

2020 Strategic Planning Process Summary Phase One Outcomes

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Steve Worrall, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260204.

1 Purpose of Report

This report sets out the summary outcomes arising from Phase One of the Fire Authority's agreed 2020 Strategic Planning Process.

2 Recommendation

Members are requested to:

- a) Note the summary outcomes derived through Phase One of the 2020 Strategic Planning Process; and
- b) Instruct the Authority's Strategic Risk and Planning Group to proceed, in consultation with officers, to Phase Two.

3 Background

The consolidated 2020 Strategic Planning Process aims to align a number of past planning processes and introduces the concept of scenario based planning to create the Fire Authority's '2020 Strategy'. The approach has provided a means by which the Fire Authority, through structured two-way consultation with staff and stakeholders, has been able to create a range of potential scenarios, to which the Authority / Service might be exposed in future years.

During the summer and autumn of 2012 approximately 70 table-top scenario planning exercises have taken place, led by Members of the Authority's Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group (STRaP). The sessions have resulted in direct engagement with approximately 90 percent of the Service's staff.

4 Scenario Development

The first phase of the planning process has involved the development of a range of potential scenarios, developed via a stakeholder workshop. The workshop generated over 100 scenarios that were categorised as *political, economic, social, technological, environmental* and *legal* issues.

Through a process of review and evaluation the scenarios were narrowed down to a more focused range of 23 scenarios, each of which could potentially act as a *'threat'* to the Fire Authority, if not addressed, or alternatively an *'opportunity'* to improve service delivery to the community. In addition, staff have also identified further possible scenarios not considered by stakeholders, scenarios that have been / are being considered in preparation for phase two.

5 Scenario Evaluation

Staff from all of the Service's stations and departments have reviewed the 23 scenarios via the Member led table-top exercises. Each scenario has been assessed to consider if it presents a *threat* or *opportunity*, and thereafter, evaluated regarding the *likelihood* of the scenario occurring, and the potential *impact* upon the Authority / Service / Community should it occur.

As an outcome from the exercise, a summary of the scenarios considered as either a *threat* or an *opportunity* is shown in Figure 1 below. The *likelihood* and *impact* of the scenarios arising, as determined by staff, is also presented within Figure 1 (which replicates the table-top format used by staff).

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future, but it is essential that the Authority has a speculative opinion for planning and budgetary purposes. The exercise has produced an informed and consensual outcome, representing a *'best guess'* as to the prioritised issues the Authority / Service should aim to address by the year 2020.

With the Service's limited resources and capacity these results will contribute to the development of a more focused and prioritised Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) during 2013. All of the presented scenarios will be monitored, but clearly those shown within Figure 1 within the *'high – high'* sector require the greatest attention.

Figure 1
Summary outcome of key scenario issues when ranked by likelihood / impact

LIKELIHOOD	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increased use of ICT</i> • Increased use / crops of Bio-Fuels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of Prime Minister and / or Chancellor • <i>Increased housing development</i> • Increased disability within society • <i>New requirements within Fire and Rescue Service National Framework</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Council Tax revenue • Further unemployment and reliance upon part-time staff • Increased poverty • Increased life expectancy • Catastrophic failure of technology • Growing public expectations placed upon Fire and Rescue Service • Collaboration and outsourcing • Increased flash flooding • Reduced energy supplies
	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of 'Intelligent' buildings</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authority boundary changes • Reduced growth / profitability within business sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More social unrest • Increased drought periods
	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safer modes of transport</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More civil unrest • Increased industrial action
		Low	Medium	High
		IMPACT		

Key

Potential 'threats' are shown in **bold text**

Potential 'opportunities' are shown in *italic text*

6 Scenario Outcomes (Summary)

A major priority for the Fire Authority during 2013 will be the development of the IRMP to represent a long-term strategy, preparing the Service for events that may occur over the next several years. The outcome of the scenario based planning exercise suggests a range of issues most likely to occur and that may have the greatest impact, which can be summarised as:

- **Reduced council tax**, whereby the Fire Authority receives less revenue resulting from imposed capping levels
- Increased **unemployment** within the local community, having a direct impact on society and the availability of retained duty personnel. Consequences could also lead to a greater reliance upon part-time staff in other roles.
- As a possible outcome of the economic downturn, rising prices and increased unemployment the prospect of **poverty** within the local community may increase, creating societal issues.
- An increasing **aged population**, particularly in the south of the County and rural communities
- As society becomes more reliant upon complex **technology** the risk of catastrophic **failure** increases (as was experienced within the banking sector this summer).
- With a new Fire and Rescue Service National Framework that places a responsibility to prepare and respond to all foreseeable risks, a **growing public expectation** may be placed upon the Service to have a 'can do' approach to all incidents, irrespective of cost or risk.
- Within the Government's modernisation agenda an expectation exists that no area of the public sector will be immune to **outsourcing** or greater **collaboration**. This presents both opportunities and threats, but is viewed as a threat by staff.
- When considering the events of recent years, the local environment is experiencing a **higher frequency and impact of flooding**. Future years are expected to see more flooding with greater demand and public expectation on the Service, both locally and nationally.
- The future may experience a **shortage of energy supplies**, leading to increased prices, fuel shortages and inappropriate storage.

7 Next Steps

As stated above, the consolidated 2020 strategic planning process aims to align a number of past planning processes to create the '2020 Strategy', which will be delivered via the IRMP.

Having determined those scenarios most likely to occur, the next phase (Phase Two) of the planning process will be to develop a range of strategies necessary to align and prepare the Service to address the *threats* and take advantage of the *opportunities* that may arise.

During the winter and spring further Member-led consultation, both with staff and communities, will take place to develop the range of strategies. The outcome of this exercise will be presented to the Fire Authority in the summer of 2013.

Phase Two will be overseen by the Authority's STRaP Group and will also include the review other important factors / issues relevant to the IRMP, such as statutory requirements. These requirements are set out within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework, together with issues logged within both the National and Local Resilience Forum Risk Registers. Perhaps most importantly, however, Phase Two will also examine the impact of the budget grant settlement and precept restrictions, resulting from a lower cap, as any further budgetary reductions may severely hamper the Authority's ability to meet its statutory requirements.

8 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9 Legal Comment

Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 provides the statutory authority for the Fire Service National Framework and requires fire authorities to have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions. The Framework sets out requirements to produce an IRMP.

10 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Human resources 5 Part 2) and have determined that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

11 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

12 Background Reports

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority:

- 25 April 2012, Report 9 - Consolidated 2020 Strategic Planning Process
- 18 July 2012, Report 15 - 2020 Strategic Planning Process
Summary Programme Plan