

Corporate Risk Management Summary

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Executive Summary

This report updates Members on the status of risks on the Corporate Risk Register. The new risks were agreed at the Committee meeting in July and updates reflect both July and August status for 2025.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) note the contents of the report,
- b) approve the Leadership and Culture Risk in Appendix A.

3 Background

Corporate Risks are those which present a threat to the achievement of an organisation's strategy. They are high level risks and organisations should seek to mitigate and manage them through the introduction of policies, processes and practices. This ensures that an organisation can manage the risk to the achievement of its strategy in the most proactive way. Early identification and ongoing review of corporate risks are essential to this process.

In 2024 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection identified a Cause of Concern regarding the management of corporate risk within the Service. Following a thorough review of corporate risk, new corporate risks were agreed by Members at the SAP Committee on 10 July 2025. The corporate risks identified present a realistic threat to the delivery of services to local communities as set out in the CRMP and strategic goals for 2025-2028.

This paper provides SAP with an overview of the status of the newly agreed corporate risk since July 2025. The latest updates provided by the end of August 2025.

At the SAP committee on the 10 July 2025 Members asked for an additional corporate risk to be added which focuses on Leadership and Culture. This risk

has been drafted and is set out in Appendix A. Subject to the committee's approval this risk will be added to the Corporate Risk register and reporting on it will commence at the next meeting of the committee.

4 Risk Acceptance and Tolerance Levels

The purpose of risk management is not to eliminate all risk, but simply to reduce the risk to a level that the Authority is prepared to tolerate. This will vary depending on the Authority's current level of 'Risk Appetite' and is defined by the Authority setting its 'Risk Tolerance Level'. This level essentially acts as a target, with any risks higher than this level attracting appropriate effort and resources in an effort to reduce it to below this level. This target therefore acts as a management indicator, with greater levels of monitoring being required for those risks above the level, than for those below it.

In addition to the upper level, it is also appropriate to set a lower-level target, called the 'Risk Acceptance Level'. Any risks assessed as being lower than this level should attract minimal effort and resources. This helps to ensure that resources are not wasted trying to reduce risks unnecessarily.

The Risk Management Brigade Order is currently going through the approval process and reflects the current risk Tolerance and Acceptance levels which are shown in the table below.

Risk Acceptance and Risk Tolerance Levels		Acceptance	Tolerance	Unacceptable		
Impact	Very High	5	10	15	20	25
	High	4	8	12	16	20
	Medium	3	6	9	12	15
	Low	2	4	6	8	10
	Very Low	1	2	3	4	5
		Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Likelihood						

5 Current Position

The new process for corporate risks requires a regular review, monitoring and reporting process. Risks are updated monthly by SMT to identify any changes

in risk status, the associated triggers and control measures. This ensures this information and consideration of the risk is as current as possible.

All risks on the register are assured through the Performance and Risk Group (PRG).

Quarterly reporting into SAP committee enables Members to receive assurance and to actively scrutinise performance. In addition, an annual report containing all entries of the corporate risk register will continue to be reported to the CFA at its annual general meeting

Appendix B is a heatmap representation of corporate risks on the risk matrix which visually depicts the level and severity of risks the Service is managing.

Appendix C is a summary of the Corporate Risk Register with the latest update by the risk owner on their respective risk.

Please note that the corporate risk summaries set out in appendix C provide the committee with the status of the risk through a 'risk rating' and narrative. As officers seek to improve this new process a 'future projection' will also be included to provide the committee with an understanding of forecasted performance of the risk.

Risk status summary

Three of our corporate risks are currently sitting outside of tolerance with risk ratings of 15 or more. These are staff engagement, Digital and Data and Systems Resilience and Cybersecurity risks.

All three of these areas are fundamental to the healthy progression of our CRMP and Service Plan and therefore inherent in the priorities we have set. The HMICFRS inspection process also highlights these as either a Cause of Concern recommendations or Areas for Improvement.

Appendix C provides an overview of actions being taken to both mitigate and manage these risks. However, actions are in the early stages of development and therefore the current risk rating for these risks is likely to remain as is throughout the second quarter of 2025/2026.

