

Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation Results

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

To update Members on progress with implementation of the actions in the 2007/08 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan. To advise Members of the outcome of an extensive, three-month period of consultation on the Fire Authority's draft IRMP Action Plan for 2008/09, and to recommend changes to these documents as a result of that consultation. In addition, to seek approval for the IRMP Members' Working Group to progress the 2008/09 IRMP process to the implementation phase.

2 Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Note the progress with implementation of the 2007/08 IRMP Action Plan;
- b) Approve the introduction of response standards for 'Life Risk Water Incidents', as detailed in section 6 of this report;
- c) Note the extent of the consultation exercise undertaken with staff, stakeholders and the public with regard to the draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09;
- d) Approve the changes to the IRMP documents, as proposed by the Fire Authority's IRMP Members' Working Group as a result of feedback obtained through the consultation process, detailed in section 11 of this report;
- e) Delegate responsibility to the IRMP Members' Working Group to progress the IRMP process, as detailed in section 12 of this report; and
- f) Note the thanks of the IRMP Members' Working Group to all staff, the Fire Brigades Union and the officers involved in the IRMP consultation.



3 Background

At a meeting of the Fire Authority on 20 December 2006, The Authority approved the implementation of the 2007/08 IRMP Action Plan including:

- Relocation of one wholetime fire appliance and crew from Telford Central Fire Station to Tweeddale Fire Station;
- A pilot project for the introduction of a 'Small Fires Unit';
- Other non life risk incidents. Changes to the way we respond to flooding and persons locked out of premises incidents and charging for attendance at certain lift incidents; and
- Further work to develop response standards to 'life risk water incidents'.

At its meeting on 18 July 2007, the Fire Authority agreed to delegate responsibility to the IRMP Members' Working Group for the creation of the Authority's 2008/09 draft IRMP Action Plan. The Authority also gave delegated responsibility for the IRMP consultation process to be held between August and November 2007 to the Group.

In addition, in December 2006 the Authority authorised the IRMP Members' Working Group to carry out further work to aid the development of response standards for 'life risk water incidents'.

4 IRMP Action Plan 2007/08 Update

Telford Central Appliance to Tweeddale Relocation

Staff selection and appointment has been completed and building alteration work is anticipated to be completed by the end of December. Changes to the mobilising system have been put in place (to be activated on 1 January 2008 go live date) to reflect the new status and location of appliances. Planning permission for the new access roadway has still to be approved by the local authority.

Pilot Small Fire Unit

The project is ongoing and a report will be submitted to the Fire Authority at the end of the project in April 2008.

Other Non Life Risk Incidents

Changes to service policy have been implemented to reflect the way we now respond to these incidents.

Other Life Risk Incidents

This work has now been completed and detailed recommendations to the Fire Authority are set out in sections 5 and 6.



5 Response Standards for Other Life Risk Incidents

Following further detailed analysis of data in relation to response to Water Rescue Incidents, Policy Group recommended the introduction of response standards based on the likelihood of incidents occurring in each station area, and consisting of two elements:

- 1 The nearest appliance to be mobilised directly to the incident to stabilise the situation, provide assistance without entering deep or fast-flowing water and carry out an initial assessment;
- 2 Swift water rescue trained (SRT) personnel and Fire Service boat to effect rescues as appropriate.

Based on this data Shrewsbury response area would be deemed to be 'High Likelihood' and the remainder of the County 'Low Likelihood', as shown in Table 1 below. Members of the IRMP Working Group support this methodology and recommend the introduction of response standards based on 'likelihood'.

| Water Incidents by Station 2002 - 2006 | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Station Area | Incidents | Likelihood | Station Area | Incidents | Likelihood |
| Ellesmere | 1 | Low | Market Drayton | 3 | Low |
| Wellington | 1 | Low | Ludlow | 3 | Low |
| Whitchurch | 1 | Low | Oswestry | 3 | Low |
| Newport | 2 | Low | Bridgnorth | 6 | Low |
| Much Wenlock | 2 | Low | Telford Central | 8 | Low |
| Tweedale | 2 | Low | Shrewsbury | 78 | High |
| Total | 110 | | | | |

Table 1 - Water incidents by Station Area

Investigation of attendance times for the first appliance mobilised over the previous 5 years is shown in Table 2 below. This analysis supports the introduction of a 10 minute response in areas of high likelihood and 20 minutes in areas of low likelihood.

| Water Incidents Average 1st Response by Year | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | Overall |
| High Likelihood | | | | | | |
| <10 Minutes | 9 | 9 | 13 | 13 | 20 | 64 |
| >10 Minutes | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 14 |
| Total Incidents | 12 | 12 | 16 | 17 | 21 | 78 |
| Pass Rate | 75.00% | 75.00% | 81.25% | 76.47% | 95.24% | 82.05% |
| Low Likelihood | | | | | | |
| <20 Minutes | 3 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 30 |
| >20 Minutes | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total Incidents | 4 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 32 |
| Pass Rate | 75.00% | 83.33% | 100.00% | 100.00% | 100.00% | 93.75% |

Table 2 - First Appliance Attendance Times



Following the methodology used in determining the attendance standard for the rescue tender when attending life risk road traffic collisions (RTCs) it would be appropriate to set a similar standard of 30 minutes on 85% of occasions for all incidents.

| Water Incidents 2 nd Response (Boat/SRT Crew) by Year | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | Overall |
| High Likelihood | | | | | | |
| <30 Minutes | 11 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 14 | 66 |
| >30 Minutes | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 15 |
| Total Incidents | 12 | 18 | 18 | 16 | 16 | 81 |
| Pass Rate | 84.62% | 61.11% | 94.44% | 81.25% | 87.50% | 81.48% |

6 Recommended Response Standards to Life Risk Water Incidents

It is recommended that the Fire Authority introduce response standards for 'life risk water incidents' based on two elements on 1 April 2008:

First Element 'nearest available appliance'

- 10 minutes on 80% (high likelihood), and
- 20 minutes on 95% (low likelihood)

Second Element SRT personnel and boat

- 30 minutes on 85% of all occasions

7 IRMP Draft Action Plan 2008/09 - Approach to Consultation

As described in the IRMP, the Fire Authority's approach to consultation complied with guidance issued by both the Cabinet Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). Additionally, the consultation process followed the recommendations of Opinion Research Services (ORS), who have been contracted by the Fire Authority to assist with various consultation exercises for a number of years, including the Fire Authority's annual IRMP consultation.

The central tenet of this guidance was that the extent of consultation should be proportionate to the scope of the IRMP and should focus upon communities or interest groups particularly affected by the changes. Because the draft Action Plan includes proposals that are likely to impact on the service to all parts of the Shropshire community (including all members of the public and businesses in Shropshire), the focus for the process has been on trying to encourage feedback from all sections of the community.

Summary details of the consultation work undertaken with staff, members of the public and other stakeholder organisations are provided in this report. Appendices A and B provide the detailed reports on this work.



8 Consultation with Staff and Representative Bodies

As with the consultation process in previous years, and in recognition that the group most likely to be affected by changes proposed within the draft IRMP and Action Plan are the employees of the Fire Authority, the IRMP Members' Working Group focussed a good deal of attention upon consulting effectively with this group. Copies of the plans were placed at all stations, watches and departments within the Service and staff were encouraged to consider, and comment upon, the information and proposals they contained.

Additionally, all staff were encouraged to attend one of forty two IRMP presentations conducted between 21 August 2006 and 12 November 2006. A total of 431 staff attended these presentations, representing 70% of the workforce. Each of the presentations lasted approximately two hours with staff being provided the opportunity to question the IRMP Team and/or Members of the Fire Authority's IRMP Working Group. In addition the presentations were supported by other Members on a significant number of occasions. Details relating to the forty two meetings held are provided at Appendix C to this report. Following each presentation staff were asked to complete a questionnaire, seeking their views on the proposals, thus providing valuable written feedback.

All representative bodies were invited to a meeting and presentation by the IRMP Team and Members' Working Group prior to the commencement of the staff consultation process. They were also invited to attend any (or all) of the forty two presentations at stations and Headquarters.

Full details about this consultation process and the responses received are included as Appendix A to this report. The Fire Brigades Union response to the proposals is attached in its entirety at Appendix D. No responses were received from the other representative bodies.

9 Consultation with the Public and Stakeholder Organisations

The method of consultation with members of the public involved:

- Formal 'Scrutiny Panels'; and
- An on-line questionnaire.

Details about this work are given below. Full details about this consultation process and the responses received are included as part of Appendix B to this report.

Public Scrutiny Panel

A 'Public Scrutiny Panel' is a group of people, representing a cross-section of the community, who can be called upon for various consultation requirements, over a number of years. Building on experience from previous years and consultation with ORS the most effective means for consulting with members of the public remained through the use of 'Scrutiny Panels'. The benefit of



using Public Scrutiny Panels is that the Fire Authority is able to demonstrate that an ‘informed’ process of consultation has taken place.

ORS recruited a total of 31 members of the public to attend one of two Public Scrutiny Panels, held in Ludlow and Shrewsbury. Panel members received the Fire Authority’s IRMP documents prior to the meetings. During the meetings the Fire Authority’s IRMP Team gave a summary presentation on the purpose of IRMP and the specific proposals contained in the Fire Authority’s proposed Action Plan. After a lengthy question and answer session the group was split into several smaller groups. Each group then discussed and agreed responses to various questions relating to the Fire Authority’s proposals. Whilst the IRMP Team were available to answer any additional questions, they did not take part in these discussions.

On-line Questionnaire

To enable more members of the public to contribute to this consultation process the Fire Authority included an on-line questionnaire within the IRMP section of its website. However, due to the development of the website, this year it was only possible to provide a very limited on-line questionnaire facility. This work was not conducted by ORS.

The questionnaire provided the respondent with information about the Fire Authority’s IRMP proposals and asked a series of questions on which the Fire Authority was seeking specific comments. Space was also provided for any other comments they wished to make. The questionnaire was made available for three months, giving ample time for people to respond.

Awareness of the questionnaire was raised with the public by signposting it on the homepage of the Service’s website and through the distribution of posters, advertising its existence, to all Post Offices, supermarkets and Parish notice boards in the County. Press releases were also sent to all news media outlets in and around the County, which resulted in several articles in the local press.

Only three responses were received via this means, which were, therefore, included within the main response sections rather than as a separate section of the report.

10 Consultation with Stakeholder Organisations

Two methods were used to consult with organisations that have a vested interest in the service delivered by the Fire Authority, namely:

- Formal ‘Stakeholder Forums’; and
- A paper questionnaire.

