

## Annual Report 2010/11

### 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 seeks Member approval of the proposed contents and format of the Fire Authority Annual Report 2010/11.

### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Approve the draft contents and format of the proposed Annual Report (which can be accessed via the web link given in section 10 of this report); and
- b) Delegate final approval of the Annual Report to the Chair and Chief Fire Officer.

### 3 Background

Historically all fire and rescue services have been duty bound through the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 to prepare and publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). These requirements were changed following the introduction of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Act deregulated the Best Value regime and as a consequence removed the requirement to produce a BVPP. These changes were reported to the Fire Authority on 13 February 2008.

The Fire Authority at its February 2011 meeting agreed the introduction of the Medium Term Corporate Plan in 2010/11, which incorporates all elements of service, financial and improvement planning, this is supplemented by a forward looking annual Service Plan, which came into effect on 1 April 2011, and a backward facing Annual Report.

This paper seeks agreement from Members on the content and format of the 2010/11 Annual Report and advises Members of the possible changes to the content and format of future Annual reports.

## **4 Contents of the Annual Report**

The Annual Report is essentially a performance document which contains updates on progress over the previous twelve months. It outlines how the Authority has sought to deliver against its stated aims and objectives (via the Improvement Priorities), progress against the Integrated Risk Management Plan/Public Value process and financial information including last year's budget spend<sup>1</sup>.

The Annual Report also includes the outturn of performance data on 2010/11 Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) and a statement certifying compliance with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters. It should be noted that as a consequence of Government changes the use of BVPs has ceased and will not be used for reporting purposes post 2010/11.

A draft copy of the Annual Report is appended to this report for approval.

## **5 Format and Promotion of the Annual Report**

In order to keep costs to a minimum but to ensure maximum exposure to the widest possible audience an online version of the document will be published on the Authority's website.

## **6 2011/12 Annual Report**

As stated above, the BVPI regime has ceased and for 2011/12 the Fire Authority approved four new aims for the Service underpinned by eight Public Value measures. It is therefore envisaged that next year's backward looking annual report will be reformatted to reflect these changes. The Service will also be cognisant of current proposals being made by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who are consulting on the future of local public audit<sup>2</sup>. The consultation follows Government's announcement that the Audit Commission be disbanded and discusses proposals for how public bodies will be audited in the future, which includes Government outsourcing the audit regime.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note:

- Due to the change in the Accounts and Audit (England) regulations 2011, the Fire Authority is scheduled to formally sign off the final accounts at its September 2011 meeting. This section of the Annual Report will be updated following this meeting; and
- there is no longer a requirement on Fire and Rescue Authorities to produce an annual efficiency statement <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/1837653.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1876169.pdf>

One option proposed would require all local public bodies to produce an Annual Report, similar to those produced in the private sector, which would be used to provide assurance to citizens on public spending. A response to this consultation is currently being prepared on behalf of the Fire Authority.

The content and format of future Annual Reports may change as a result of the above issues.

## **7 Financial Implications**

The costs for producing the Annual Report are incorporated into existing budgets.

## **8 Legal Comment**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **9 Equality Impact Assessment**

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

## **10 Appendix**

The Draft Annual Report 2010/11 can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/sites/alpha.shropshirefire.gov.uk/files/fra/13-appendix-annual-report-2010-11.pdf>

## **11 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.