Those Amber risks are being managed and are therefore considered to be in tolerance. However, the risks of Finance and Political and Organisational change, contain triggers which are not primarily within the control of the Fire Authority or Service. This contributes to their Amber rating and will require constant review as changes take place at a national and local government level.

6 Conclusions

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and approve the Leadership and Culture Risk in Appendix A.

7 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9 HMICFRS Areas For Improvement, Cause of Concern, External Audit Recommendations

HMICFRS inspection for the Service which took place in 2024, identified the management of corporate risk to be ineffective as part of the Best Use of Resources, Cause of Concern.

The cause of concern identified the need to achieve the following as part of the Service's improvement plan:

'The corporate risk register is actively used to mitigate and manage known risks.'

The implementation of these new corporate risks and a more focused approach to review and assurance of these risks addresses a significant proportion of this cause for concern.

The continued review and management of corporate risks is critical to the delivery of our strategic plans and the successful implementation of this new approach.

There is ongoing evaluation of the process which will conclude at the end of the financial year, as risks are reviewed and evaluated within the review and/or refresh of the CRMP and Service Plan.

10 Community Safety

The effective management of corporate risk will ensure the Service and Authority is able to deliver services effectively to its communities.

11 Appendices

Appendix A – New Corporate Risk Register Entry

Appendix B – Heatmap of Corporate Risks

Appendix C – Summary of Corporate Risk Register Entries

12 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Appendix A - New Corporate Risk Register Entry

Risk Number	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Triggers
CR8	Leadership and Culture	<p>There is a risk that ineffective leadership will damage organisational performance and reputation, thereby impacting on the culture, values and behaviours expected from all staff, as well as the ability for and pace of change.</p> <p>If leadership direction, visibility and actions do not demonstrate the services shared values, beliefs and practices that influence employee behaviour and decision making, this could lead to a poor risk culture, a lack of transparency, reduced trust in leaders and organisational performance.</p> <p>The Service will be less resilient in times of change, and this could result in reduced staff engagement, increased staff turnover, sickness absence and dissatisfaction.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to delivery its services to the public in line with its CRMP.</p>	<p>Lack of clear visible leadership aligned to strategy</p> <p>Leaders do not role model expected behaviours aligned to service values</p> <p>Lack of staff engagement and recognition of staff (aligned to CR 8) affecting</p> <p>Staff wellbeing and or retention is poor</p> <p>A breakdown in effective relationships with trade unions</p> <p>Gaps in the development of staff and leaders</p> <p>Performance is not managed effectively, and decisions lack transparency</p> <p>External scrutiny reflects poorly on leadership and or decision making</p>

Appendix B – Heat Map of Corporate Risks

Risk Acceptance and Risk Tolerance Levels	Acceptance	Tolerance	Unacceptable
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Impact	Very High			CR1 CR7 CR3		
	High			CR5	CR4	
	Medium			CR2 CR6		
	Low					
	Very Low					
		Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High

	Likelihood				

Appendix C to report on
 Corporate Risk Management Summary
 Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
 Standards, Audit and Performance Committee
 30 September 2025

Appendix C - Summary of Corporate Risk Register Entries

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
CR1 - Staff Engagement	<p>There is a risk that low staff engagement and dissatisfaction within the workforce could impact operational effectiveness and service delivery. Changes to terms and conditions, including pay, pensions and shift patterns may lead to discontent, reduced morale and potential industrial action.</p> <p>If communication and engagement strategies are ineffective, staff may feel undervalued, leading to a decline in trust and employee relations between leadership and frontline personnel. This could result in increased absenteeism, lack of progression, higher staff turnover, resistance to change and reduced commitment to organisational objectives.</p> <p>A disengaged workforce may also impact public confidence in the service, effective recruitment</p>	<p>Open and effective staff engagement continues to be a focus as processes are reviewed, new approaches begin to be implemented.</p> <p>Mitigating factors: In June/July the national pay awards were completed. NJC Green book pay was awarded at 3.2% for 25/26, removing risks around dissatisfaction.</p> <p>Review of staff engagement mechanisms is underway:</p> <p>All Staff Engagement Forums began at the end of July as part of a new approach to enabling wider engagement and feedback from all staff.</p> <p>A draft internal engagement strategy will be presented into SMT during 3rd quarter of 2025/2026.</p>	15	Karen Gowreesunker

