

Committee Membership and Constitution

Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Sharon Lloyd,
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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) Agree 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 during the year 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 8a 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 required to be made by the political groups. Each group may, of course, propose further changes in addition to those required.

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. Currently, there is no delegated authority set down within the Authority's constitution to approve these changes. To avoid having to bring such matters before the Authority it is proposed that authority to do so be delegated to the Monitoring Officer.

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.

Each of the Authority's major committees, and the STRaP Working Group, has reviewed its terms of reference within the last four months, with the exception of the Strategy and Resources Committee. This item of business was included on the agenda for the last meeting of that Committee, which was scheduled to take place on 20 June. Unfortunately, it was necessary to cancel the meeting, as it would not have been quorate. Certain changes to the Committee's terms of reference are, however, proposed by your officers.

Details of the more significant amendments recommended are given below. In addition, in line with the decision made by the Fire Authority at its April meeting, it is proposed that power is given to each of the Committees to approve the Role Description of its Chair and Vice-Chair and, in the case of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, that of the Member Champion for Risk Management and Audit.

Strategy and Resources Committee

Over the years additions and amendments have been made, which have resulted in a somewhat disjointed list of responsibilities. Officers have, therefore, re-arranged the list so that there is now a more logical flow. To avoid confusing mark up these changes have not, however, been shown in Appendix A.

Audit and Performance Management Committee

The majority of proposed amendments have emanated from Internal and External Audit to reflect changes in the professional guidance, which came into effect from 1 April 2013.

Human Resources Committee

In recent years, the Fire Authority has delegated responsibility to make recommendations to the Fire Authority regarding the process for appointments to senior posts, e.g. Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer, to the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel. The Committee, therefore, thought it appropriate to recommend deletion of this responsibility from its Terms of Reference. It is, therefore, proposed that it be added to those of the Panel.

Standards Committee

At its last meeting in April the Fire Authority agreed the amendments recommended by its Standards Committee. No further changes are proposed either to the terms of reference or to the procedures for dealing with complaints relating to a breach of the Code of Conduct. To avoid excessive paper the procedures have been omitted from Appendix A.

Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group

No amendments were recommended by the Group. Officers, however, propose deletion of references to Public Value and 2020 planning to provide a more generic description. A change in the wording regarding the frequency of meetings is also proposed, as the Group needs to meet when required, rather than at specific dates.

In addition to the reviews conducted by committees, officers have carried out a review of the Fire Authority's two Panels and propose the following amendments.

Pensions Panel

No amendments are proposed.

Brigade Managers' Employment Panel

The inclusion of responsibility to make recommendations to the Fire Authority regarding the process for appointments to the posts of Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer and Clerk senior posts is recommended.

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

Appointment of Members to Serve on 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