Deputy Monitoring Officer/Clerk  
(01432 260266)  
Email: [abrown@hwfire.gov.uk](mailto:abrown@hwfire.gov.uk)

**Use of Authority resources:**

APE 0389

This case illustrated the application of the Code when a member is carrying out an activity, which is not part of their normal duties as a councillor.

In this case, the Adjudication Panel for England had to consider the test previously set out by Mr Justice Collins in the High Court case concerning the former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone.

The Adjudication Panel decided that the councillor was subject to the Code when he used a council computer to access indecent images of children. This case was considered in the context of paragraphs 4 and 5 of the 2001 Code relating to disrepute and misuse of resources.

APE 0169

A councillor used council notepaper in an attempt to avoid parking penalties incurred by his son. He also dishonestly attempted to renew a parking permit for disabled drivers. He was convicted of attempting, by deception, to evade the parking penalties dishonestly. He was found to have brought his office and authority into disrepute and was disqualified from office for one year.

**Acting in official capacity:**

APE 0421

The Appellant argued that she was not acting in her official capacity as all her comments on an internet newspaper forum were made in her private time and all using the pseudonym of "Indie".

The Appeals Tribunal accepted that even if it became clear from the forum that an individual who was posting on the forum was a councillor, the Code of Conduct would not automatically be engaged. The question was whether in the postings on the forum the councillor was, or gave the impression that she was, "acting in the role of councillor". This was fact-sensitive and would very much depend on the content of the postings.

It was noted that the member had used a pseudonym, and that she stated in at least one of the postings that she was on the forum as a resident who just happened to be a councillor. However, taking the contents of the postings on the forum as a whole the Appeals Tribunal concluded that the Appellant did give the impression that she was acting in the role of councillor and thus representing the council.

LGS/2010/0513

One issue considered in this appeal was whether or not the member was acting in his official capacity when the behaviour which led to the complaint occurred. The standards committee found that during, or immediately after, a couple of evening music events about a month apart the member had kicked a youth, used behaviour to him that was

inappropriate and irresponsible and engaged in inappropriate 'banter' between a councillor and a 16 year old. He had also slapped another youth on the bottom and made inappropriate comments about tattoos to her.

The tribunal considered the member was acting in his official capacity at the relevant times. As a starting point the tribunal considered the case of Livingstone v APE. The facts there were that the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, had been hosting a reception at City Hall. As he left City Hall when the reception was ended, as he was walking away, he was confronted by a reporter and a conversation took place. A key issue in the case was whether at the time the conversation took place he was performing his official functions: the court determined that on the facts he was not.

The Investigating Officer found that in his opinion the member "liked it to be known that he was a Town Councillor/Mayor and repeatedly if not constantly gave the impression that he was acting as a Town Councillor/Mayor". This is also the firm impression that the tribunal gained from the documents before it. The tribunal considered that the facts in this appeal could clearly be distinguished from those in Livingstone. This was a case where the member's public and private life were intertwined, unlike in the Livingstone case where the Mayor had concluded his public function and was walking away.

The tribunal concluded that the member acted or gave the impression that he was acting as a representative of the Town Council when he attended the music events in question. The events affecting the second youth occurred when the group of people running the music event moved on to the pub to have a "debrief" after the event. The question is whether moving to the pub was a change of circumstances such that the member was no longer giving the impression that he was a representative of the Council. The tribunal considered this carefully but concluded that the events at the pub could not clearly be separated from the music event. The fact that the discussion about the event had moved from the event hall to the pub was incidental. The same people were involved and the motive and reason for being there were the same. It was not like the facts in the Livingstone case where the councillor had finished official business and was going home. The tribunal therefore considered that the member was acting in his official capacity in relation to the incident. The tribunal confirmed the sanction of suspension for a two month period.

