

IRMP 2 Fire Control Review Project

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact John Redmond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Area Manager Kevin Faulkner on 01743 260182.

1 Purpose of Report

To advise Members on the progress made in relation to the Fire Control Review Project, including the outcomes from consultation on potential changes to the Fire Control Duty System, and to seek approval to progress changes, as recommended by the StraP Working Group.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Support the recommendation that a new duty system for Fire Control staff be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:
 - a Self-Rostering duty system
 - locally managed rostering¹
 - keeping the current start and finish times of 0800-1800 and 1800-0800
 - annualised hours (as described in Section 4);
- b) Recognise the consultation that has taken place and direct officers to negotiate with Representative Bodies as required to implement the changes;
- c) Note the introduction of new internal work-streams into Fire Control, which are aimed at enhancing service delivery and firefighter safety, as well as improving the efficiency of this important function; and
- d) Note that the Service will continue to monitor and identify opportunities for commercial income generation through Fire Control.
- e) Delegate responsibility to the Strategic Planning Working Group (StraP) to monitor the implementation of these recommendations and report progress back to the Fire Authority at its October 2016 meeting; and

¹ Locally managed – this would give maximum flexibility and responsibility to staff, however, should this fail to deliver the desired staffing, then the centrally managed option would be the fall-back position

- f) Direct officers to monitor and evaluate all collaborative opportunities regionally and sub-regionally, and any other opportunities that may arise.

3 Background

Having undertaken extensive consultation on a proposal to consider merging the Service's Fire Control function with that of another Service, in October 2014 the Fire Authority agreed that, rather than potentially losing Fire Control from within Shropshire's borders, the Service should:

1. Suspend the existing merger proposals and undertake a Fire Control Review Project, which should identify alternative options for improving the cost-effectiveness of the Fire Control function by up to £300k per annum and report back to the Fire Authority with possible options within 12 months of starting the review; and
2. Maintain its current watching brief on all collaborative opportunities and those that may arise in the future.

This requirement was then included in the Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2015 to 2020, with a review phase commenced in April 2015.

The review has been broken into three stages:

Phase 1

Analysis of the Fire Control function with regard to the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing duty system and research to identify alternative duty systems, which can offer cost savings, improved productivity, improved resilience and, where possible, improved staff welfare

Phase 2

Measurement of the level of spare capacity within Fire Control and identification of how this capacity can be used to support the internal development and improvement of the Service, focusing in particular around operational support and firefighter safety; and

Phase 3

Investigate possible commercial opportunities that could generate an income for the Service

4 Phase 1 – Improving the efficiency of the Fire Control Duty System

The starting point for the review was to identify the precise needs of the Service alongside the key requirements of any new work pattern from a staff perspective (as defined by staff). These are shown in Tables 1 and 2 overleaf.

Table 1 – Key objectives of the Service
<i>Required Outcomes</i>
Meets the needs of the IRMP
Optimum staffing
Resilience
Firefighter Safety
Flexibility to meet demands
Sustainability / Affordability
Improving efficiency by up to £300k
Table 2 – Key Staff Requirements
<i>Essential</i>
No compulsory job losses
Family Friendly
Appropriate work/life balance
Maintain current salary
<i>Desirable</i>
Something simple, easy to follow and understand
Variable levels of flexibility to suit individual needs
We want people to recognise our value to the Service

Within the Service’s existing Operational Model, it is a primary requirement to have 3 control staff on duty at all times with at least 2 present in the Fire Control Room maintaining a wakeful watch at all times. This model is crewed with 4 watches of 4 staff working a shift system as follows:

- 2 Days (0800hrs to 1800hrs)
- 2 Nights (1800hrs to 0800hrs)
- 4 Days off

This is a nationally recognised duty system, as described within the Scheme of Conditions of Service for Firefighters (Section 4, Part A – Hours of Duty & Duty systems).

Taking leave into account, this should provide an additional 232 shifts per year but the actual experience in Shropshire is that the Service suffers a deficit of 158 shifts per annum and incurs significant understaffing and overtime costs, which averages out at £35,402 per annum, as a consequence.