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
	<p>and retention efforts.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to delivery its services to the public in line with its CRMP and a risk of not complying with Equality and Diversity legislation.</p>	<p>The Industrial relations framework and policy is under review with trade unions fully engaged. The new approach will be agreed and signed off by the Service and Trade Unions. Completion planned for Dec 25.</p> <p>Throughout June and July planning for our Cultural programme began with Future Works. Key outcomes have been defined to ensure focus. Staff workshops to commence from September 25.</p> <p>HR manager roles have now been recruited to support a focus on areas for improvement and the progression of the Culture programme.</p> <p>Capacity issues continue to be experienced with the pensions administrator resulting in delayed annual and remedial statements for pension members. This continues to be managed through monthly contract meetings with the provider and ensuring clear communication to our members.</p> <p>Risk rating: As of August the impact and likelihood assessment remains L3, I5 as many of the above mitigating factors are either still in review or early stages of implementation.</p> <p>Look forward:</p> <p>Grant Thornton value for money audit will seek to gain assurance around 23/24 recommendation 2 which focuses on promoting the right values and culture including senior officers leading by example.</p>		

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
		The progress of the cultural programme and feedback from this will support future mitigation of this risk and the new Leadership and Culture risk.		
CR2 – Political and Organisational Change	<p>There is a risk that political decision, local government reorganisation (LGR), or changes in governance structures could impact the fire service’s strategic direction, funding, and operational effectiveness. Mergers, changes in oversight bodies, or increased diversification of responsibilities (e.g., broader community safety roles) may lead to a dilution of core fire and rescue priorities, creating uncertainty in long-term planning and resource allocation.</p> <p>The loss of funding or shifts in financial priorities could reduce service capacity, impact investment in training and equipment and place additional pressure on operational delivery. If decision-making is influenced by political priorities rather than risk-based assessments, it could result in misaligned strategies, inefficiencies, and a lack of clarity in leadership direction. Additionally, the pace of change – if too rapid or uncoordinated – could create disruption, staff disengagement, and resistance to new structures or ways of working and industrial action.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to deliver its services to the public in line with its CRMP.</p>	<p>At the Fire Authority meeting on 23 July 2025, it was agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase FRA membership from 15 to 17. • Establish a new Scrutiny and Performance Committee. • These changes will be implemented from 1 October 2025, with a review planned as part of the Governance work plan. <p>A letter from the Minister regarding the Devolution Priority Programme was shared with SMT.</p> <p>The Fairer Funding consultation has been completed and aligned with the national response. While there are no immediate impacts, the risk of a reduction in future funding remains for 2026/2027 onwards and therefore this will remain under review.</p> <p>Risk rating: No changes have been made to the risk factors or treatment, as current updates reflect newly embedded activity that will be reviewed during the sustain period.</p> <p>Look forward Fair funding consultation- The Service are awaiting announcements regarding fair funding whereby it is anticipated funding is to be reduced. This will have a detrimental impact on funding and has potential to impact upon delivery of Services. To raise awareness Officers are</p>	9	Simon Hardiman