Details about this work are given on the following page. Full details about this consultation process and the responses received are included as part of Appendix B to this report.



Stakeholder Forums

On the recommendation of ORS the Fire Authority determined that the most effective means for consulting with organisations and businesses most likely to be affected by the Authority's proposals was through stakeholder forums. This format of consultation allows for the proposals to be explained on a face-to-face basis prior to obtaining the views of stakeholders through in-depth discussion.

More than 430 organisations were, therefore, informed of the Fire Authority's Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09 and the possible impact it could have on them. These included:

- Local County and Unitary Councils;
- Local District and Borough Councils;
- Police and Ambulance Services in Shropshire;
- Neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services;
- Primary Care Trusts;
- The top 100 largest employers in Shropshire;
- The Environment Agency and Environmental Health Departments;
- Shropshire's diversity forums.

The Authority was disappointed that only 9 people attended the forum, however it did prove to be a valuable event bringing together views of other elected Members, officers of the local authority and members of the business community. The forums were managed through a structured approach by ORS, and the forum members' views on the IRMP proposals were obtained and reported to the Authority in a 'Consultation Report'. The findings from this work with stakeholders are summarised in the relevant sections of the full ORS report, included as annex A to the Stakeholder and Public Consultation Response Document.

Questionnaires

The Fire Authority was keen to make sure that those organisations unable to attend one of the Stakeholder Forums had every opportunity to comment on its proposals. Every invitation to attend the forums also included, therefore, a paper questionnaire, which gave details of the proposals and asked for their thoughts.

Also, in recognition of their involvement in, and impact on, the local communities of Shropshire, the Fire Authority put great effort into obtaining feedback from Shropshire's Parish Councillors. This involved:

- Sending a questionnaire to the Clerk of all parish councils;
- A presentation to:
 - Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) Executive Committee
 - North Shropshire District Council



- Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council
- Bridgnorth and Shifnal Area Committee
- Shrewsbury and Atcham Area Committee
- Wrekin Area Committee and
- Oswestry Area Committee.

In total 81 elected representatives of the local community received the presentation and 33 completed questionnaires were returned.

The feedback from the Fire Authority's Public and Stakeholder consultation process is detailed in Appendix B to this report.

11 Recommended Changes to Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09

The feedback received during this process has been extremely perceptive and constructive. The significant outcomes from the consultation process are as follows:

- There is no clear preference amongst all staff for refurbishment over relocation, although:
 - The majority of staff based in Shrewsbury who provided a written consultation response (67%) favoured the refurbishment option
 - With the exception of Fire Control Staff, there is majority support for refurbishment amongst individual staff groups based at Shrewsbury
- There is a higher level of support amongst the public and stakeholders for the refurbishment of Shrewsbury than that for relocation.
- There is overall support from staff for the introduction of additional Officer Cover Resilience:
- There is more support for the introduction of additional Officer Cover amongst retained duty staff than wholetime.
- There was unanimous support and recognition from the public and stakeholders that increased Officer Cover Resilience is required.
- There was a high degree of support for the Fire Authority's IRMP consultation process amongst staff (75%) and the public and stakeholders (81%).



Proposals

Having considered all of the feedback received, at its meeting on 28 November 2007, the Working Group agreed to make the following recommendations to the Fire Authority on how it should progress its Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09:

Shrewsbury Fire Cover and Site Review

- a) The option of refurbishing the existing site is adopted as proposed in the Draft Action Plan 2007/08:
 - Review of the options that will be presented in refurbishment of the site; and
 - Commence consultation with staff, who are likely to be affected by the refurbishment of the site.

Officer Resilience

- b) The number of Flexible Duty Officers is increased by four to provide increased resilience in operational officer cover:
 - The number of Flexible Duty Officers at Station Manager role be increased by 3; and
 - The number of Flexible Duty Officers at Group Manager role be increased by 1.

Cultural Audit

- c) The Assistant Chief Officer, in conjunction with the Staff Representative's (Representative Bodies), continues to develop and implement the Action Plan to address the areas identified in the Cultural Audit report; and
- d) A further Cultural Audit is carried out in 18 to 24 months' time to review and benchmark progress against the initial Audit.

Message of Thanks

The IRMP Members' Working Group also wished to put on record their thanks to all staff and the Fire Brigades Union for their constructive input and involvement in the IRMP process.



12 The Next Stages

Subject to the agreement of the Fire Authority that the proposed amendments detailed above be made to its draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09, it is also recommended that authority be delegated to the IRMP Members' Working Group to oversee the following stages of the IRMP process:

- Update and finalise the Action Plan to reflect the agreed changes;
- Provide feedback to consultees with regard to the outcome from the consultation process and the changes made as a result;
- Publish the Fire Authority's IRMP Action Plan for 2008/09 by 1 April 2008;
- Develop implementation projects in accordance with the actions stated in the Action Plan 2008/09; and
- Commence implementation of these projects.

13 Financial Implications

The report from property consultants, who were employed to give financial estimates on the costs for the refurbishment or relocation of the Shrewsbury site, has now been received. These costs are close to the outline estimates used during the consultation (£2 - £3 million to refurbish and £5 - £8 million to relocate).

The financial implications of increasing the Flexible Duty Officer establishment by four (£67,000 ongoing) and implementation costs for the Cultural Audit outcomes (£40,000 one-off) have been included in the growth areas of the budget papers that follow.

A provision of £10,700 should be provisionally allocated to carry out a further Cultural Audit in 2010/211

It is not anticipated that there will be any additional financial implications at this stage on the introduction of response standards for life risk water incidents.

14 Legal Comment

The Fire and Rescue National Framework 2006/08 issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government states that 'Fire and Rescue Authorities must each have in place and maintain an IRMP which reflects local need and which sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risk to communities'. This report details how compliance with that obligation is being achieved.



15 Equality and Diversity Implications

The consultation process adopted by the Fire Authority and, in particular, involvement of Public Scrutiny Panels, taken from a cross-section of the community, has ensured that representatives of all members of the community have been consulted.

16 Appendices

Appendix A

Staff Consultation Response Document

Appendix B

Stakeholder and Public Consultation Response Document

Appendix C

Timetable of presentations given during IRMP Consultation

Appendix D

Fire Brigades Union IRMP Consultation Response Document

17 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority:

13 December 2006, Minute 13, Integrated Risk Management Plan, Consultation Results

18 July 2007, Minute 16, Integrated Risk Management Plan Member's Working Group Update

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.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Balanced Score Card | | Integrated Risk Management Planning | * |
| Business Continuity Planning | | Legal | * |
| Capacity | | Member Involvement | * |
| Civil Contingencies Act | | National Framework | * |
| Comprehensive Performance 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 | * |





Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09

Staff Consultation Response Document

November 2007



Executive Summary

Following the release of its Integrated Risk Management Draft Action Plan for 2008/09 in August 2007, Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority has conducted three months of consultation with its entire staff. As in previous years the opportunity was taken to keep staff informed of the outcomes of the service assessments conducted by the Audit Commission in 2006 and outcomes of the National Report published in April 2007 which highlighted Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service as rising to meet the challenge.

The major area for consultation in this year's action plan was the future provision of fire cover in Shrewsbury. Unlike previous years, the major issue under consideration in this year's IRMP consultation did not offer a definitive proposal. Rather it was an opportunity for stakeholders to inform the Fire Authority of the preferred option in relation to redevelopment or relocation to an alternative site(s) for the Shrewsbury facilities. As such any changes in this year's consultation would primarily affect staff at Shrewsbury, Workshops and Headquarters, together with the local communities in those areas.

In addition the future provision of Officer Cover to meet periods of peak activity and provide resilience along with developing an action plan to address the outcome of our Staff Cultural Audit were also included in this year's consultation process.

A great deal of effort was put into obtaining feedback on the document from all members of staff within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. The consultation process involved presentations to all staff by members of the Fire Authority and the Service's IRMP Team on the contents of the document. All staff were then asked to complete a questionnaire which asked for their views on various aspects of the document and the proposals contained therein.

Employee Representative Bodies (RB's) were also asked to comment on the draft document, again supported by the same presentations given to staff. Following completion of the consultation process, full details of the feedback received from staff and their RB's has been included in this report, along with the Fire Authority's response to that feedback.

The feedback received during this process has been extremely perceptive and constructive.

The significant outcomes from the consultation process are as follows:

The Draft Action Plan

- The majority of staff found the draft IRMP Action Plan easy to read and informative (over 86% of responses);
- There is overwhelming support from all groups of staff for the Authority's remaining Strategic IRMP Priorities;

The Proposals



a. Shrewsbury

- There is no clear preference amongst all staff for refurbishment over relocation, although;
 - The majority of staff based in Shrewsbury (67%) favoured the refurbishment option
 - With the exception of Fire Control Staff there is majority support for refurbishment amongst individual staff groups based at Shrewsbury

b. Officer Resilience

- There is overall support for the introduction of additional Officer Cover Resilience;
 - There is more support for the introduction of additional Officer Cover amongst RDS staff than Wholetime.
 - The number of Group Managers is increased by 1 to provide more flexibility in the command roles, in addition to overall improvement in officer resilience.

Cultural Audit

- There was overwhelming support amongst staff for the setting up of 'Discussion Groups. The majority of staff (57%) felt these should be run by an external facilitator
- Just under half of staff (47%) who responded indicated they would be interested in becoming involved in the Discussion Groups. 85% of staff supported the use of comments that had been anonymised being used to inform the discussions.
- The highest individual approval for communications was received by 'The Pink'. The highest consistent score across all groups was for watch/team briefings as a method of communication.

Outcomes will be considered by the Fire Authority on 19 December 2007. Any changes approved by the Authority will be made to the appropriate document and then the final version of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Action Plan for 2008/09 will be published on 1st April 2008.



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Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform all interested groups of:

- the details of the consultation process undertaken with the staff and Employee Representative Bodies of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority, on its Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan for 2008/09;
- the comments received from the staff and Employee Representative Bodies of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority from this consultation process; and
- Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's response to the comments made on its Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09.

The results from this consultation process, combined with the results from the Fire Authority's consultation with the public and stakeholder groups in Shropshire, will be used to assist the Fire Authority in its decision to make changes to the Draft IRMP Action Plan for 2008/09, prior to its final release on 1 April 2008.



Approach to Consultation

The consultation process for Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's 2008/09 Draft IRMP Action Plan has been undertaken as detailed in the relevant section of the Draft Plan, and builds upon the experience gained in previous IRMP consultations.