This situation is primarily due to a level of absence from duty from sickness that is well above the industry “norm”, with an average absence per staff member of 15 days per year. This realisation meant that any change in duty system should aim primarily to minimise the impact of high levels of absence and improve resilience, before it can yield any actual cost savings through staff reductions.

The Project Board carried out extensive research into alternative duty systems, which could be operated within Fire Control, with a view to optimising the availability of the current number of staff. This was done in conjunction with departmental Champions, made up of volunteers from Fire Control.

Following the initial research, more in-depth investigation of the following duty systems was carried out:

- Option 1 - Three Shift System (3 x 8 hours 'Metropolitan')
- Option 2 – Self-Rostering Shift System
- Option 3 - Four Watch Flexible Roster Shift System
- Option 4 - Five Watch (Cambridge) Shift System

The relative advantages and disadvantages of each of these systems is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3 Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Duty system	Outline	Advantages	Disadvantages
3 Shift System – 3 x 8 hrs (Metropolitan)	Uses 4 Watches and three, eight-hour shifts: two early shifts, two mid shifts and two night shifts, then two days off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to reduce staff numbers by 8 • Same high level of service to the public despite reduction in operational posts • Potential to reduce spend on overtime • Optimum crewing can be achieved • Increased productivity • Health benefits from reduced shift duration • Compliant with Working Time Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires 50% more attendances at work • Increased travel costs • Less weekends off • Not compliant with Grey Book • Less family friendly
Self-Rostering	Within certain criteria, the hours a firefighter works will be primarily managed through local discussions with work colleagues, rather than a centrally imposed rigid system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family friendly • Potential to reduce staff numbers by 8 • Same high level of service to the public despite reduction in operational posts • Potential to reduce spend on overtime • Optimum crewing can be achieved • Flexibility • Organisational resilience • Compliant with Working Time Directive • Compliant with Grey Book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT solution required to fairly manage shift allocation • Significant changes to policies and procedures • Loss of Watch based system which concerns staff
4 Watch Optimum Crewing Shift System (Flexible Rostering)	Based around the existing 2-2-4 rota pattern, but with the addition of rostered off duty shifts, which means continually operating with optimum crewing numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family friendly • Potential to reduce staff numbers by 12 • Same high level of service to the public despite reduction in operational posts • Potential to reduce spend on overtime • Optimum crewing can be achieved • Organisational resilience • Maintains continuity for Watch based training / management • Allows the Service to maintain a large number of its existing policies • Compliant with Working Time Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of staff availability will create additional responsibility • No opportunity for short term compensatory leave

Duty system	Outline	Advantages	Disadvantages
5 Watch Shift System	Uses an annualised hours calculation to operate a ten-week cycle of a mix of the 2-2-4 rota pattern (7 tours) followed by 2 weeks of 8.4 hour-day duties (and four off duty shifts - weekends). All leave and training courses would be taken with the 2 weeks of day-duty periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to reduce staff numbers by 16 • Same high level of service to the public despite reduction in operational posts • Potential to reduce spend on overtime • Optimum crewing can be achieved • Organisational resilience • Maintains continuity for Watch based training / management • Compliant with Working Time Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of staff availability will create additional responsibility • Fixed leave is restrictive for staff • Some leave periods do not include time off during school holidays • Cambridgeshire FRS experience issues with industrial relations due to the way this was implemented

Each of these alternatives has the potential to provide the Service with greater resilience within Fire Control and could also result in a significant saving from the current overtime budget. The Service was, therefore, keen to consult with all Fire Control staff, to ascertain their views on the options for change.

Consultation Process

An online survey tool was used as the method of consultation. Prior to the start of the consultation period, the Project Board visited the four Watches in Fire Control and gave a presentation on the various options to be explored, offering staff the opportunity to seek clarification on how each duty system could work. They were also provided with a document, which detailed each shift option, as well as a copy of the questions contained within the online survey, to enable them to give considerable thought to the responses they wished to give.

The online survey was open to staff for a period of 8 weeks, closing on 31 January 2016. 15 of the 17 Fire Control staff (88%) completed the survey.