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
		<p>lobbying MPs to challenge these potential reductions that could impact upon local communities.</p> <p>Following a review of existing Governance arrangements, which will be implemented from 1st October 2025 there will be the addition of 2 new Fire Authority Members.</p>		
CR3 – Cyber Security Threats and System Resilience	<p>There is a risk that a cyber-attack, system failure, or data breach could compromise the fire service's ability to respond effectively to emergencies, protect sensitive information and ensure firefighter and public safety.</p> <p>A loss of access to critical IT systems – such as emergency dispatch, command and control, and mobile data terminals – could delay response times, disrupt incident coordination, and put lives at risk.</p> <p>A data breach could expose personal, operational or confidential information, leading to reputational damage, regulatory penalties, and loss of public trust. If systems are not adequately protected, malicious actors may exploit vulnerabilities, resulting in operational paralysis and increased financial costs for recovery.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to deliver its services to the public in line with its CRMP.</p>	<p>Mitigations in place and developing with added area of risk around ICT team resilience.</p> <p>An ICT health check across command-and-control system to enable recertification of PSN Code of Connection has been undertaken. Due to remedial actions required and the resolution of critical and high actions, a further 6-month extension with monthly reporting into Home Office. This has mitigated the risk of loss of connection. It is anticipated with ongoing progress a full 12 month re certification will be provided in November 2025.</p> <p>A further ICT system health check is due this financial year and will be undertaken in line with the introduction of testing for the Services new C&C system.</p> <p>System security is currently being managed and mitigated across the Services website, prior to the implementation of a new website commencing in October 2025.</p> <p>A programme of training and exercising for all staff continues focused on cybersecurity. Recent analytics from this training highlight a lack of engagement in training following awareness exercises.</p> <p>The Information Security policy as another control measure is being finalised to enter the policy consultation process.</p>	15	Karen Gowreesunker

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
		<p>The resilience of capacity and skills within ICT to support this risk is being reviewed and initial plans in place to mitigate risks, with a focus on recruitment and upskilling and development of staff within the ICT team.</p> <p>Risk Rating: The likelihood and impact of this risk remains the same as the June assessment due to actions still taking place and resilience within the ICT team.</p> <p>Look Forward: a focus on the wider undertaking of cyber security awareness and training through focused communications and line management.</p>		
CR4 – Data and Digital Capability	<p>There is a risk that inadequate access to accurate, timely, and well-managed data could impact strategic decision-making, operational effectiveness, and compliance with data protection regulations. Without the right data, the fire service may struggle to assess risk accurately, allocate resources efficiently, and drive evidence based decision-making. A lack of investment in modern digital systems and data analytics tools may hinder innovation, slow response times, and reduce overall service effectiveness.</p> <p>Additionally, if the workforce lacks the necessary digital skills or capacity to manage and interpret data effectively, this could lead to inefficiencies, poor decision-making, and missed opportunities for service improvement. The rapid pace of technology change, coupled with evolving regulatory requirements such as GDPR, presents further challenges in ensuring data security, system integration, and ongoing compliance. Failure to address these issues</p>	<p>A Digital Strategy has been agreed (July SMT) for the Service which provides direction for the next three years in how the Service will build, deliver and manage digital services for staff, public and partners.</p> <p>Service understanding and HMICFRS outcomes have highlighted that data accuracy and effective reporting requires significant improvement and is a dependency across other areas. To support our progression external support commences in October 2025 via a contracted provider to evaluate current status and gaps in relation to data, data governance and confidence. The outputs from this work will support the formation of a data strategy, as well as progress priority data dashboard and analytics work. This will also provide an understanding for the Service in the level of investment required to achieve our Strategy and support how we address our HMICFRS outcomes confidently. This work is expected to take approximately 5 days to complete.</p> <p>Risk rating: The impact and risk rating remains at L4 I4 and it is anticipated this will remain the scoring at least up to December 2025. The direction of travel in building our digital and particularly data capability is positive, however this</p>	16	Karen Gowreesunker