In keeping with consultation best practice, the Fire Authority has concentrated a lot of its efforts on getting feedback on its proposals from its staff (the people likely to feel greatest impact from the draft proposals). To this end, a presentation on the Fire Authority's Draft Action Plan was presented on forty-two occasions to members of staff from all sections and departments in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. A total of 431 staff, representing 70% of the workforce attended the consultation presentations. The presentations were given by a member of the Service's IRMP Team, an Executive Officer and in the vast majority of cases at least one representative from the Fire Authority's Members IRMP Working Group who responded to any questions asked. In addition to this, other Fire Authority Members supported the presentations on a significant number of occasions.

On completion of each presentation members of staff were provided with a feedback questionnaire so that information about their thoughts on the proposals contained in the Draft IRMP Action Plan for 2008/09 could be gathered.

Following requests from a number of officers, a consultation meeting was held which specifically sought feedback, from the officer group, on the question of Officer Resilience.

The Questionnaires

The questionnaires consisted of a series of 'questions' about the Action Plan. Staff were asked to rate their 'level of agreement' with each statement on a scale of 'Strongly Agree' through to 'Strongly Disagree'. In addition they were invited to submit any other comments they considered appropriate. The questions on which they were asked to comment were as follows;

1. Did you consider the draft Action Plan is;
 - a. Easy to read
 - b. Informative.
2. Do you agree with the Fire Authority's remaining stated Strategic IRMP Priorities?
 - a. Community Fire Safety in the rural community
 - b. Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury
 - c. Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire
3. In relation to fire cover for the Shrewsbury area;
 - a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
 - b. I believe that the refurbishment of the existing site is the best option
 - c. I believe that relocation to separate sites is the best option



4. Officer resilience;
 - a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
 - b. I agree that additional Officer Cover provision is required

5. The IRMP Consultation process
 - a. I am satisfied with the IRMP consultation process

In addition to the above, 9 further questions were asked on the outcomes of the cultural audit.

6. Do you agree that the areas we have identified to address are the right ones
7. Do you agree with the suggestion that we should have Group Discussions
8. Do you agree that the Group Discussion should be run by an external facilitator rather than by a member of staff
9. Would you like to take part in a group discussion
 - a. Please tick the areas that you think should be addressed at a Group Discussion
 - a. Perception of positive discrimination
 - b. Issues with senior management
 - c. Bullying
 - d. Harassment
 - e. Discrimination
 - f. Access to promotion
 - g. Bureaucracy
10. Do you agree with the suggestion that we should have workplace visits
11. What information do you think we should communicate at a workplace visit
 - a. Information about positive discrimination and the law
 - b. Information about our recruitment and selection process
 - c. Information about Assessment Development Centres (ADC's)
 - d. Processes for dealing with bullying/harassment
 - e. Other please state here
12. Do you agree that the comments given in confidence should be shared with small groups of staff/ reps to enable us to identify further areas for development or improvement
13. The results presented have given you a general overview, are there any specific issues you would like to comment on
14. How do you think we should communicate progress against the action plan/ keep staff up to date with what is going on
 - a. Updates on The Pink
 - b. CFO Newsletter



- c. Officer in Charge Meetings
- d. Team/Watch Meetings
- e. Other (please state)

All responses had to be back to the IRMP Team by the 12 November 2007. This ensured that all feedback received could be duly considered by the Fire Authority's Members IRMP Working Group during the last week in November, prior to taking any recommendations for changes to the draft document, to the full Combined Fire Authority meeting on 19 December 2007.

The overall response to this consultation process has been fair, with a total of 124 questionnaires being returned by the close of the consultation period, this is a slight reduction from the previous year's consultation responses [184]. This represents approximately 20% of all staff. The table below shows a break down of the respondents to the questionnaire by department and/or groups. In view of the relevance of the Fire Authority's draft proposals to Officers, the response from this particular group (only 17%) is a little disappointing. There were no responses from any staff within the Training Department.

All responses, including eleven returned anonymously, have been included in the statistics, graphs and comments contained in this report.

| Group of staff | Number of responses | Number of staff | Percentage of staff |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Retained | 42 | 317 | 13 |
| Wholetime | 40 | 166 | 24 |
| Officers | 4 | 23 | 17 |
| Control | 5 | 18 | 28 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 46 | 24 |
| Training | 0 | 17 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 27 | 41 |
| Anonymous | 11 | - | - |
| Overall figures | 124 | 614 | 20 |

How the results are presented in this report

The report has been split into 14 sections. Each section details the responses made by staff to one of the statements/questions listed in the questionnaire. The last section deals with other comments made that do not specifically relate to one of the ‘Questionnaire Statements’. Each of the statement sections comprise of the following sub-sections:

- The statement or question on which people were commenting;
- A summary of the responses and comments received;
- The Fire Authority’s response to the feedback received;
- A summary table showing the number of responses received and the overall breakdown of percentage figures for each of the ‘Agreement Ratings’ (i.e. ‘Strongly agree’ through to ‘Strongly disagree’).
- A detailed breakdown of the response from the various groups and departments within the organisation; and
- For each of the nine questions/statements, a summary graph which averages the responses for each of the various departments. The graph depicts the ‘Average Agreement Response’ for each identified group. This figure has been calculated by attaching a score to the response received from each respondent. These figures are then averaged for each of the various staff groups shown in the graph. Full details on how the graphs were constructed are included as appendix A. The table below shows the scoring used for this calculation:

| Agreement rating | Score |
|-------------------|-------|
| Strongly agree | 2 |
| Agree | 1 |
| Neither | 0 |
| Disagree | -1 |
| Strongly disagree | -2 |

- Questions 9 and 13 asked for either a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ response. The results for these statements are given as a proportion of each staff group.



The Action Plan

Response to Question 1

Question asked:

Did you consider the draft Action Plan is;

- Easy to read
- Informative

Response Summary

The majority of respondent (86%) stated that they either 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' and only 2% disagree. There appears to be general support for this statement.

Comments from staff were evenly split – some recognising and supporting the need to plan and others wanting more details.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

The Fire Authority recognises that the IRMP process is an integral part of SFRS risk management and reduction strategy, and as such the Authority remains committed to consulting on it with all areas of the Shropshire community as widely as possible.

Whilst each of the staff consultation sessions do not have a set time limit and staff are encouraged to ask all questions they may have about the proposals, the content and details of the presentations are limited to an acceptable length. Staff were encouraged to seek further information from the evidence documents on the SFRS web site or by contacting the IRMP team.

Summary table of responses to this question

a. Easy to read

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 25 |
| Agree | 72 | 61 |
| Neither | 15 | 13 |
| Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 118 | 100 |

b. Informative

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 26 | 21 |
| Agree | 81 | 66 |
| Neither | 14 | 11 |
| Disagree | 2 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 123 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 1

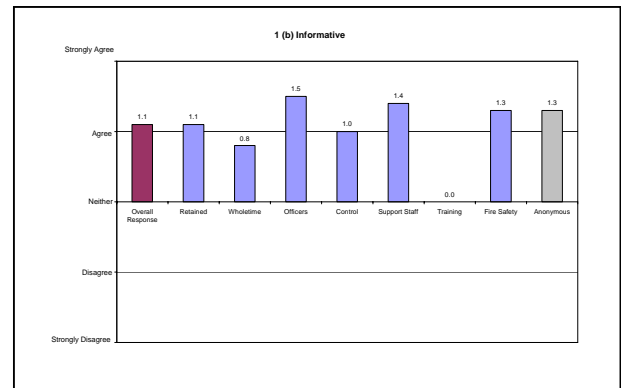
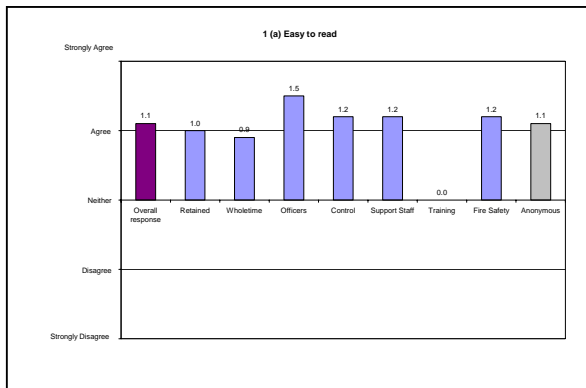
a. Easy to read

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 123 | 26 | 81 | 14 | 2 | 0 |
| Retained | 42 | 7 | 30 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 5 | 27 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 13 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

b. Informative

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 118 | 29 | 72 | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| Retained | 37 | 8 | 27 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 4 | 23 | 10 | 0 | 1 |
| Officers | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 1¹



¹ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Comments made in response to Question 1

Q1Comments

Comments in agreement with statement

- Reasonable to have plans.
- It's always good to have senior officers come and explain the draft plan to watch personnel.
- The presentation of the Action Plan also expanded on the information in the plan in a more interactive manner.

Neutral comments

- Only briefly read/received presentation.
- Too simplistic. People other than fire and rescue employees would not understand most of it.
- I have only received the presentation. I haven't read the plan.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- Could have been benefited from being independently proof read.
- Non uniform staff may not understand fully some of the operational logistics.
- Without the full statistics and report that we had for the first few years we have to look at the evidence given only.

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU made no comments for note in response to this question.



Response to Question 2

Question asked:

- Do you agree with the Fire Authority's remaining stated Strategic IRMP Priorities?
- Community Fire Safety in the rural community
 - Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury
 - Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire

Response Summary

While response to the individual sub questions fluctuates slightly there is over whelming support for the Authority's IRMP Strategic Priorities.

Some members of staff recognise the benefits of proactive intervention in areas of community safety rather than being a reactive service, a few respondents however believe that provision of more equipment and resources are the best option. A number of respondents commented on the absence of information in respect of Shrewsbury Retained staff.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority is pleased with the level of support for the remaining Strategic IRMP Priorities which will form the basis of future IRMP consultation work. It is too early to say what the implications for Shrewsbury RDS staff will be, in light of the fact that they would only be impacted if the outcomes from the consultation are to relocate all present resources from the current site.