Survey Results

This section summarises the statistical results that came from the survey. Staff were also given the opportunity to provide written comment on each of the duty systems. All of their responses are provided in the appendix to this report.

Preferred Shift Pattern - Fire Control staff were asked to rate each of the alternative shift options in order of their preference.

Shift Name	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice	3 rd Choice	4 th Choice
3 x 8hr	0	0	4 (27%)	11 (73%)
Self-Rostering	3 (20%)	12 (80%)	0	0
4 Watch Flexible Rostering	12 (80%)	2 (13%)	1 (7%)	0
5 Watch (Cambridge Model)	0	1 (7%)	10 (67%)	4 (27%)

This shows that:

- The Four Watch Flexible Rostering Shift System is most preferred
- The Self-Rostering Shift System was ranked second

Local or Central Management - A number of the shift patterns include flexible rostering, which would require monitoring to ensure it was implemented fairly. Staff were asked if they would prefer this to be centrally managed (by the Service) or locally managed (by their managers). The results below show that staff would prefer a locally-managed roster.

	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice
Locally	10 (71%)	4 (29%)
Centrally Managed	4 (29%)	10 (71%)

Shift Duration - With the current day and night shifts being of unequal length (10 hour days and 14 hour nights), if this was not taken into account, then some unfairness could result from any system based on flexible rostering. To overcome this, a system involving either 2 x 12 hour shifts or annualised hours (where the hours worked are monitored rather than simply the number of shifts) could be introduced. Fire Control staff were asked to rate their preference on these two options.

	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice
2 x 12hr	9 (64%)	5 (36%)
Annualised Hours	5 (36%)	9 (64%)

If either of these options had to be introduced, their preference would be the 12- hour shifts option.

Start and Finish Times - If 12-hour shifts were to be introduced, staff were asked to rate, in order of preference, their preferred start and finish times. The 0700–1900 option was the most favoured.

Start-Finish	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice	3 rd Choice	4 th Choice	5 th Choice
0600 - 1800	6 (43%)	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	2 (14%)	0
0700 - 1900	6 (43%)	7 (50%)	1 (7%)	0	0
0800 - 2000	1 (7%)	3 (21%)	7 (50%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)
0900 - 2100	1 (7%)	0	2 (14%)	10 (71%)	1 (7%)
1000 - 2200	0	0	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	11 (79%)

In summary, if the Service were to adopt a new duty system, simply based on the statistical outcomes from the survey, the preferred shift pattern would appear to be:

- **4 Watch Flexible Rostering**
- **Locally managed flexibility**
- **2 x 12 Hour Shifts**
- **0700 – 1900**

However, simply looking at the numbers does not provide a full picture of what staff think. The tables below summarise the comments made by staff, specifically when asked about the two most statistically preferred duty systems, as well as the more general comments made during the whole survey.

Staff comments in relation to the 'Self Rostering Duty System'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 hour night shifts will allow more time with family life. There is more time in-between nights before being back in on shift • This option would be much more attractive if the 10 hour days and 14 hour nights remained • Any 12 hour day will impact on family life. At present staff can be home at a reasonable time to spend the evening as they wish. If 12 hour shifts were introduced there would be no family time after days. I feel the fact that over 35% of Control staff are working mothers has been overlooked when deciding on alternative shift patterns • I feel this would be very difficult to manage without a reliable IT product to distribute and manage the shifts • I feel this shift pattern is the best option providing we could retain 10 hour days and 14 hour nights. The benefits of a shorter night make very little difference if staff work between midnight and 0600, however the disadvantages of a longer day have much more of a negative impact. The new exchange of duty trial which is currently underway on the operational watches accepts that a shift is a shift regardless of whether it is a 9 hour day or 15 hour night. Therefore I feel there is no need to change to 12 hours shifts
Staff comments in relation to the '4 Watch Optimum Crewing Duty System'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In comparison to the other suggestions this is the easiest option to manage with the consistency of keeping the Watches and the management structure within a Watch • 12 hour shifts do not suit most, if not all, of the current Control staff. 12 hour nights may be 2 hours shorter but this is not enough to make a difference to staff. 12 hour days will make a long day much longer • Potentially, the main disadvantage is the proposed change to the current 10 hour day shift and 14 hour night shift, as this will detract from the family friendly / carer friendly element of the system • Changes to start and finish times will also cause difficulties for staff with school and nursery age children and for the expectation of family friendly working conditions
General comments made throughout the survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have ranked the four proposals but only in terms of least advantageous to most disadvantageous. I would rather the terms 'preference' and 'favoured' were not applied • Firstly, the order in which I placed the answers to Question 1 is only because I could not skip the question • I feel this questionnaire does not reflect my true answers as I have been made to pick a preferred options, however I would prefer the shift pattern to stay the same