APE 0401

The member appealed against a standards committee finding under the 2001 Code which does not include the provision about giving the impression of acting as a councillor. The standards committee had found that the member had failed to treat others with respect and brought his office or authority into disrepute. This was by using his position to gain entry to a council-funded organisation and then:

- demanding information from staff
- becoming aggressive
- threatening staff's employment
- refusing to leave until senior staff threatened to call the police

The Adjudication Panel for England decided that the standards committee had failed to address whether the member's conduct was undertaken in an official capacity.

The Tribunal found that the member was not on council business and there was no apparent relationship between the purpose of his visit and any relevant function of the

council. However, by so clearly identifying himself as a councillor, his conduct had come within paragraph 4 of the Code [Now paragraph 5] and therefore the finding of a breach was upheld.

APE 0474

The councillor, as Lord Mayor of the council, hosted an event which was ceremonial and a fund raiser for the Lord Mayor's charities. During the evening, he had a conversation with a woman attending the event, some of which was of a sexually explicit nature. The Tribunal found that this conversation was highly embarrassing, offensive and disreputable. The Mayor's conduct was found to have brought his office and the authority into disrepute. He was given a 3 month suspension from office and required to provide a written apology

LGS/2010/0521

A district councillor produced a leaflet prior to elections which were to be held for the county council. It was "to inform the residents of current issues at both Brentwood Borough and Essex County Councils."

The front page of the leaflet contained the following passage,

*'The Council Offices are looking more and more like the Marie Celeste – empty Planning Department, empty Highways Department, empty Finance Department, empty Chief Executives office – where will it end! Those rooms were full and bustling with activity on our resident's behalf when the Lib Dems ran the Council, and we still successfully balanced our annual budget.'*

On the reverse page of the leaflet, it said,

*'FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR TORY CANDIDATE (IF YOU SEE THEM)*

*...5. Why are the Tories dismembering Brentwood Borough Council piece by piece, i.e. no Chief Executive, no Planning Department, no Finance Department and no Highways Department?'*

The Investigating Officer formed a view that the leaflet 'could reasonably be regarded as reducing public confidence in the district council being able to fulfil its functions and duties and therefore brought the authority into disrepute.' Subsequently, at a hearing panel the councillor was found to have brought the authority into disrepute.

The tribunal found that the councillor had produced the leaflet to further his candidacy for election to the county council. They decided that it is not within the role of a councillor from one authority to campaign for election to another. They also found that the panel appeared not to have properly understood the burden of proof applicable in the case, it had not given any reason for deciding that a suspension was the appropriate sanction and it did not appear to have had regard to Article 10 of the Convention on Human Rights in reaching its decision.

The tribunal found that there had been no attempt to justify an interference with the councillor's right to say what he did in the leaflet. It appeared that the issue was a matter of political party interest and debate. It was appropriate for such issues to be canvassed in the electoral process. There was no evidence that his right to raise the

issue was outweighed by any public interest. It was open to those holding opposing views to express them in the same way. The tribunal found that he did not breach the Code of Conduct.

APE 0428

This was an appeal against the decision of a standards committee which had been predicated on finding that the Appellant had, at the material time been acting in her capacity as a councillor.

Emails passed between the Appellant and the complainant. All of them appeared to have been instigated by the complainant and contained what the tribunal described as "a curious mixture of personal and business issues".

Of particular importance in this case were the emails relating to a website and the possibility of setting up an alternative to it. The website appeared not to be published or sanctioned by the council but promoted discussion on matters of local interest which might be about council business and might also be considered to be aspects of local political activism. It is in relation to this publication that the email exchange which led to the complaint related.

The tribunal found that there could be no reasonable finding that correspondence relative to a website which was not produced or sanctioned by the council related to council business.