Summary table of responses to this question

a. CFS in rural community

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 46 | 37 |
| Agree | 61 | 49 |
| Neither | 17 | 14 |
| Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 125 | 100 |

b. Fire Cover in Shrewsbury

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 32 | 26 |
| Agree | 60 | 48 |
| Neither | 24 | 19 |
| Disagree | 7 | 6 |
| Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 125 | 100 |

c. Fire cover in Shropshire

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 34 | 28 |
| Agree | 67 | 55 |
| Neither | 19 | 16 |
| Disagree | 2 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 122 | 100 |

Overall

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 112 | 30 |
| Agree | 188 | 51 |
| Neither | 60 | 16 |
| Disagree | 10 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 372 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 2**a. Community Fire Safety in the rural community**

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 125 | 46 | 61 | 17 | 1 | 0 |
| Retained | 42 | 20 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 7 | 22 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

b. Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 125 | 32 | 60 | 24 | 7 | 2 |
| Retained | 42 | 9 | 21 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 8 | 16 | 11 | 4 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 |

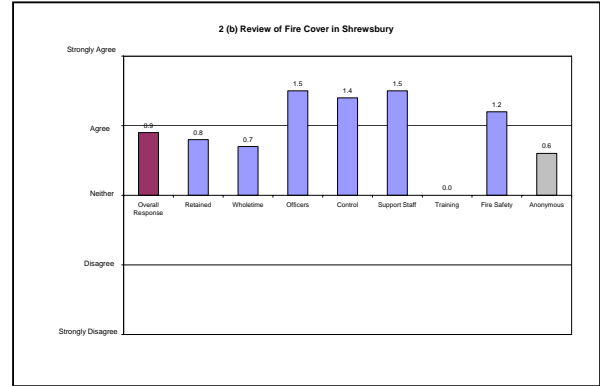
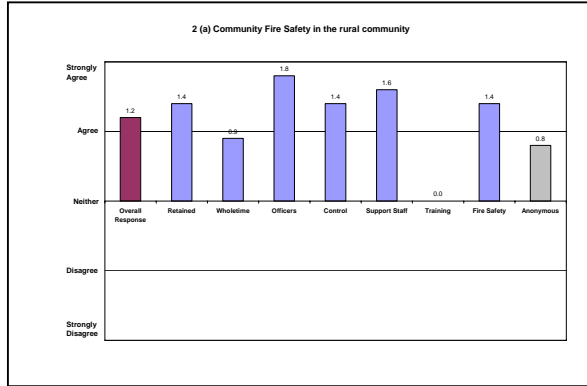
c. Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 122 | 34 | 67 | 19 | 2 | 0 |
| Retained | 40 | 13 | 21 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 5 | 26 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

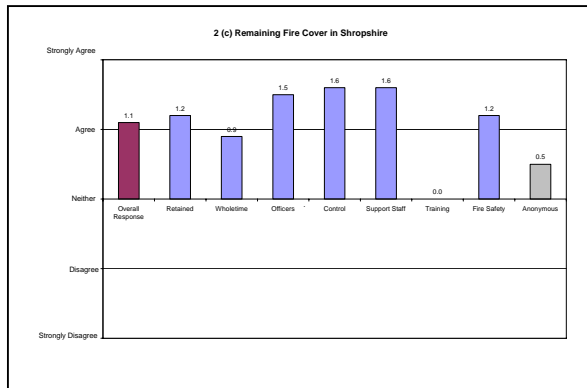


Averaged Response Graph for Question 2²

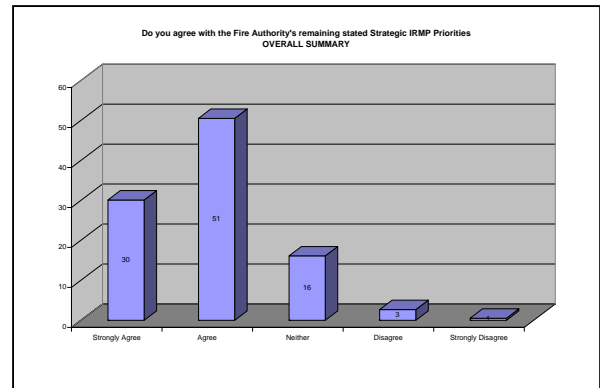
Community Safety in the Rural Community Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury



Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire



Overall Summary



Comments made in response to Question 2

Comments in agreement with statement

- Review of Shrewsbury Fire Cover is long overdue.
- Links in with youth education plan re: adopt a school in the rural area.
- Obviously, prevention is better than cure and as the Service was carried out in SY-WL-TC areas fully the rural areas must also be a priority as these areas have the longer attendance times.

Neutral comments

- Question 2: 3rd question: This was not part of the presentation given.
- It is not clear how something becomes a priority.

² See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- The villages surrounding the stations which are rural are getting missed. We are frowned on to do them as lowering staffing levels. These properties are a longer attendance and surely need protection.
- These are broad overviews and sometimes it would appear that operational considerations and equipment are not given as high a priority as long term planning
- Unless the cover is vastly improved, I feel it would be a lot of money to spend and could be used in other areas.
- Shrewsbury retained did not seem to be part of the equation when working our fire cover.
- Retained not included in plans. Could not say what was happening to retained.
- Don't understand the question.

Comments from the Fire Brigade's Union

It is reassuring in Shropshire that both the FA and the management in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) take a pragmatic and sensible viewpoint, in contrast to the actions taken in many other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs). The commitment to maintain frontline appliances in their current configuration, in terms of staff and conditions of service is commendable.

It is pleasing that the SFRS has highlighted the need for training more vehemently in very recent times. That it has been given equal status to the targets required for CFS and Business Fire Safety realigns the balance that is need between protection, prevention and intervention. It means that the Service is concentrating on all aspects of service delivery, rather than those arbitrarily identified by Government through BVPIs.



The Proposals

Response to Question 3

Question asked:

In relation to fire cover for the Shrewsbury;

- I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
- I believe that the refurbishment of the existing site is the best option
- I believe that relocation to separate sites is the best option

Response Summary

Overall, the two options proposed received a very mixed response, with neither option having a clear majority from all staff. Looking at responses from staff based at Shrewsbury (wholtime and retained duty operational staff , fire safety, support staff and fire control) there is a clear majority of staff in favour of refurbishment (67%) against the relocation option (33%). In addition, with the exception fire control staff there is also a majority in favour of refurbishment within each group of staff.

In terms of the comments received, those in support of the refurbishment option slightly outweighed those received in support of relocation. There were many comments in support of relocating some of the current site facilities (e.g. HQ & Workshops).

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

a. Information

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 36 | 29 |
| Agree | 59 | 47 |
| Neither | 17 | 14 |
| Disagree | 9 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | 4 | 3 |
| Total | 125 | 100 |

b. Refurbishment

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 13 | 11 |
| Agree | 25 | 22 |
| Neither | 31 | 27 |
| Disagree | 33 | 29 |
| Strongly Disagree | 13 | 11 |
| Total | 115 | 100 |

c. Relocation

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 12 | 13 |
| Agree | 20 | 21 |
| Neither | 26 | 27 |
| Disagree | 26 | 27 |
| Strongly Disagree | 12 | 13 |
| Total | 96 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 3**a. Sufficient Information Provision**

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 125 | 36 | 59 | 17 | 9 | 4 |
| Retained | 42 | 13 | 21 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 8 | 17 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 |

b. Refurbishment option

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 115 | 13 | 25 | 31 | 33 | 13 |
| Retained | 39 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 2 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 5 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 3 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 8 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 13 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |

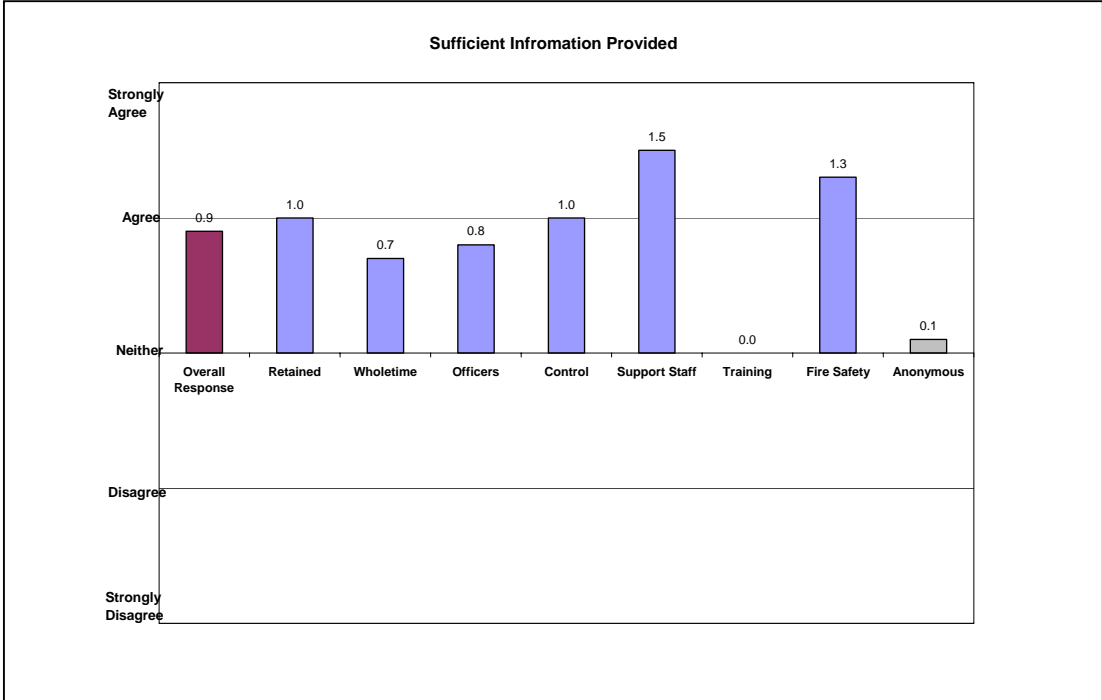
c. Relocation option

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 96 | 12 | 20 | 26 | 26 | 12 |
| Retained | 31 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 2 |
| Wholetime | 28 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 2 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 13 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |

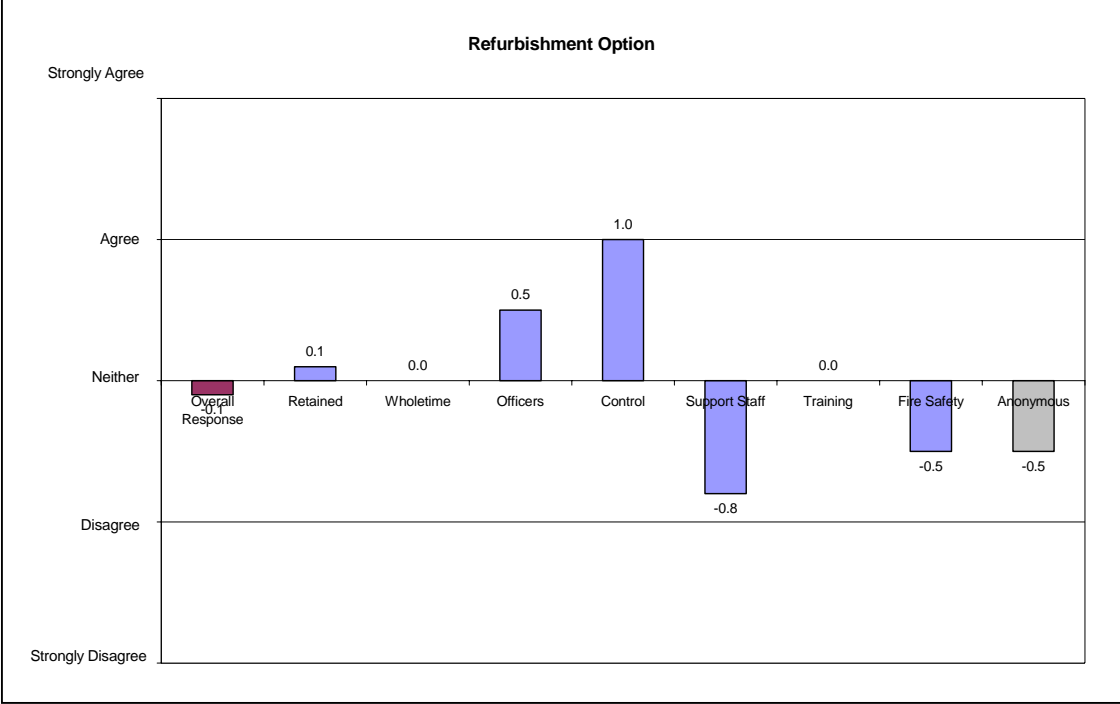


Averaged Response Graph for Question 3³

Sufficient information has been provided

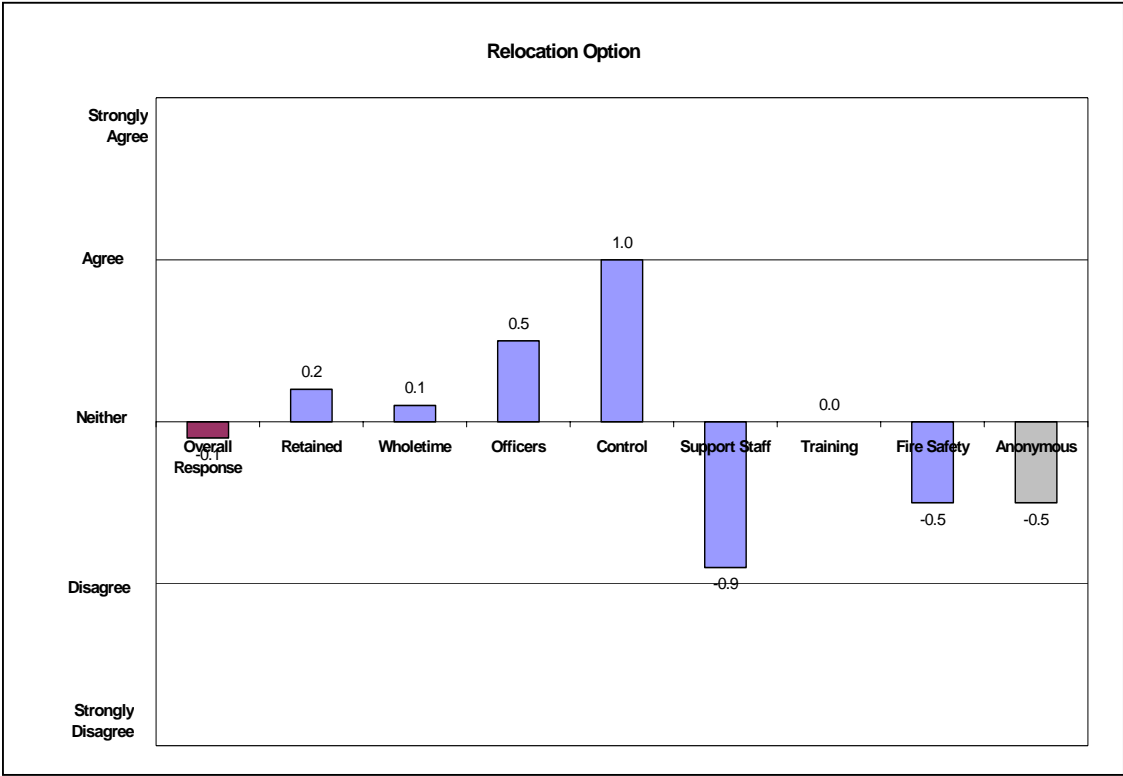


Refurbishment is the best option

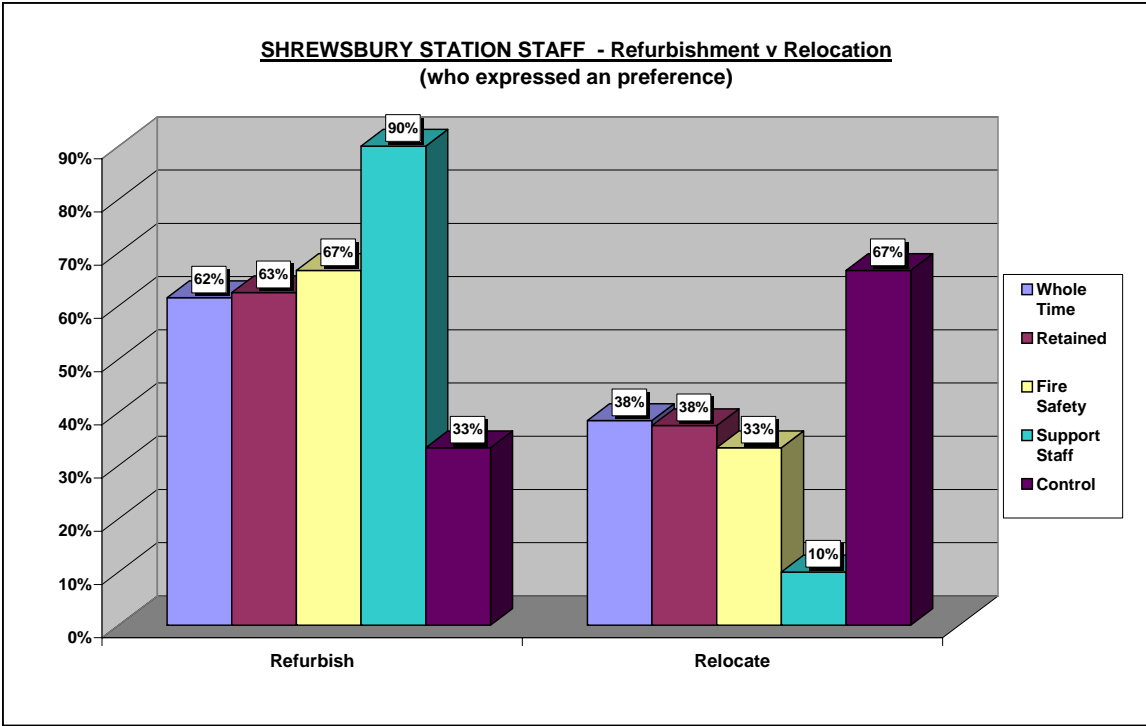


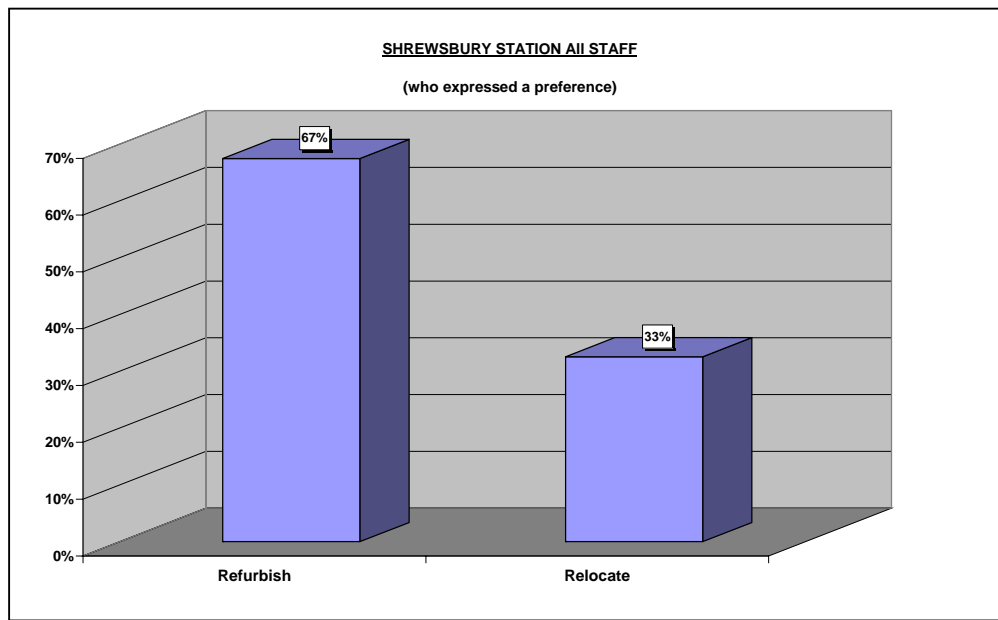
³ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Relocation is the best option



Shrewsbury Summary.





Comments made in response to Question 3

Comments in agreement with refurbishment

- This raises more questions. Cost, timescales break down of watches, possibly, movement of specialist appliances. Refurbishment should be a rebuild.
- Knock it down and rebuild suitable building.
- Alongside the refurbishment, there must be some relocation of Workshops and other non-operational facilities e.g. Fire Safety or HQ Service.
- Refurbish Shrewsbury station and relocate HQ to another site, i.e. existing office space at TC or ready built office accommodation. Split the site and sell a percentage to fund or part fund refurbishment.
- From the information given, I believe this option provides a greater value for the amount of money being discussed. It also retains the better response times for the 2 appliances to an incident.
- Safer for Firefighters, as second appliance arrival is quicker. Separate sites involved waiting 5 minutes in many cases.
- The second pump turns up to shout 5 minutes and over sometimes. This puts the first crew at greater risk. Also, Shrewsbury retained had little mention, almost suggesting they had been moved
- Strongly agree - that Workshops should relocate. Tend to disagree - on the relocation of HQ away from an operational site: re: availability of departments/managers for 'face to face' communication.
- Stay on the same site and invest more in community safety.
- Due to the time crews spend off station carrying out duties/training the location of a base is



- of less significance.
- I believe we should refurbish current site but also have a smaller satellite site if it is deemed that appliance from there would reach area of large population.
 - I obviously want what is best for our community also my fire crews. Two appliances arriving from the same area - usually, rather than opposite ends of town is preferential. Also developing this site may increase the training opportunities and spaces.
 - I don't think we should move to separate sites. Keep Fire Cover here, move Admin Support type Personnel (Workshops, Fire Safety etc) to an updated (enhanced Telford site, otherwise what else is going to be done with the spare capacity at Telford? (Refurbish and replacing windows won't cost £8m).
 - The option of moving HQ and Workshops to a different site should be looked at as part of the refurbishment.
 - As one site showed some attendance times did not differ from that of St Michael's Street, explore the option of refurbish station, sell off half existing site, and relocate one pump to new location with FSEC.
 - All options have pros and cons. Health and Safety implications are vital to relocate Workshops. The only concern I would have with relocating HQ is the distance/divide between uniform and support staff, although there would not be any detriment to the support function.
 - The station should remain there but not HQ and Workshops which do not need to be on the same site.