- None of the start and finish times are favourable. This is due to them being 12 hour shifts. I did not feel comfortable with Questions 1, 10, 11 and 12 as there was no opportunity to make comments, and I was unable to proceed and submit the survey unless I answered all the questions. The words 'favoured' and 'preference' obviously indicate that you prefer one more than another – when in fact you may not favour either. In my opinion, the answers to these questions should not be included in the overall outcome as it would not give a true reflection on staff opinion, due to staff having no option but to rank them

Taking the issues raised in these comments into account, the Project Board believes that the survey results actually show that, if a change had to be implemented, then the staff preferred duty system would be:

- **4 Watch Flexible Rostering**
- **locally managed rostering**
- **on a shift for shift basis**
- **keeping the current start and finish times - 0800-1800 & 1800-0800 (10/14)**

FBU Response

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) provided a response to the IRMP Action Plans and 20:20. This comprehensive response covered various items, including views on national issues, specifically the Fire and Rescue Service move from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office and Police and Crime Commissioners.

On local matters the FBU commented on the Service's IRMP Projects 1, 2 and 3. The full response is set out in paper 11C on the agenda for this meeting. The FBU made several recommendations in relation to IRMP 2 Fire Control Review, which are detailed below with a response from the Project Board.

Recommendation

Recruit more RDS Firefighters to the Emergency Fire Control Room.

The Service is committed to recruiting more on-call Fire Control Operators and has recently offered contracts to two additional personnel.

Recommendation

Develop the Flexible Shift Exchange System and encourage further its use with greater numbers of personnel. Delay introduction of shift changes until this system has been fully appraised.

The Flexible Shift Exchange System is a voluntary scheme, not currently open to Fire Control. The success of this Scheme is pleasing, however not all staff have signed up to it. It is, therefore, necessary for the Service to introduce a managed system to ensure its effectiveness.

Recommendation

Remove the 12 hour proposal from each option. Seek a collective agreement with the FBU on maintaining the present start and finish times.

The recommendation within this report acknowledges the strength of feeling of staff and the FBU and recommends a change, which removes the need to introduce the 12-hour proposal, and maintains the existing start and finish times.

Recommendation

Negotiate with the FBU to introduce an incentive mechanism for staff who make themselves available for short notice recall to duty.

A recommendation of this report is to direct officers to negotiate with Representative Bodies as required to implement the changes. This recommendation from the FBU will be considered within the negotiation.

Recommended Working Pattern

Members of the StraP Working Group considered the consultation results along with the FBU response and discussed the issues raised with the Project Board.

They noted that, whilst the Service is keen to ensure that any change to the current duty system is consistent with the needs and desires of those staff that have to work it (as outlined in Table 2), it is also conscious that the objective set by the Fire Authority, to improve the efficiency of Fire Control by approximately 50%, is a significant challenge.

To achieve this, and thereby demonstrate the clear benefit of the Service's holding onto its own Fire Control function, when many Services are combining theirs with others, will require a fundamental change to the way that the function currently operates.

As stated earlier, the first challenge in Control is to develop a way of working that mitigates against the current very high level of absence and improves the ability of the current staff numbers to maintain a resilient function. This requires maximum flexibility and the ability for staff to take responsibility for ensuring numbers do not fall below acceptable levels.

Whilst providing a resilient function is one of the key objectives set for this project (see Table 1), improving efficiency is also important. The StraP Working Group agrees that to obtain greatest efficiency out of such a relatively small number of staff, they need to operate as a single team; constantly improving what they do by learning from each other and sharing best practice.

