

## Committee Membership and Constitution

### Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Sharon Lloyd, Corporate Support Manager, on 01743 260210.

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report asks the Fire Authority to confirm appointments to committees and to the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission and to review the constitution of its committees.

### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Consider and decide upon the appointment of Members to serve on committees, as set out in Appendix A;
- b) Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to approve changes to committee membership, proposed by the appropriate Political Group Leader;
- c) Appoint its representative on the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission; and
- d) Review and agree the proposed amendments to the constitution of its various committees, as set out in Appendix B.

### 3 Background

In accordance with the Fire Authority's Standing Order 7(2) for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business, the Fire Authority is required at least annually to review the constitution and composition of any committees or sub-committees, which it has appointed.

### 4 Membership of Committees

Members will already have reviewed and decided upon the allocation of seats on committees to political groups at item 10a on the agenda for this meeting.

The Fire Authority is now asked to agree the appointment of named Members to serve on its committees. Appendix A sets out the current membership and any additions or reductions (in bold italics), which will be required to be made by the political groups in light of decisions made at item 10a on the agenda for this meeting. Each group may, of course, propose further changes in addition to those required. Vacancies in Labour Group membership have arisen, because Councillor Picken is no longer a Member of the Fire Authority. The Labour Group Leader has proposed that these are filled by Councillor Austin, who has replaced Councillor Picken on the Authority.

After Shropshire Council's meeting on 17 July it will also be known who the new Member to the Fire Authority will be. In light of this the Fire Authority is asked to decide, on which committees that Councillor should sit. This will be dependent upon the Council's decision and would need to be revisited, if it does not tie in with the allocation referred to above.

If the Fire Authority agrees the recommendations in report 10a relating to the allocation of seats to political groups to take effect from 17 July, membership of the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel will increase from 6 to 7 from that date.

## **5 Delegation to Monitoring Officer**

From time to time, for instance when a Member leaves the Fire Authority and a new one joins, it is necessary for changes to be made to committee membership. At last year's Annual Meeting authority was delegated to the Monitoring Officer to approve changes to committee membership, proposed during the year by the appropriate Political Group Leader. This enables changes to be made quickly without the need to refer them to the Fire Authority for ratification. Members are asked to decide whether they wish this to become a permanent delegation, rather than having to agree the delegation each year.

## **6 Local Government Association Fire Services Commission**

Each year the Fire Authority appoints its representative on the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission, which has historically been the Chair of the Authority. Members are asked to consider whether this arrangement should continue and appoint its representative accordingly.

## **7 Committee Terms of Reference**

The current terms of reference for all committees and the Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group (StRaP) are set out at Appendix B to this report, with proposed additions shown in bold italics and proposed deletions struck through. Details of the more significant amendments recommended are given below.

### **Standards and Human Resources Committee**

At its December 2013 the Fire Authority agreed to the merger of the Standards and Human Resources Committees and also the terms of reference for the merged Committee, to take effect from 1 April 2014.

Two amendments to the terms of reference are proposed relating to Role Descriptions.

### **Audit and Performance Management Committee**

In June the Audit and Performance Management Committee agreed new wording and a different layout for its terms of reference, for recommendation to the Fire Authority. This would bring them into line with the latest guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), 'Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (2013)'. New sub-headings mirror, to some extent, the CIPFA guidance and also show more clearly the various areas covered by the Committee. To avoid confusing mark-up changes in format and order of wording have not been shown.

### **Strategy and Resources Committee**

The Strategy and Resources Committee reviewed its terms of reference in June and recommended the deletion of three responsibilities, relating to financial management and the Annual Statement of Assurance, which fall under the remit of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, and submission of an annual report to the Fire Authority. Two additions are proposed, the first relating to risk management and the second to enable the Committee to agree any amendments to the Role Description of the Chair of the Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group. The Group itself cannot carry out this responsibility, as being a Working Group, it has no delegated powers.

### **Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group**

One amendment is proposed: to formalise the ability of the Group to report direct to the Fire Authority.

At item 10a the Fire Authority will already have decided whether it wishes to stipulate formally that the Chair of Strategy and Resources should sit on the Group. This decision will need to be reflected in the Group's terms of reference.

### **Pensions Panel**

No amendments are proposed.

### **Brigade Managers' Employment Panel**

No amendments are proposed.

## **8 Financial Implications**

There are no material direct costs arising out of the recommendations of this report, although many decisions of committees will impact on budgets and need financial approval.

## **9 Legal Comment**

Under its Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business the Fire Authority is required at least annually:

- To consider the constitution of its committees and sub-committees and their membership (Standing Order 6.3); and
- To review the constitution and composition of any committees or sub-committees which have been appointed (Standing Order 7.2).

## **10 Initial Impact Assessment**

An Initial Impact Assessment has been completed.

## **11 Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

Membership of Committees

### **Appendix B**

Constitution of Committees

## **12 Background Papers**

### **Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority**

Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business

