

## Review of Member Role Descriptions

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201, or Sharon Lloyd, Corporate Services Manager, on 01743 260210.

### 1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to review, and agree the Fire Authority's existing Member Role Descriptions.

### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is requested to consider and agree the existing Role Descriptions as detailed below.

### 3 Background

To provide clarity regarding the role and responsibilities of Members the Fire Authority has in place for the following Role Descriptions:

- Member
- Chair of the Authority
- Vice-Chair of the Authority
- Leader of the Main Opposition Group
- Chair of Strategy Risk and Planning Working Group
- Director of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service Regional Control Centre Ltd

### 4 Review of Existing Role Descriptions

Although not a legal requirement, it is deemed good practice for the Role Descriptions to be reviewed annually. The Fire Authority is, therefore, requested to review the Role Descriptions attached at the Appendix.

## 5 Committee Role Descriptions

Each of the Fire Authority's major committees has reviewed its role descriptions within the last few months and any amendments recommended have been brought to the Authority on the dates shown below:

| <b>Committee</b>                               | <b>Date of Committee Review</b> | <b>Date agreed by Fire Authority</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Chair of Human Resources                       | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Vice-Chair of Human Resources                  | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Chair of Strategy and Resources                | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources           | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Chair of Audit and Performance Management      | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Vice-Chair of Audit and Performance Management | May 2010                        | June 2010                            |
| Chair of Standards                             | March 2010                      | April 2010                           |
| Vice-Chair of Standards                        | March 2010                      | April 2010                           |
| Independent Member of Standards                | March 2010                      | April 2010                           |

## 6 Review of Role Descriptions

Officers have reviewed the Role Descriptions and propose one, minor amendment: the location of the Protocol on Member / Officer Relations should be Section 14, not 15, of the Handbook.

The Role Descriptions for Leaders of the Main Opposition Groups and Chair of the Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group have a slight error in the final paragraph where it reads 'Member Champion'.

All amendments to the Role Descriptions are shown in bold italic.

## 7 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 8 Legal Comment

It is deemed good practice to have Role Descriptions for Members and for those Role Descriptions to be reviewed annually.

## 9 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided 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.

## 10 Appendices

### Role Descriptions:

#### Appendix A

Member of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

#### Appendix B

Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

#### Appendix C

Vice-Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

#### Appendix D

Leaders of the Main Opposition Groups of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

#### Appendix E

Chair of Strategic Risk and Planning Working Group

#### Appendix F

Director of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre

## 11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Business Continuity Planning   |  | Legal                                   | * |
| Capacity   |  | Member Involvement                      | * |
| Civil Contingencies Act  |  | National Framework                      |   |
| Comprehensive Area Assessment  |  | Operational Assurance                   |   |
| Efficiency Savings   |  | Retained                                |   |
| Environmental  |  | Risk and Insurance                      |   |
| Financial  |  | Staff                                   |   |
| Fire Control/Fire Link   |  | Strategic Planning                      |   |
| Information Communications and Technology                            |  | West Midlands Regional Management Board |   |
| Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information |  | Equality Impact Assessment              |   |
| Integrated Risk Management Planning                                  |  |   |   |

## Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

### Role Description Member of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Office:</b>         | Member of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority |
| <b>Allowance:</b>      | Basic allowance of £2,658 per annum                       |
| <b>Responsible to:</b> | Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority           |

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is:

- To ensure that the Fire Authority provides an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Fire Authority's policies, priorities, plans, targets, budget and service delivery
- To ensure that the Fire Authority is an equal opportunity employer, and considers the needs of all sections of the community
- To ensure that the Fire Authority delivers best value

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To develop and maintain a sound working knowledge of the Fire Authority's duties, policies and practices
- To fulfil all requirements of a Member of the Fire Authority, including compliance with relevant protocols and codes of conduct
- To participate effectively as a Member of any committee, working group or best value review
- To participate in performance review of the services provided by the Fire Authority, including scrutiny of policies and budgets and their effectiveness in achieving strategic objectives

- To participate effectively in any consultative processes with the local community and with other organisations, as required
- To encourage the community to participate constructively in consultative arrangements and service provision
- To develop and maintain good and effective working relationships with the Fire Authority's Chair and Vice-Chair and relevant officers of the Fire Authority
- To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the organisation's services, activities and other matters, which affect and impact on the local community
- To participate actively and effectively in any political group, of which you are a member
- To consider recommendations/options put forward by the Treasurer in relation to the Fire Authority's budget and precept and participate in the budget and precept setting process

## **Accountability**

The responsibilities outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance is through the political and electoral process.