The StraP Working Group agrees that this is not best achieved by splitting such a small number of staff into even smaller, separate, groups (Watches). Indeed, comments made by staff in response to the consultation indicate that the four watches are not currently operating as harmoniously as should be possible from such a relatively small number of individuals.

Consultation responses
Require a greater emphasis on team work (if people unable to pull together get rid). Under performing staff could benefit from working with more competent staff. Under weaknesses (number 5) I disagree with this statement as morale and performance can be damaged or hidden if working with the same watch for a period of years
Would require greater cohesiveness between staff
This system would cause resentment amongst staff as there will always be persons who would act selfishly when rostering shifts. It would affect morale.
This system requires ALL staff to be flexible and prepared to do their fair share.
This system needs to be managed by someone not associated with Fire control as there are too many selfish people in there who would try and manipulate the rota to their own advantage leaving others with all the so called bad shifts
This would need to be closely managed to ensure all staff were treated fairly.
I do not believe that this would be done fairly.
It will need to have robust guidelines and management in place to prevent abuse of the system and some staff members having advantages over others.
An IT solution will be required to calculate and fairly distribute shifts requested by staff.

The StraP Working Group recognises that a duty system, which brings all 17 staff together, as a single team, would be most suited to the achievement of the project's overall aim of improving effectiveness and efficiency and would still meet the staff essential and desirable requirements (as stated in Table 2). This would favour a duty system based on self-rostering, where all staff form a single team that works together to ensure Fire Control is staffed 24 / 7 / 365.

To that end, the StraP Working Group is pleased to see that the self-rostering duty system was not amongst the staff least favoured option, coming in as a strong second preference.

Two equal shifts of 12 hours would appear to support greatest flexibility, but having taken into account the strength of feeling expressed towards keeping the current start and finish times. The Service recognises that, due to Fire Control night shifts being a wakeful watch, a proposal to exchange a 10-hour day shift for a 14-hour night shift would be inappropriate. The StraP Working Group supports the view that the following duty system is most likely to achieve the maximum benefits available to the Service, whilst also meeting the majority of staff concerns about any change:

- **Self-Rostering duty system**
- **locally managed rostering**
- **annualised hours**
- **keeping the current start and finish times - 0800-1800 and 1800-0800 (10/14)**

It is recognised there will be some points of negotiation such as notice periods and ability to accrue and take “time off in lieu”. It is also recognised that leave has already been allocated for 2016. Therefore, it is recommended that a collective agreement is achieved on the points of negotiation. Implementation of any new shift pattern would take place on 1 January 2017, unless an agreement is achieved between the Service and Representative Bodies to do it earlier.

Members of StraP Working Group wished to thank staff for their positive engagement throughout the process, which has helped in the development of staff needs and contributed to the outcomes of the project.

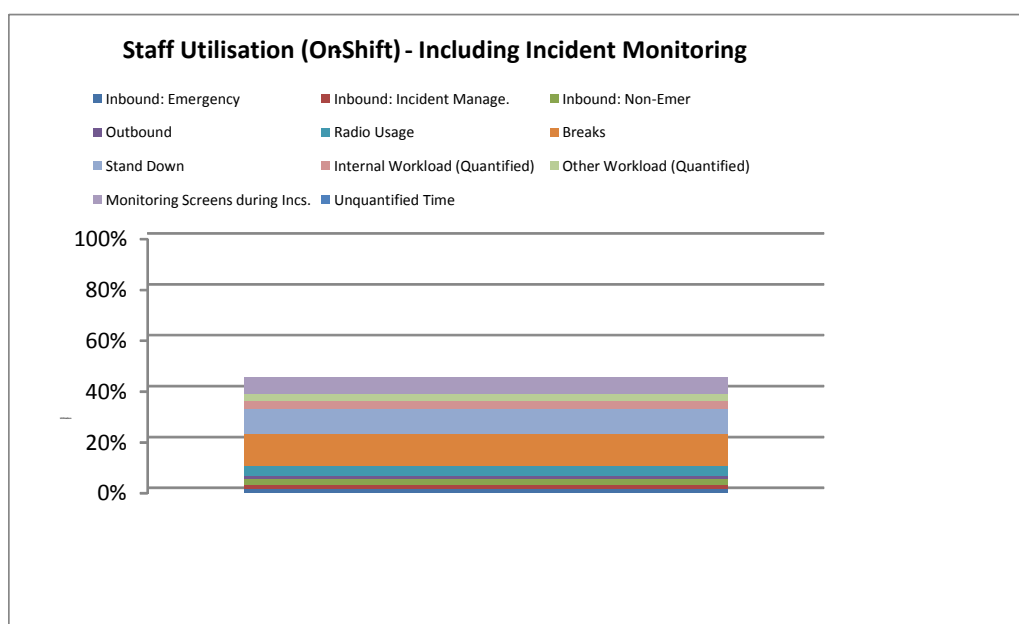
Having discussed this matter at length, the StraP Working Group agreed to put this recommendation to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 3 May 2016.