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
	<p>could result in optional disruptions, financial losses, reputational damage and risks to firefighter and public safety.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to delivery its services to the public in line with its CRMP.</p>	<p>update provides some of the foundational elements to development in this area and as such will need to be completed and understood.</p> <p>Look forward: A Head of Digital and Data has been recruited and begins on the 1st September 2025. The recruitment of other roles within ICT will recommence once this role is in place.</p>		
CR5 - Finance	<p>There is a risk that the fire service may face challenges in delivering a cost-effective, high quality service to the community due to financial pressures, resource constraints, and increasing demand. Ensuring value for money requires efficient use of personnel, equipment, and funding while maintaining high operational standards and public safety. Budget reductions, rising costs and the need to invest in new technologies and infrastructure may create financial strain, leading to difficult decisions around service provision.</p> <p>Inefficiencies in resource allocation, procurement, or workforce management could result in wasted expenditure, reduced service capacity, or failure to meet public expectation. If financial and operational planning is not effectively aligned, there is a risk that strategic priorities may be compromised, impacting emergency response times, firefighter safety and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>This could result in an inability for the Fire Authority to delivery its services to the public in line with its CRMP.</p>	<p>Fair Funding Review is being consulted upon which will determine the funding share to the Fire sector and settlements for individual authorities. There is a risk that implementation of current Fair Funding review proposals will lead to a reduced overall control total awarded to FRSs, and a lower individual settlement for this Service following updates to the Fire Formula. This may impact the achievement of the Service's goals and objectives</p> <p>There has been a significant lack of capacity and knowledge within the Service with regarding to procurement. Support is being provided via Telford Council and another Fire Service in the region. To build a more sustainable approach plans are currently in place to appoint a permanent procurement officer, as well as engage contracted support via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)</p> <p>Risk rating: this rating has remained at 12 due to the current uncertainty around funding for future years.</p> <p>Look forward: Interim procurement role will commence in Service during September, prior to a permanent recruitment process commencing.</p> <p>Support provided via the OPCC will commence in early September.</p>	12	Joanne Coadey

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
CR6 - Environment	<p>There is a risk that the fire service may face barriers in achieving its goal to reduce its carbon footprint and overall environmental impact. Transitioning to more sustainable operations requires investment in green technologies, infrastructure upgrades and changes to fleet, equipment, and working practices. Constraints such as budget limitations, supply chain challenges, and regulatory complexities may slow progress. Additionally, balancing sustainable goals with operational effectiveness – such as ensuring electric or alternative-fuel fire appliances meet emergency response requirements-presents logistical and technical challenges.</p> <p>Failure to meet environmental targets could lead to reputational damage, missed government sustainability commitments, increased operational costs due to inefficient resource use, and potential non-compliance with environment regulations. The pace of change in green technologies may also create challenges in procurement, workforce adaptation, and interoperability with existing infrastructure.</p>	<p>With the appointment of the new Head of Resources starting on 1st September, a review of the Fleet Strategy and the development of a new Estates Strategy will commence. Both strategies will be aligned with the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to ensure that resource planning supports long-term operational needs and risk reduction priorities. This work is critical to mitigating future infrastructure and asset-related risks and ensuring that strategic decisions are informed, sustainable, and aligned to organisational objectives.</p> <p>Risk rating: remains at 9.</p>	9	Sam Burton
CR7 – Health and Safety	The Fire Authority fails to meet statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Environment Act 1995, and Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, due to gaps in policy implementation, ineffective governance, or a weak assurance framework.	The Service has taken significant steps to address longstanding health and safety concerns and a revised strategy is now in place, supported by a £100,000 funding package to deliver the contaminants programme. This includes enhancements to decontamination infrastructure, clean cab protocols, and operational hygiene standards.	15	Mark Price

Corporate Risk	Risk Descriptor	June – August Status	Risk Rating	Owner
	<p>This could lead to criminal prosecution, civil litigation, regulatory enforcement, and reputational damage.</p> <p>There is a risk of significant physical harm to staff, contractors, or members of the public arising from systemic weaknesses in the design, management, or oversight of safe working practices, training environments, or operational response. This includes the cumulative impact of inadequate infrastructure, exposure to hazardous environments, or failure to maintain a strong safety culture across the organisation.</p>	<p>While strategic direction and leadership commitment are evident, consistent delivery across the Service is still developing. Training remains variable across roles, and investigation processes require standardisation to support consistent learning.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Manager role is currently being advertised which will support additional capacity to address gaps.</p> <p>The Contaminants Board has convened and will report to the Health and Safety Committee on a regular basis.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Committee met on 6 August and agreed a revised Terms of Reference to support decision-making and ensure legal compliance.</p> <p>Risk rating: This risk remains at L3 I5 as work is developing and being implemented to manage this risk. The impact of this risk will always be set a 5 (Very High) to the potential impact of the risk should it be realised.</p> <p>Forward look: The health and safety role is anticipated to be recruited into in September.</p>		