The responsibilities outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by the officers of the Fire Authority, for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When performing their role Members must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.

## Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

### Role Description Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Office:</b>         | Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority  |
| <b>Allowance:</b>      | Special responsibility allowance of £10,000 per annum<br>in addition to basic allowance of £2,658 per annum |
| <b>Responsible to:</b> | Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority   |

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is:

- To chair the Fire Authority; and
- To provide overall political leadership to the Fire Authority.

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To provide the political lead in the development or review of the Fire Authority's policies, plans, budget and precept
- To work closely with the Chief Fire Officer to ensure the delivery of an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To agree personal priorities with the Chief Fire Officer and monitor these on a regular basis against the Fire Authority's strategic aims and objectives
- To review the Chief Fire Officer's performance and identify development needs
- To oversee the efficient and effective conduct of business within the Fire Authority
- To foster the best possible relations with the two constituent authorities
- To foster the best possible relations with the relevant trades unions

- To lead in developing the Fire Authority's partnerships with other organisations throughout the County
- To act as the Fire Authority's representative at official functions and on other bodies, as nominated by the Fire Authority
- To represent the Fire Authority at any meetings, as may be required from time to time in connection with the work of the Fire Authority and to act as the principal political spokesperson for the Fire Authority, at local, regional, national or international level
- To represent the Fire Authority and its policies in a positive and professional manner
- To chair such other committees, panels, working groups as required
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Fire Authority's Member role description

### **Accountability**

The responsibilities outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance overall is through the political and electoral process.

The responsibilities outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by officers of the Fire Authority, for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When carrying out this role the Chair must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.



## Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

### Role Description

#### Vice-Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Office:</b>         | Vice-Chair of Shropshire and Wrekin<br>Fire and Rescue Authority   |
| <b>Allowance:</b>      | Special responsibility allowance of £5,000 per annum<br>in addition to basic allowance of £2,658 per annum |
| <b>Responsible To:</b> | Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority  |

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is:

- To support and assist the Chair in providing overall political leadership to the Fire Authority; and
- To deputise for the Chair, as required

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To chair the Fire Authority, relevant committees, panels, working groups or other meetings as required in the absence, or inability to act, of the Chair
- To assist the Chair in working closely with the Chief Fire Officer to ensure the delivery of an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To assist and support the Chair in the efficient and effective conduct of business within the Fire Authority
- To serve as a representative at official functions and on other bodies, as nominated by the Fire Authority
- To represent the Fire Authority at any meetings, as may be required from time to time in connection with the work of the Fire Authority and to act as political spokesperson for the Fire Authority, at local, regional, national or international level in the absence of the Chair

- To represent the Fire Authority and its policies in a positive and professional manner
- To chair such other committees, panels, working groups, as required
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Member's role description

### **Accountability**

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance is through the political and electoral process.

The tasks outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by the officers of the Fire Authority for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When carrying out this role the Vice-Chair must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.

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

### **Role Description Leader of the Main Opposition Group of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Office:</b>         | Leaders of the Main Opposition Groups of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority                |
| <b>Allowance:</b>      | Special responsibility allowance of £2,658 per annum in addition to basic allowance of £2,658 per annum |
| <b>Responsible To:</b> | Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority   |

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is:

- To support and assist the Chair and Vice-Chair in providing overall political leadership to the Fire Authority; and
- To deputise for the Chair and Vice-Chair, as required

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To chair the Fire Authority, relevant committees, panels, working groups or other meetings as required in the absence, or inability to act, of the Chair and Vice-Chair
- To assist the Chair and Vice-Chair in working closely with the Chief Fire Officer to ensure the delivery of an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To assist and support the Chair and Vice-Chair in the efficient and effective conduct of business within the Fire Authority
- To serve as a representative at official functions and on other bodies, as nominated by the Fire Authority

- To represent the Fire Authority at any meetings, as may be required from time to time in connection with the work of the Fire Authority and to act as political spokesperson for the Fire Authority, at local, regional, national or international level in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair
- To represent the Fire Authority and its policies in a positive and professional manner
- To chair such other committees, panels, working groups, as required
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Member's role description

### **Accountability**

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance is through the political and electoral process.

The tasks outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by the officers of the Fire Authority for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

Whilst performing their role ~~Members~~ **Leaders** must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.

## Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

### Role Description Chair of Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group

**Office:** Chair of Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group

**Allowance:** Special responsibility allowance of £3,000 per annum  
in addition to basic allowance of £2,658 per annum

**Responsible To:** Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is:

- To chair the Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group of the Fire Authority
- To lead on all aspects of Strategic Risk and Planning for the Fire Authority

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To chair all meetings of the Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group
- To work with the Chief Fire Officer and other officers to ensure that the Fire Authority's Strategic Risk and Action Plans are developed, updated and implemented in accordance with relevant guidance
- To lead on all public, stakeholder, and staff consultation on the Fire Authority's Strategic Risk and Planning and Action Plans
- To represent the Fire Authority at any meetings, as may be required from time to time in connection with the work of the Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group and to act as political spokesperson for the Working Group, at local, regional, national or international level
- To represent the Strategic Risk and Planning Members' Working Group and

the Fire Authority in a positive and professional manner

- To chair such other committees, panels, working groups relating to the IRMP process as required
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Member's role description

### **Accountability**

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance is through the political and electoral process.

The tasks outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by the officers of the Fire Authority for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

Whilst performing this role the ~~Member Champion~~ **Chair** must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.

## Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

### Role Description Director of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Ltd

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Office:</b>         | Director of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services<br>Regional Control Centre Ltd                           |
| <b>Allowance:</b>      | Special responsibility allowance of £2,562 per annum<br>in addition to basic allowance of £2,658* per annum |
| <b>Responsible To:</b> | Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority   |

#### **Purpose of Role**

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is to act as the representative of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority on the Board of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Ltd.

#### **Main Responsibilities**

The main roles and responsibilities of the office holder are set out below.

1. A director appointed by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority will usually be able to represent the interests of this Fire Authority in company matters without any difficulty. Under company law, however, directors owe an overriding duty to the company. If, therefore, a decision to be taken by the Board gives rise to a conflict between the best interests of the company and the best interests of the Fire Authority, the directors must vote according to the best interests of the company. It is recognised that conflicts could put directors in a difficult position, and this is one reason why the Members' Agreement attempts to minimise the number of occasions when such a conflict can arise, by reserving key decisions to be decided by the five constituent Fire Authorities unanimously, and not by the directors at a meeting of the Board.
2. Where a unanimous decision of the Fire Authorities is required, depending on its scale, it may need to be referred back to a fully constituted elected Members' meeting of each Fire Authority, or it may be that the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority, will have sufficient delegated authority to decide the matter on behalf of the Fire Authority (it is also expected that the Chief Fire Officer would consult with their company director, where this person is not also the Chair of the Fire Authority).

Most times it will not be necessary to call a members' meeting of the company to discuss unanimous decisions, as it is expected that the Fire Authorities will discuss their positions amongst themselves so that it becomes clear whether unanimity can be reached or not. If unanimity cannot be achieved, then the Members' Agreement sets out dispute resolution procedures, which allow the Fire Authorities more time to discuss their positions, but ultimately, if necessary, to refer the dispute to an independent professional mediator.

3. While it is recognised that the directors of the company are also elected Members, companies do not in law have any political character. Each Fire Authority is entitled to be represented by one director at every meeting of the Board of Directors and, as set out in the Members' Agreement, all directors have an equal vote in business of the company.
4. Directors' responsibilities are personal to the individual appointed as director. While there is a power in the company's Articles for a director to appoint a substitute to represent him at a particular company meeting, this is only intended to be used as an exceptional provision, as the five directors appointed by the fire authorities are those personally responsible for the management of the company. As far as possible, therefore, the directors need to make themselves available to conduct the company's business through meetings of the Board of Directors.
5. Once the Regional Control Centre Director (RCCD) is in post that person can undertake much of the day-to-day management associated with the development of the regional control room. Once the control room is operational the RCCD will actually work in the control room and properly assume the role of the Board of Directors' principal executive officer.
6. In common with all the regions, the Members' Agreement for the West Midlands regional company allows the Fire Authorities to review the composition of the Board of Directors from time to time and certainly before the whole region cuts over into the regional control room in 2010. A review might include looking at increasing the number of directors appointed by each Fire Authority or considering whether the division of roles between elected Members and officers is still appropriate.

## **Accountability**

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the political or Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance is through the political and electoral process.

The tasks outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by the officers of the Fire Authority for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When carrying out this role the Director must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in Section ~~15~~ **14** of the Authority Handbook.