Comments in agreement with relocation

- Life risks within main Shrewsbury area are not all covered by 1st appliance in 10 minutes (based at St Michael's Street). Surely it is better to get one appliance to the incident (minimise protraction of incident and/or carry out immediate life rescue).
- I tend to agree that the relocation of different departments i.e. Fire Safety, Workshops, HQ is the most viable option, leaving the station in its current location. With the relocation of the appliance from TC to TW, additional space would be available at TC to allow Fire Safety to devolve personnel to this area to cover that side of the county, with, I would suggest, a minimal cost outlay. This would also free up space and facilities at Shrewsbury.
- Relocate but consider further splitting resources i.e. why is all Fire Safety at Shrewsbury when Telford could be available. Remote Workshops and FSHQ. Fire Safety could work from any office block, introducing the demountable file store has only exacerbated the site parking and vehicle movement problems. If no major benefit from splitting into 2 stations, refurbish only what is left at existing site after moving other departments to better locations. More



attention to Business Fire Safety. With the removal of one pump from TC to TW, has the possibility of utilising the resulting space been explored. For example, at least half the CFS and BFS teams live in Telford. Is it cost effective to continue travelling to Telford on a daily basis to carry out FS work when an office could be based at Telford as it was until 4 or 5 years ago?

- I do not believe that the current site is the best option for the modern Fire Service. Spending a large amount of capital should be invested in more modern premises for the future of the Service.
- But could have a small retained station still at St. Michael's site to cover the centre of Shrewsbury.
- Workshops definitely needs to be separate from other departments, they need lots of space for repairs/maintenance. Their facilities are a little dated.
- Move Wholetime to new site. Keep Retained at existing site as second pump to both Wholetime stations.

Other comments

- Two sites highlighted for new Shrewsbury station (Heath Gates and Meole). Not viable options to build a new station/H due to limited available land/space.
- Enlightening information on this section of the IRMP. I was surprised by the number of issues which required consideration.
- Options for relocating Fire Safety, Workshops, Headquarters, should all be explored. This may resolve some, if not all, of the perceived problems!
- The sensible option as presented would be to relocate the HQ and FS function (including workshops) and refurbish the operational site.
- More information is required regarding costing, logistics, site plans etc.
- Suggest one appliance and retained at present site, one at Meole to cover South of town. HQ to move to office accommodation. Workshops to move to appropriate premises. Workshops to be developed into permanent crucial crew site. HQ to be used by Fire Safety and to have a community drop in centre accessible from the street for the public.
- Alternative: Refurbish existing site but add new station in Meole Brace area. Retained personnel would then not be affected and the costs would be reduced.
- FSEC presentation lost credibility when the FIRST illustration was agreed by all (including deliverers of presentation), to be inaccurate. This was regarding time take to access Shrewsbury Town.
- Other options do not seem to have been made available for consultation. i.e. relocation of HQ, Workshops. Also, relocating a single station. DO NOT believe FSEC proved that it was



- a reliable tool with which to make judgements of this kind.
- FSEC flawed, proved nothing.
- The cost of relocation to separate sites does not give significant extra cover to make it cost effective. However, to remove the office functions i.e. HQ, CFS, BFS, to other premises would relieve congestion on this site and this could then develop this site for better training facilities.
- There was no inclusion of the retained pump in the attendance times.
- Retained not included.
- Why not relocate to one site that is better.
- To make a more informed decision I would need far greater information. The main points have been highlighted, but it is only an overview. I am aware that you can only indicate certain factors because of the fact that it is a presentation and there is limited time.
- A lot more firmer figures and sites would help me towards an opinion.
- My main concern is whether the boat will be "Primary Staffed". Shrewsbury has more water rescue incidents than house fires, splitting the station would be detrimental to its response times, and its ability to respond.
- The boat will need to be primary staffed as Shrewsbury attends more water rescues than house fires.
- Information provided IS NOT sufficient to form an opinion. It appears quite biased.
- Borrowing millions of pounds to build a new station will be a heavy drain on the budget. My fear is that this would come from the retained budget.
- Appliances could be located in different areas without the expense of new stations.
- A one station pump somewhere in Shrewsbury manned by retained firefighters.

Comments from the Fire Brigade's Union

The evidence given to staff under consultation of the Shrewsbury fire cover review strongly suggest that the benefit of splitting the attendance at Shrewsbury by relocating from St. Michael's Street to two separate sites, is minimal at best from an operational point of view. This is against what may be regarded as a lenient attendance time success rate of 75%. Shrewsbury's record for last year at 81% would question the need for relocation in those terms.

The presentation also does not take into account the operational response of the RDS appliance at Shrewsbury. The statistics are also based on life risk incidents only which can only limit the accuracy of the empirical data. If all incidents and their times were taken into account, (even if unwanted fire signal automatic fire alarm calls were removed) this would give more convincing evidence.

Further consideration must also be given to investigating the long term needs of the fire service in Shrewsbury. If it is the case that a refurbishment of the Shrewsbury site brought it up to today's needs; how long will it be before this question needs to be revisited?



Response to Question 4

Question asked:

- Officer resilience;
- a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
 - b. I agree that additional Officer Cover provision is required

Summary of responses

Overall there was significant support for the introduction of additional resilience for the provision of Officer Cover. Within individual groups there was less support for the proposal from wholetime staff and more from RDS staff.

Consultation with the 'Officer Group' indicated better support for the use of the standard flexible duty system rather than a modified flexi – duty system. In addition, this group suggested that a more effective use of resources would be achieved by increasing the number of Station Managers (SM) by 3 and Group Managers (GM) by 1, thereby enabling there to be 2 SM and 2 GM in each rota group. This would provide more flexibility in the command roles, in addition to overall improvement in officer resilience.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

A number of respondents commented on the use of recall to duty systems. While these have been used infrequently in the past to some degree of success, it is not considered to be sufficiently robust and reliable method to meet a predicated increase in the likelihood of requiring additional officer cover. The adoption of the proposal to increase the number of GM will raise the projected cost from £45k to approximately £67.6k

Summary table of responses to this statement

a. Information provision

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 30 | 24 |
| Agree | 74 | 58 |
| Neither | 18 | 14 |
| Disagree | 2 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 2 |
| Total | 127 | 100 |

b. Additional Officer Cover required

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 23 |
| Agree | 50 | 40 |
| Neither | 26 | 21 |
| Disagree | 16 | 13 |
| Strongly Disagree | 5 | 4 |
| Total | 126 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Statement 4

a. Information Provision

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 127 | 30 | 74 | 18 | 2 | 3 |
| Retained | 42 | 9 | 31 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 40 | 7 | 18 | 11 | 2 | 2 |
| Officers | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

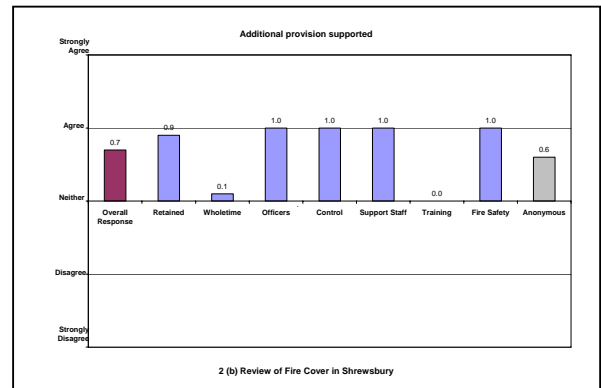
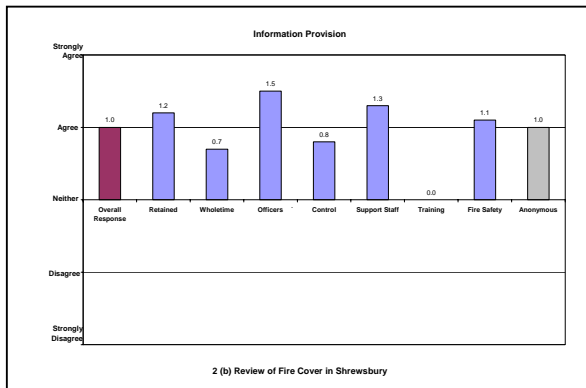
b. Agree additional Officer Cover is required

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 126 | 29 | 50 | 26 | 16 | 5 |
| Retained | 42 | 9 | 22 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 11 | 4 |
| Officers | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Statement 4⁴

Sufficient information has been provided

Additional Officer Provision required



⁴ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Comments made in response to IRMP Statement 4

Comments in agreement with statement

- Whilst the case for officer resilience was well made, I remain a little unclear as to the duties expected of the 42hour Station officers.
- Any move towards the welfare and well being is a positive one. However, care should be taken regarding shift patterns and the impact this would have on other work commitments the individual officers may have.
- This seems like a sound proposal, which will be invaluable when dealing with more than one incident were additional officers are required.
- Cover for Shropshire enhanced also possibility of recouping some cost from O/B Brigade, although 44k for the cover is not unreasonable.
- I agree providing that existing 42 hour station officers do not have a dual role within current working conditions, and flexi duty system applies.
- I agree that additional officer cover is required however; more discussion is needed with current officers on how best to achieve this.
- I feel that resilience on the flexi rota is required so therefore, feel the 'new' positions should fit onto the current flexi rota - 1x per group. Also have same pay and conditions As current flexi and not introduce yet another shift pattern.
- Officer cover should be provided for all incidents that may or may not occur. Officers off duty should not be expected to cover, even though most would, as indicated in the meeting, but cannot rely on goodwill when lives may be at risk.
- It would seem that it is of benefit and it has been highlighted that there were a number of incidents when it could have been used. It is interesting that it could be part financed by neighbouring Brigades.
- I agree that our resilience cover is open to weakness but I think that fireground/operational experience, and working the flexi duty system is required to make a fully educated decision.
- I don't believe a new post should be created but current posts are modified.
- I feel that better value for money and efficiency would be achieved by using these officers on the existing SFRS rota rather than designating a group for out of county resilience duties only.
- Add four more flexi duty officers - one per group. Spate conditions over the last two year dry and extremely wet summer.