### **Behaviour at Meetings:**

APE 0402

The appellants questioned whether the town council meetings at which they were accused of breaching the Code complied with the statutory requirements for the calling of such meetings and thus whether the meetings can be considered meetings of the council. In the view of the appeals tribunal, it was irrelevant to the issues before them whether the meetings were properly called. Those attending thought that the meetings were properly called and business of the council was being transacted. In their view, even if it had been clear to all that the meetings were not official council meetings it would not have affected the application of the Code which applies to councillors when carrying out their role as councillors. There was no doubt that the appellants' actions were seen by them and the others involved as directly about Council business and the running of the Council

APE 0326

A member persistently refused to obey the chair's rulings at meetings, refused to be quiet when asked, and at two meetings of the council had to be asked to leave by the police. The events took place over a three-month period. He was disqualified for a year.

APE 0362

A member interrupted an interview between a reporter and another member during a break in a council meeting. He steered the reporter out of the room and threatened the member using extremely abusive language. This was seen by others including

members of the public. The member immediately apologised for his behaviour. He was censured.

APE 0425

A councillor made a throwaway, non-malicious remark about the majority group of the council being corrupt. However, he made the comment at a public meeting and by doing so without justification he brought his own office and the authority into disrepute. No sanction was imposed

LGS/2010/0497

Disrupting a council meeting to the point of causing the sitting to be suspended might not merit a breach of the Code. However, in this case the councillor persisted even after the cooling-off period that was available as a result of the suspension. That then led to the meeting being adjourned and having to be reconvened. The tribunal took a more serious view of persisting in that way and considered that she brought the Council into disrepute. She was censured and warned that if she appeared again before the tribunal as a result of causing a meeting to be abandoned she could expect a less lenient sanction to be applied.

#### **Member/Officer Relations:**

APE 0414 and LGS/2009/0480

In these appeals, the tribunal provided a good summary of the High Court decisions on Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Freedom of Expression), i.e. whether the Article is engaged and if so what might be convincing and compelling reasons to interfere with the right. In the former case the tribunal found no breach of the Code where the councillor had made criticisms of the planning regime at the council. However, in relation to the Councillor's behaviour towards the parish clerk in the latter case it took the view that the higher level of protection afforded to statements of political opinion etc, was not applicable where the nature of the words and the manner in which they were expressed crossed the line into expressions of personal malice /anger or personal abuse

APE 0415

The chairman of the Council introduced a motion to suspend the clerk, without giving 3 clear days notice as required by standing orders, and did not allow a vote as to whether

this motion should be dealt with in exempt session. The councillor for this disrespect and other breaches, arising from the same events was suspended from the town council for three months. He was also partially suspended from being a member of the Standards Committee of the responsible authority and from being the town council's Chairman for twelve months.

LGS/2009/0483

The councillor had on a number of occasions, both in emails and at council meetings, referred to the chief executive as a liar, a cheat and a hypocrite. He also emailed the monitoring officer about service complaints, simply instructing him to take certain actions and the intemperate manner in which he did so resulted in his conduct

amounting to personal abuse rather than political expression. The tribunal said the words used by the councillor against the two senior officers were not political comments or political opinions. The use of the words liar, hypocrite and cheat to the chief executive was disrespectful and sought to damage his reputation. The councillor had prepared much of what he said at council meetings beforehand and the comments were therefore premeditated. These comments, which questioned the chief executive's honesty, credibility and integrity, were made in a public arena where they would receive maximum publicity and he had no right of reply.

In respect of the monitoring officer the tribunal was also of the view that the councillor treated him with disrespect by referring to him in emails in a derogatory way and questioning his professional abilities and integrity. The councillor's communication with the monitoring officer was regularly copied to members of the public and other staff members which was demeaning and undermining.

The tribunal decided that the councillor's conduct amounted to behaviour which was intimidating, insulting, humiliating and undermining. The councillor was disqualified for twelve months.

LGS/2010/0495

This case concerned how much a senior officer should be prepared to accept robust criticism made in public. In this case the words were personal and highly critical and made in a public arena where the clerk had no right of reply, no opportunity to contradict and where she was largely defenceless. The subject member was suspended for four months or until such time as she apologised to the clerk in a form to be provided by the standards committee.