5 Phase 2

The Service employed Process Evolution, a specialist consultancy, experienced in ‘Value Stream Analysis’, to look at the work carried out in Fire Control and to develop a baseline on its current performance and the corresponding workload involved in its delivery. This involved defining a framework for analysing each process and then overlaying data captured from operational systems in order to quantify the frequency and resource requirements of each process.

Their analysis showed that the level of quantifiable workload in Fire Control is 44% of current capacity, but they also highlighted that there is also likely to be some unquantifiable work, which is not captured within the data systems.

The graph below shows how this quantifiable workload is broken down.



The main findings from Process Evolution's analysis were:

- Approximately 16.4% (6,800) of all calls received by Fire Control are emergency calls;
- Approximately 37,000 non-emergency calls were received by Fire Control, with 11,500 being made, in the last year;
- 53.7% of the time there have been no mobilised incidents in progress in Shropshire over the last year;
- 10.6% of the time there are 2 or more incidents in progress simultaneously;
- Emergency calls peak in the early evening, with the troughs occurring overnight;
- Non-emergency calls demand peak during the mornings and early evenings but drop to very low levels overnight.

As a result of these findings the Project Board set about identifying opportunities for additional or new work-streams that could be introduced into Fire Control to fill some of the 'spare capacity', thereby improving its value to the Service as a whole and its efficiency. This was undertaken through a Working Group, including representatives from all departments within the Service and Fire Control staff. In considering any particular work-stream, the Working Group ensured that it would be relevant to the particular specialist skills that Fire Control staff have and would improve support to frontline firefighters and operational safety. The list below shows some of the areas identified by the Working Group:

- Writing and updating incident procedures
- Provision of Operational Risk Information System (PORIS)
- Writing and updating Contingency Plans
- Producing reports from the Incident Reporting System (IRS)
- Operational 'news flashes' / bulletins
- National Resilience notifications

A Fire Control Champion's Group has already made some progress towards moving these processes across to Control in a way that ensures the greatest value to the Service and the following additional areas of work have already been integrated into Fire Control:

- Lone working monitoring
- Provision of incident related data to local authorities for re-housing purposes

The StraP Working Group is aware of the proposed changes to the Telford Central Fire Station site, including the full integration of Fire Control with the Operations Department, and recognised that this would in time further support the cultural changes in Control.

6 Phase 3

Phase 3 has involved exploring the possibility of using some of the 'spare capacity' in Fire Control to undertake commercial activities.

Fire Control already offers 24-hour call handling services to both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Emergency Planning Units. This work-stream would ascertain if there are any other opportunities available that could generate income without negatively impacting on the main function of receiving emergency calls, mobilising assets and playing a key role in the command and control of incidents.

Phase 2 will inevitably reduce the amount of 'spare capacity' within Fire Control, but it is unlikely to utilise 100% of the time available (a target that would in any event not be compatible with an emergency response function). Therefore, whilst the Phase 2 work is progressing, the Project Board has started initial investigations into some of the insourcing opportunities that may exist with its local authority partners. The Project Board feels that it is likely to have a synergy with these type of partners, sharing a public service ethos, such as working to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of those who are vulnerable in the community.