Neutral comments

- I am aware that a meeting has been arranged to discuss this matter. I will be attending the meeting.



- The above will obviously depend on the proposed shifts/working conditions etc. Also needs to be taken into account as to what will be done if the officers in the existing posts do not want to take on flexi duty.
- Although rare if we were to incur a shift where 2 or more large incidents occurred, as outlined in the presentation, we would be devoid of officers with the current provision contingency plans need to be clarified i.e. recall to duty etc.
- After seeing the breakdown of the 84 incidents that this would have been used for 44 of these were to cover sickness. That's more than 50% of times. And we "made do". However, I do feel that it is important to have the support at OTB incidents and at actual protracted incidents. Would it be cheaper to cover by overtime?
- I think we should look into standby officers i.e. one incident all officers were deployed so it would be ideal for officers to be on standby from other brigades.
- If crews go over the border then either the OIC of appliance becomes a resilient officer or we send an RSO - or this becomes a training issue.
- If our officers didn't have the over the border responsibility, when this bordering Brigade should have adequate cover then we would have adequate cover.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- Shouldn't flexi officers provide greater weekend cover?
- I believe that the RSOs could have the training and responsibilities to carry out the role of support to RDS.
- I feel that not all aspects of officer cover have necessarily been considered. No identification of strategic management was provided for resilience issues involving Fire Control. Option of providing resilience officers on a different callout rate to flexi-rate to cover incident roles appears to be a contentious issue.
- There didn't appear to be the usual series of options to solve this 'problem'. These meant suggestions were being banded around without any formulated response.
- Poor evidence to support option of increasing officer cover.
- Explanation of requirement.
- For the frequency SFRS requires 7th officer, why not utilise a "recall" procedure. It has worked successfully in the past (Snedshill 23/12/05).
- Mid and West Wales is short of officers in the north of its area, that should be addressed in their IRMP, it's not for Shropshire to cover if we are already short. The example of sending Albrighton to a fire at Walsall, well the West Mids. reduced night cover after 2003 and mothballed 35 appliances that is something that should be reassessed by West Mids. If we have to send crews across the border, then that Brigade should assign an officer to look



- after the needs of supporting crews.
- Additional officer provision should only take place with regard to SFRS's officer needs, not neighbouring counties.
 - The statistics were rather misleading, as we have Incident Command in this Brigade, also the resources could be better spent on permanently running the boat. Also, 18 other Brigades require our staff, and then perhaps we should insist that one of their officers are detached to look after them.
 - I believe little information has been provided. What other options are there. i.e. neighbouring assistance, how often are officers used, how long is their average attendance, how often do we require cover for more than one incident?
 - A lot of money for very little return. Give us more appliances instead.

Comments from the Fire Brigade's Union

There are two aspects to this proposal. Is there a need for greater officer provision? If so, what should that provision be?

The evidence put forward would strongly suggest that there is a need for greater officer cover for Shropshire. The number of occasions that an extra officer would have been required in the previous year (84) is too frequent and the recall to duty system is not meant to be used as a standard course of action. In fact, the situation at Acousafoam as described in the presentation, where officer cover was at full stretch and no one else was available even if there had been recall to duty, indicates the need for greater officer cover. This will also provide the facility to relieve officer at protracted incidents. The need to send an officer to over the border incidents, as has been planned for in New Dimension scenarios, is a welcome step in the right direction.

But, reading between the lines of this proposal it is highly unlikely that there is justification for a quasi flexi system that appears to be intimated here. It would be of greater benefit and ease to appoint four further Station Officer personnel onto the present flexi system.



Response to Question 5

Statement made:

The IRMP Consultation process
 a. I am satisfied with the IRMP consultation process

Summary of responses

While 75% of responses indicated that they were satisfied with the IRMP consultation process there were mixed comments. A number of responses indicated that they found the presentation informative and presented an opportunity to ask questions, an equal number of comments indicated that they felt the consultation was tokenism and that the results did not influence any changes or the decisions of the Authority.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made. While it is not possible to implement or take onboard everyone's ideas and suggestions the Authority considers takes all views into account when making decisions regarding the implementation of IRMP proposals.

The outcomes from previous consultations have resulted in changes and directly influenced and shaped future Draft IRMP plans.

Summary table of responses to this statement

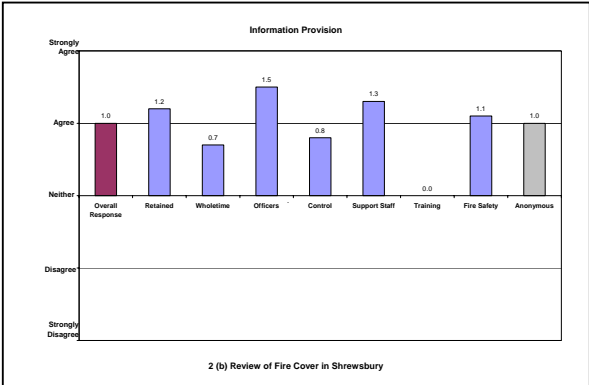
| | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 25 | 20 |
| Agree | 68 | 55 |
| Neither | 24 | 20 |
| Disagree | 5 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 123 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Statement 5

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 123 | 25 | 68 | 24 | 5 | 1 |
| Retained | 42 | 9 | 22 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 37 | 5 | 17 | 11 | 3 | 1 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Statement 5⁵



⁵ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Comments made in response to Statement 5

Comments in agreement with statement

- As a whole, it is informative but it seems that it is taken for granted that regional controls are a forgone conclusion and for the past 2 years that I know of, no mention of Control has been made during the IRMP and as an integral part of the organisation I feel this is an important factor continually overlooked.
- This was a good informative session, hopefully beneficial to all.
- ADO Whelan to be complimented on his style of presentation, very engaging for none uniformed /operational personnel.
- Lots of opportunity for questions.

Neutral comments

- This needs to prove to be genuinely listening to the staff.
- Water Safety/Rescue within Shrewsbury and County i.e. Crewing of boat plus countrywide training.
- Sometimes the people who are on the consultation panel know little about what happens on the fireground.
- Although I do find that I am personally not always up to speed with subject matter and what it means/entails, I may be missing it but I don't remember having access to or explanation of proposals prior to consultation. Although, I suppose I should just ask if I don't understand something.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- I feel there was no need to look into the Shrewsbury situation. I feel it is being looked at because the Brigade has to look at something.
- I now it's a consultation process and nothing is "cast in stone" prior to the talks. However, the IRMP doesn't change follow in the process - our input doesn't carry much weight. part from looking at two station sites this year's IRMP was pretty none descript.
- Information provided is not balanced. Brigade set the agenda. What are the options? We don't know.
- Why not reduce pressure on boat crewing and moral pressure on Ff's elsewhere by training ALL personnel on slow or stationary water rescue and supply all appliances with basic equipment to enter water?
- Presentations are too simplistic. Unless meaningful questions are asked they are completely biased towards the Brigade's plans.



Comments from the Fire Brigade's Union

We are aware that there are national drivers to concentrate the focus areas of IRMP. These are road safety, flooding, environmental protection, Heritage, Community Safety, Local Area Agreements, Equality and Diversity, Civil Contingencies Act and Wildfire.

We would support SFRS in looking more closely at these areas and also support SFRS in the continuing implementation of last year's IRMP, to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties. We also look forward to further involvement in the three Action Plan proposals in this year's IRMP and to continue the good working relationship between the FBU in Shropshire and SFRS.



The Cultural Audit

Response to Question 6

Question asked:

Do you agree that the areas we have identified to address are the right ones?

Summary of responses

The large majority (68%) agreed that the areas we have identified to address are the right ones. Whilst many staff (29%) indicated that they 'neither agree nor disagree', only 2% of staff indicated that they disagreed and they were from the same staff group (Wholetime).

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

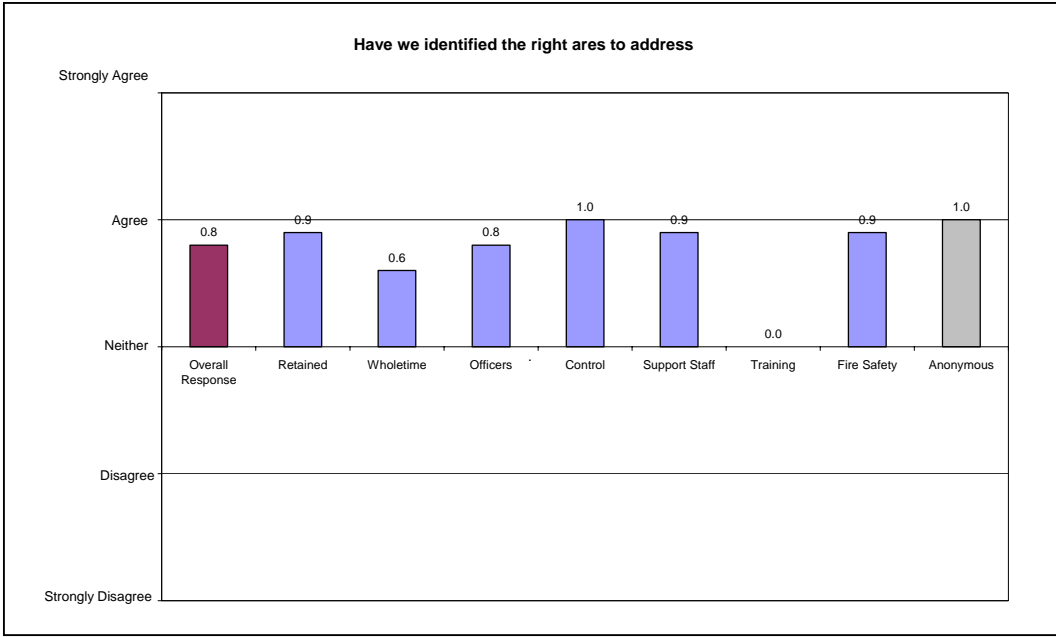
| | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 22 | 17 |
| Agree | 64 | 51 |
| Neither | 37 | 29 |
| Disagree | 3 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 126 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 6

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 126 | 22 | 64 | 37 | 3 | 0 |
| Retained | 42 | 8 | 22 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 4 | 20 | 12 | 3 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 6⁶



⁶ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 6

Comments in response to this question

- Middle management.
- Having now read the full report it would appear that teams work well and line managers do a good job. However, senior management, HR and equal ops staff have a real image problem. In the case of HR I am not surprised! Most uniformed staff are dissatisfied with the way we now promote. No consideration is given to current performance. That cannot be right.
- As manager of a section, I think that it is imperative that I am informed of the key issues that have been identified by staff in the section. These could then be addressed as priority issues within the departmental action plan. Issues/aspects that may not have been identified could be monitored/noted as generic organisational issues.
- Not enough emphasis given to bullying/harassment concerns raised by the audit.
- Control! See previous comments

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU made no comments for note in response to this question.