APE 0378

A councillor wrote to the chief executive, in rude terms demanding action where she had no authority to do so. The tribunal decided that the member had not shown disrespect to the chief executive. The tribunal decided that sufficient weight had to be given to the fact that the officer was the chief executive, and it was significant that there was no direct personal attack on that officer.

Conversely, the tribunal did find that there was disrespect shown to a senior police officer. This is because the councillor was disrespectful to him in email correspondence and referred to him by his surname outside of the expected norms of such relationships. This was compounded by the circulation of the offending emails to junior and senior officers within both organisations.

#### **Access to, and use of, Information:**

APE 0285

This case example is about a member's right to access the accounts of a council.

The chair of a council took steps to prevent other members gaining access to the accounts of the council. The tribunal confirmed that Section 228(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the common law, taken together, give a member of a council the right to inspect accounts and documents.

The right under Section 228(3) is not limited to approved accounts or to accounts in the public domain. Frustration of these statutory and common law rights by the chair of the council – by not allowing members to inspect the accounts – constituted unlawful withholding of information within the meaning of the Code.

The tribunal in considering whether or not information was confidential took into account that some information would be disclosed were a request made under the Freedom of Information Act. Such information was not considered confidential. The councillor had attended a meeting at which the voluntary redundancy of the chief executive was considered, and voted in favour of the matter being taken in exempt session. He subsequently put out a press release that included personal information about the chief executive. He argued that the Chief Executive was responsible for a significant part of the council's financial difficulties and that he should have resigned or been dismissed. The case tribunal did not consider that any of the exceptions to paragraph 4 of the Code applied. The councillor was suspended for three months.

LGS/2009/0462

This case is about disclosures to local newspapers by a councillor of information relating to proposals for the extension of a town centre supermarket. Part of the information had been sent to him accompanied by a letter from the monitoring officer reminding all members of the confidential nature of the contents. When the councillor expressed his concern that the matter was to be considered in private at the council meeting he was told by the chief executive and the monitoring officer that disclosure could prejudice the council. Despite the council having voted for the matter to be exempt, the councillor disclosed information. Also despite an undertaking given personally to the monitoring officer not to do so, he disclosed information from the minutes of a later meeting which were also exempt.

The tribunal considered the councillor's right to freedom of expression under Article 10 European Convention on Human Rights and considered the qualification imposed on that right in Article 10(2). They concluded that the public interest in maintaining confidence had to be weighed against the public interest favouring disclosure. The council itself undertook that weighing exercise when it decided that the matter should remain exempt from disclosure in two separate meetings. Having found that none of the exceptions in paragraph 4 of the Code applied, the case tribunal found that the councillor was in breach of paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Code, and suspended him for six months.

### **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:**

APE 0383

This case was under the 2001 Code. A councillor was given information in a private briefing to councillors about the council's proposals to buy land and relocate its offices to another town. The information was made public swiftly after this. The councillor did not agree with the proposals and secretly bought the land. The tribunal found that, together with the lack of openness, these actions diminished public confidence in his ability to discharge his office as a councillor and, therefore, he had brought his office or authority into disrepute. He was disqualified from office for six months.

This appeal concerned a member's involvement in consideration of a report prepared for the council which responded to the outcome of a consultation exercise about residential care services and set out proposals that would form the basis of the next consultation for modernising those services. The report identified workforce issues and stated. '...changing provision will impact on staff...' and '...workforce planning will look at the skills required and establish what alternative employment/training opportunities are needed to ensure the effective use of staff...'

The member's partner was employed as a care assistant at a council run day centre identified in the report and it was evident that the member's partner could potentially be affected by the proposals outlined in the report. The standards committee had found that the member's partner was a 'relevant person' within the meaning of paragraph 8(2) of the Code. It was also found that he had a personal interest which was prejudicial in accordance with the definition contained in paragraph 10 of the Code. The tribunal agreed. In deciding a period of suspension for one month, the tribunal said that the principal purpose of a sanction is the 'need to impress upon the [member] the severity of the matter and the need to avoid repetition.' They concluded that a suspension for one month would bring home to the member the seriousness of what he has done, and send the right message to all concerned that a serious view was indeed being taken of what he had done.

# Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>ACAS</b>   | Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service             |
| <b>ACFO</b>   | Assistant Chief Fire Officer                              |
| <b>AFA</b>    | Automatic Fire Alarm                                      |
| <b>AFD</b>    | Automatic Fire Detection                                  |
| <b>ALP</b>    | Aerial Ladder Platform                                    |
| <b>AM</b>     | Area Manager  |
| <b>AMP</b>    | Asset Management Plan                                     |
| <b>ARCC</b>   | Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre                  |
| <hr/>         |   |
| <b>BA</b>     | Breathing Apparatus                                       |
| <b>BACS</b>   | Bankers' Automated Clearance System                       |
| <b>BCM</b>    | Business Continuity Management                            |
| <b>BCP</b>    | Business Continuity Plan                                  |
| <b>BME</b>    | Black and Minority Ethnic                                 |
| <b>BVPI</b>   | Best Value Performance Indicator                          |
| <b>BVPP</b>   | Best Value Performance Plan                               |
| <hr/>         |   |
| <b>CAA</b>    | Combined Area Assessment                                  |
| <b>CAFS</b>   | Compressed Air Foam Systems                               |
| <b>CARP</b>   | Combined Aerial Rescue Pump                               |
| <b>CBRN</b>   | Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear                  |
| <b>CCA</b>    | Civil Contingencies Act                                   |
| <b>CDRP</b>   | Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership                  |
| <b>CERMIG</b> | County Emergency Response to Major Incidents Group        |
| <b>CFA</b>    | Combined Fire Authority                                   |
| <b>CFO</b>    | Chief Fire Officer  |
| <b>CFOA</b>   | Chief Fire Officers Association                           |
| <b>CFRMIS</b> | Community Fire Risk Management System                     |
| <b>CFS</b>    | Community Fire Safety                                     |
| <b>CIMAH</b>  | Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazards              |
| <b>CIPFA</b>  | The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy |
| <b>CLG</b>    | Department for Communities and Local Government           |
| <b>CM</b>     | Crew Manager  |
| <b>COSHH</b>  | Control of Substances Hazardous to Health                 |
| <b>CPA</b>    | Comprehensive Performance Assessment                      |
| <b>CPS</b>    | Chemical Protection Suits                                 |
| <b>CRE</b>    | Commission for Racial Equality                            |
| <b>CRR</b>    | Community Risk Register                                   |
| <b>CS</b>     | Community Safety  |
| <b>CSR</b>    | Current Spending Review                                   |
| <b>CSU</b>    | Command Support Unit                                      |
| <hr/>         |   |
| <b>DC</b>     | District Commander  |
| <b>DCFO</b>   | Deputy Chief Fire Officer                                 |
| <b>DDA</b>    | Disability Discrimination Act                             |
| <b>DIM</b>    | Detection, Identification and Monitoring                  |
| <b>DOF</b>    | Director of Finance                                       |
| <b>DoH</b>    | Department of Health                                      |
| <b>DoT</b>    | Direction of Travel                                       |
| <b>DPA</b>    | Data Protection Act                                       |

## Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>EA</b>       | Environment Agency  |
| <b>EAS</b>      | Electronic Availability System  |
| <b>ECS</b>      | Enhanced Command Support  |
| <b>EIR</b>      | Environmental Information Regulations   |
| <b>EPU</b>      | Environmental Protection Unit   |
| <b>ESLG</b>     | Equality Standard for Local Government  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>FBU</b>      | Fire Brigades Union   |
| <b>FDR</b>      | Fire Damage Report  |
| <b>FDS</b>      | Flexible Duty System  |
| <b>FireLink</b> | The National Project for the introduction of a National Fire Service Radio System |
| <b>FOIA</b>     | Freedom of Information Act  |
| <b>FRA</b>      | Fire and Rescue Authority   |
| <b>FRD</b>      | Fire Resilience Directorate   |
| <b>FRS</b>      | Fire and Rescue Service   |
| <b>FRSNCC</b>   | Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Centre                             |
| <b>FSC</b>      | Fire Service College  |
| <b>FSCA</b>     | Fire Service Consultation Association   |
| <b>FSEC</b>     | Fire Services Emergency Cover   |
| <b>FSNBF</b>    | Fire Service National Benevolent Fund   |
| <b>FSPA</b>     | Fire Service Procurement Association  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>GM</b>       | Group Manager   |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>HAZMAT</b>   | Hazardous Materials   |
| <b>HERMIT</b>   | Herefordshire Emergency Response to Major Incidents Team                          |
| <b>HFSC</b>     | Home Fire Safety Check  |
| <b>HMFSI</b>    | Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate   |
| <b>HMI</b>      | Her Majesty's Inspector or Inspectorate   |
| <b>HPA</b>      | Health Protection Agency  |
| <b>HR</b>       | Human Resources   |
| <b>HRIS</b>     | Human Resources Information System  |
| <b>HSE</b>      | Health & Safety Executive   |
| <b>HWFRS</b>    | Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service                                      |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>ICP</b>      | Integrated Clothing Project   |
| <b>ICS</b>      | Incident Command System   |
| <b>ICT</b>      | Information and Communications Technology   |
| <b>IEG</b>      | Implementing Electronic Government  |
| <b>IIP</b>      | Investors in People   |
| <b>IOSH</b>     | Institute of Occupation Safety and Health   |
| <b>IPDR</b>     | Individual Performance and Development Review                                     |
| <b>IPDS</b>     | Integrated Personal Development System  |
| <b>IRMP</b>     | Integrated Risk Management Plan   |
| <b>IRS</b>      | Incident Recording System   |
| <b>IRU</b>      | Incident Response Unit  |
| <b>ISU</b>      | Incident Support Unit   |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>JERA</b>     | Joint Emergency Response Arrangements   |
| <b>JFS</b>      | Juvenile Fire-setters Scheme  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| <b>KPI</b>      | Key Performance Indicator   |
| <b>KLOE</b>     | Key Lines of Enquiry  |

## Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>LASER</b>  | Learning about Safety by Experiencing Risk                   |
| <b>LEA</b>    | Local Education Authority                                    |
| <b>LFF</b>    | Leading Fire Fighter   |
| <b>LGA</b>    | Local Government Association                                 |
| <b>LGV</b>    | Light Goods Vehicle  |
| <b>LIBID</b>  | London Interbank Bid Rate                                    |
| <b>LPG</b>    | Liquid Petroleum Gas   |
| <b>LPSA</b>   | Local Public Service Agreement                               |
| <b>LRF</b>    | Local Resilience Forum                                       |
| <b>LRI</b>    | Learning Resource International                              |
| <b>LSGCM</b>  | Long Service and Good Conduct Medal                          |
| <b>LSP</b>    | Local Strategic Partnership                                  |
| <b>LTCM</b>   | Long Term Capability Management                              |
| <b>LTF</b>    | Local Training Facilities                                    |
| <b>MDT</b>    | Mobile Data Terminals  |
| <b>MIS</b>    | Management Information Systems                               |
| <b>MISAR</b>  | Mercia Inshore Search and Rescue                             |
| <b>MMFE</b>   | Management of Major Flood Emergencies                        |
| <b>MoU</b>    | Memorandum of Understanding                                  |
| <b>MTFP</b>   | Medium Term Financial Plan                                   |
| <b>NCFSC</b>  | National Community Fire Safety Campaign                      |
| <b>NEBOSH</b> | National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health |
| <b>NEET</b>   | Not in Education, Employment or Training                     |
| <b>NFST</b>   | National Flood Support Team                                  |
| <b>NJC</b>    | National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire Brigades  |
| <b>NOS</b>    | National Occupational Standard                               |
| <b>NVQ</b>    | National Vocational Qualification                            |
| <b>OASD</b>   | Operational Assessment of Service Delivery                   |
| <b>ODPM</b>   | Office of the Deputy Prime Minister                          |
| <b>OJEU</b>   | Official Journal of the European Union                       |
| <b>ORS</b>    | Opinion Research Services                                    |
| <b>PDR</b>    | Personal Development Review                                  |
| <b>PFI</b>    | Private Finance Initiative                                   |
| <b>PI</b>     | Performance Indicator  |
| <b>PMM</b>    | Principal Management Members                                 |
| <b>PMSO</b>   | Project Management Support Office                            |
| <b>PO</b>     | Principal Officer  |
| <b>PPE</b>    | Personal Protective Equipment                                |
| <b>PPP</b>    | Policy, Planning and Performance                             |
| <b>PSA</b>    | Public Service Agreement                                     |
| <b>PSHE</b>   | Personal, Social, Health Education                           |
| <b>PSRP</b>   | Public Services Radio Project                                |
| <b>PWLB</b>   | Public Works Loans Board                                     |
| <b>QSA</b>    | Quality Systems Audit  |

# Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>R2R</b>      | Rank to Role   |
| <b>RB</b>       | Representative Body  |
| <b>RBIP</b>     | Risk Based Inspection Programme                                      |
| <b>RCC</b>      | Regional Control Centre  |
| <b>RCCC</b>     | Regional Civil Contingencies Committee                               |
| <b>RDS</b>      | Retained Duty System   |
| <b>RHSCG</b>    | Regional Health and Safety Collaboration Group                       |
| <b>RIDDOR</b>   | Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation |
| <b>RMB</b>      | Regional Management Board  |
| <b>RoSPA</b>    | Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents                        |
| <b>RPE</b>      | Respiratory Protective Equipment                                     |
| <b>RRF</b>      | Regional Resilience Forum  |
| <b>RRO</b>      | Regulatory Reform Order  |
| <b>RRT</b>      | Regional Resilience Team   |
| <b>RSIG</b>     | Road Safety Implementation Group                                     |
| <b>RTA</b>      | Road Traffic Accident  |
| <b>RTC</b>      | Road Traffic Collision   |
| <b>SAP</b>      | Systems Application and Products                                     |
| <b>SARA</b>     | Severn Area Rescue Association                                       |
| <b>SBE</b>      | Standards Board for England  |
| <b>SCC</b>      | Strategic Command Centre   |
| <b>SCE</b>      | Supported Capital Expenditure  |
| <b>SCG</b>      | Strategic Command Group  |
| <b>SDA</b>      | Service Delivery Agreement   |
| <b>SFSO</b>     | Senior Fire Safety Officer   |
| <b>SFU</b>      | Small Fires Unit   |
| <b>SHA</b>      | Strategic Holding Area   |
| <b>SHEBA</b>    | Safety in the Home and Electric Under Blanket Assessment             |
| <b>SLA</b>      | Service Level Agreement  |
| <b>SM</b>       | Station Manager  |
| <b>SOLACE</b>   | Society of Local Authority Chief Executives                          |
| <b>SoRP</b>     | Statement of Recommended Practice                                    |
| <b>SPI</b>      | Service Policy Instruction   |
| <b>SRT</b>      | Swift Water Rescue Team  |
| <b>SSI</b>      | Special Service Incidents  |
| <b>T&amp;DC</b> | Training and Development Centre                                      |
| <b>UoR</b>      | Use of Resources   |
| <b>USAR</b>     | Urban Search and Rescue  |
| <b>UWFS</b>     | Unwanted Fire Signal   |
| <b>VMDS</b>     | Vehicle Mounted Data System  |
| <b>WAN</b>      | Wide Area Network  |
| <b>WM</b>       | Watch Manager  |
| <b>WMRMB</b>    | West Midlands Regional Management Board                              |
| <b>YFA</b>      | Young Firefighters' Association                                      |