This initial focus has been on the two councils' use of Assistive Technology (using technology to support vulnerable people to live independently) and out-of-hours Neighbourhood Services (responding to urgent calls for assistance to the councils), as there is commonality in the types of incidents these processes deal with.

In relation to the two councils' use of Assistive Technology, the Service found that:

- Shropshire Council receives approximately 70,000 calls per annum;
- Telford & Wrekin Council currently has a complete end-to-end service, provided by Wellbeing (this includes the provision and maintenance of the equipment, not just the call centre function).

In relation to Telford and Wrekin Council's out-of-hours services, the Service found that:

- Telford & Wrekin Council Neighbourhood Services received approximately 1,345 calls in 2015;
- This service currently costs the Council approximately £30k per annum.

The StraP Working Group recognises that the call demand likely to be experienced in the area of Assistive Technologies would have a significant impact on the Service's ability to meet its statutory responsibility to respond to emergency calls. However, the call demand from Neighbourhood Services is more likely to be accommodated without significant impact on emergency calls. However, it should be recognised that the level of income, or savings, likely to arise from this type of opportunity may not be significant for either partner.

The StraP Working Group requests that the Fire Authority note that the Service will continue to explore these and other opportunities as they occur, but that the main focus will be on the full implementation of Phases 1 and 2.

7 FBU Comment

This report has been shared with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) prior to the Fire Authority meeting, in order for them to provide a comment, which will be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

8 Recommendations

Having considered all of the information available to them, the StraP Working Group support the following recommendations.

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Support the recommendation that a new duty system for Fire Control staff to be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:
 - a Self-Rostering duty system
 - locally managed rostering
 - keeping the current start and finish times of 0800-1800 and 1800-0800
 - annualised hours (as described in Section 4);
- b) Direct officers to negotiate with Representative Bodies as required to implement the changes;
- c) Note the introduction of new internal work-streams into Fire Control, which are aimed at enhancing service delivery and firefighter safety, as well as improving the efficiency of this important function;
- d) Note that the Service will continue to monitor and identify opportunities for commercial income generation through Fire Control;
- e) Direct the StraP Working Group to monitor the implementation of these recommendations and report progress back to the Fire Authority at its October 2016 meeting; and
- f) Direct officers to monitor and evaluate all collaborative opportunities regionally and sub-regionally, and any other opportunities that may arise.

9 Financial Implications

The proposed changes to the duty system are designed to reduce the financial impact of high levels of staff sickness but it is currently difficult to attribute a precise figure to this.

However, it should be noted that implementing the changes to the duty system may require upgrades to the current IT system used to manage staff availability, which will incur costs. The level of such costs are currently unknown.

The workflows and processes to be included in Fire Control as part of Phase 2 will result in efficiency savings or cost avoidance for other departments but these are currently unclear.

10 Legal Comment

The Authority is required to consider the normal contractual principle that variations to current terms and conditions of employment may only be made with agreement (either individually or collectively) or under a right of variation already contained within the terms of employment or relevant collective agreement. The Authority should note the provisions of the Employment Rights Act 1996, which entitle employees with at least two years' service to claim unfair or constructive unfair dismissal in circumstances where there has been an unlawful variation of a substantive term of employment without sufficient justification and reasonable procedure.

The Authority is also required to consider the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, which prohibit unjustified 'provisions, criteria or practices' that indirectly discriminate against workers with protected characteristics.

Furthermore, the Authority is required to consider the provisions of the Working Time Regulations 1998 in respect working hours and rest times, insofar as the provisions are not excluded or modified for the group of workers in question.

11 Initial Impact Assessment

An Initial Impact Assessment has been completed and this indicated that a full Equality Impact Assessment should be completed.

12 Equality Impact Assessment

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

13 Appendices

Appendix

Survey: IRMP 2 Consultation Questions and Responses

As the Consultation Responses document is in excess of 25 pages, a hard copy has not been included with the meeting papers but can be accessed on the Fire Authority's website via the following link:

<https://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/meeting/3-may-2016>

Paper 11c

FBU response to the IRMP 2 Consultation

14 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.