Response to Question 7

Question asked:

Do you agree with the suggestion that we should have Group Discussions?

Summary of responses

The suggested approach of using Group Discussions to debate the issues identified was overwhelmingly supported with 86% of the 127 respondents either agreeing, or strongly agreeing, that they be used. In terms of staff groups, as would be expected from such a high number, all staff groups who responded were positive about the suggested method.

The comments made by staff indicate that they support this idea as long as opinions raised are taken on board.

Fire Authority’s response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

The Fire Authority appreciates and thanks staff for the support that they have shown by indicating their willingness to participate in Group Discussions.

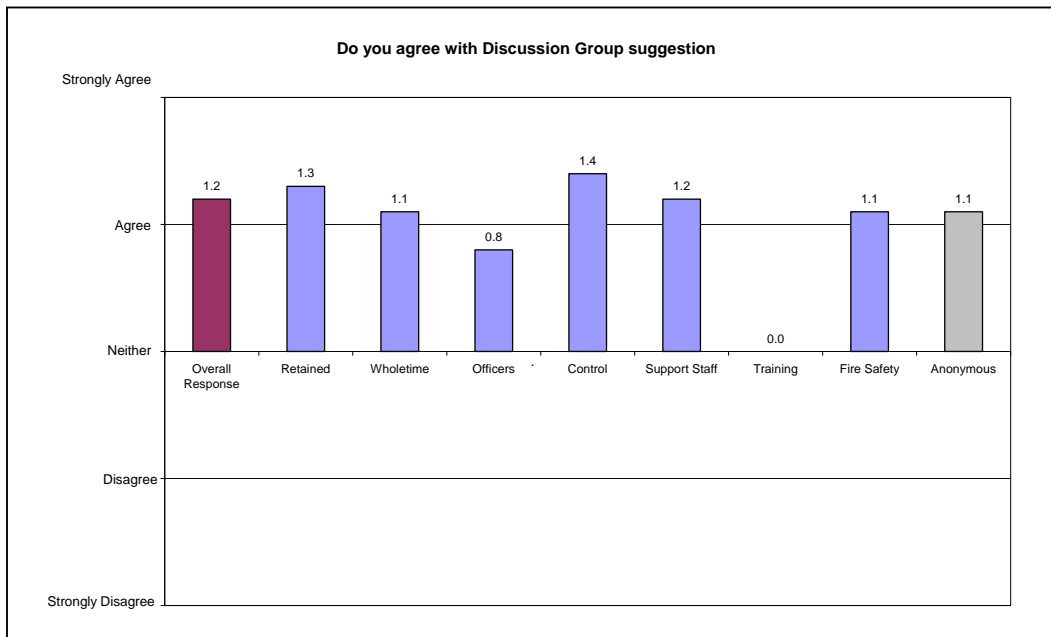
Summary table of responses to this question

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 42 | 33 |
| Agree | 67 | 53 |
| Neither | 17 | 13 |
| Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 127 | 100 |

Detailed summary of responses to Question 7

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 127 | 42 | 67 | 17 | 1 | 0 |
| Retained | 42 | 18 | 18 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 40 | 9 | 27 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Officers | 4 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 7⁷



⁷ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 7

Comments in agreement with statement

- Although I feel you may struggle to get adequate number of volunteers to step forward and clarify their position/views (some just like to moan!)
- This is probably the best format to discuss issues as it would involve a full cross section of the establishment, allowing all an opinion.
- Only if comments are taken on board.
- Group discussions would obviously, by the very nature of a group, be open to more ideas, issues may have other solutions if looked at by various individuals without any outside influence.
- Provided it is not lip service and valid points are considered.
- As long as ALL staff are represented on each group.
- These could be useful but may have to be tightly controlled to ensure they are worthwhile and not just 'talking shops'.

Neutral comments

- Not clear as to what these hope to achieve.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- There were no comments in disagreement

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU made no comments for note in response to this question.



Response to Question 8

Question asked:

Do you agree that the Group Discussion should be run by an external facilitator rather than by a member of staff?

Summary of responses

57% of staff responded positively to this question although 14% disagreed. Interestingly there was variance between the staff groups with Control and Support staff being particularly supportive whilst wholetime and retained staff felt less strongly overall.

Fire Authority’s response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

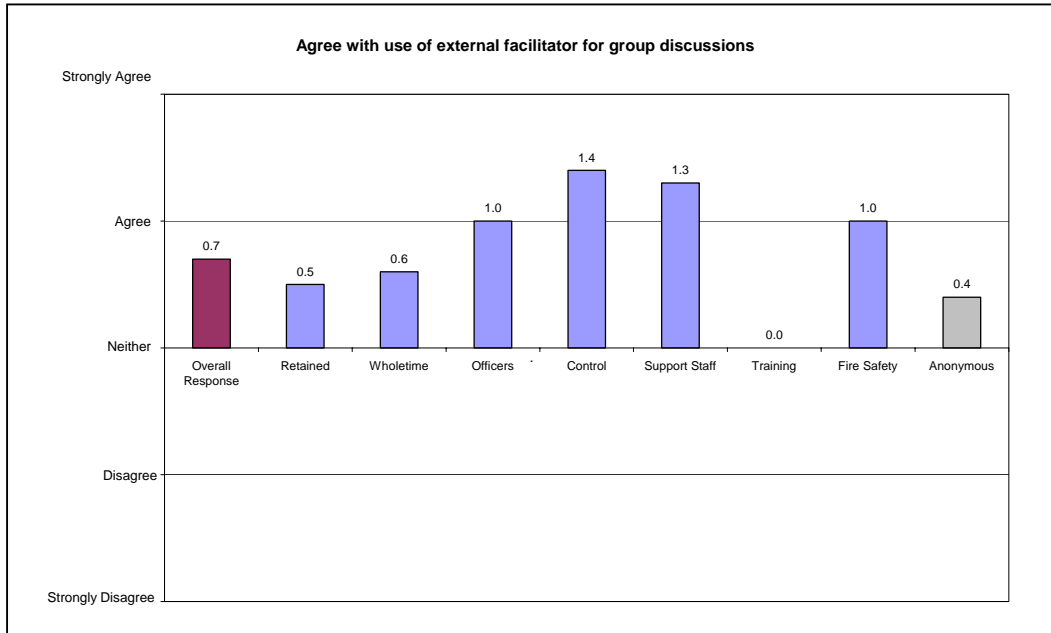
Summary table of responses to this question

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 34 | 27 |
| Agree | 38 | 30 |
| Neither | 37 | 29 |
| Disagree | 14 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 4 | 3 |
| Total | 127 | 100 |

Detailed summary of responses to Question 8

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 127 | 34 | 38 | 37 | 14 | 4 |
| Retained | 42 | 8 | 10 | 18 | 5 | 1 |
| Wholetime | 40 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 2 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 8⁸



⁸ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 8

Comments in agreement with statement

- It may help secure (above) if they have the opportunity to voice opinions to outside body.
- The people who feel they would not be able to speak freely in front of members of FS staff would probably find it easier to express their opinions in confidence to an external facilitator.
- To promote free discussion.
- Group discussions should consist of mixed groups of different departments and rank levels rather than individual watches, departments, officers etc.

Neutral comments

- "Independent" would be a better word.
- However, what would be the arrangements of rank/positions of personnel in discussion groups? ... Personnel will not be honest and open in mixed groups.
- I think impartiality is VERY important in this.
- In my opinion, this would depend quite heavily on the issues raised/to be discussed.
- If the person who runs this is capable it shouldn't matter where they're from.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- Group discussions should be about and discussed by people who know the Brigade and its working forum.
- No, again they tend not to know about how we work or our procedures. Needs to be someone from within the Service but who can be unbiased.
- Independent and without conflict of interest. Facilitators would put a biased slant on this process.
- Don't see why that would make a difference but don't want staff members going in with a pre-set agenda.

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU commented that they hoped that discussion groups would be set up.



Response to Question 9

Question asked:

Would you like to take part in a group discussion?

Please tick the areas that you think should be addressed at a Group Discussion

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| a. Perception of positive discrimination | e. Discrimination |
| b. Issues with senior management | f. Access to promotion |
| c. Bullying | g. Bureaucracy |
| d. Harassment | |

Summary of responses

Overall 47% of the 118 respondents indicated that they would be prepared to participate in a discussion group.

In terms of the areas to be covered within those group discussions, there was strong support for all of the suggested areas particularly for the issue of positive discrimination (82%), but each of the other suggested areas received strong support (over 65%). Whilst in general there was little disagreement, in the areas of bullying and harassment 7% of respondents disagreed that those topics should be addressed at a group discussion.

Fire Authority’s response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

Would you like to participate in group discussions?

| | Count | Total % |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 56 | 47 |
| No | 62 | 53 |
| Total | 118 | 100 |

Areas to be addressed at a Group Discussion

a. Perception of positive discrimination

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 37 | 32 |
| Agree | 57 | 50 |
| Neither | 21 | 18 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 115 | 100 |

b. Issues with senior management

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 23 | 20 |
| Agree | 55 | 49 |
| Neither | 30 | 27 |
| Disagree | 4 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 113 | 100 |



| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 26 |
| Agree | 48 | 42 |
| Neither | 28 | 25 |
| Disagree | 5 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 113 | 100 |

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 28 | 25 |
| Agree | 48 | 42 |
| Neither | 29 | 26 |
| Disagree | 5 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 113 | 100 |

e. Discrimination

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 34 | 30 |
| Agree | 54 | 48 |
| Neither | 23 | 20 |
| Disagree | 2 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 113 | 100 |

f. Access to promotion

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 26 |
| Agree | 43 | 39 |
| Neither | 33 | 30 |
| Disagree | 5 | 5 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |

g. Bureaucracy

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 26 | 46 |
| Agree | 19 | 34 |
| Neither | 11 | 20 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 56 | 100 |

Detailed summary of responses to Question 9

Would you like to participate in group discussions?

| | Number of responses | Yes | No |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall response | 118 | 56 | 62 |
| Retained | 37 | 21 | 16 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 19 | 19 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Control | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 14 | 6 | 8 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 1 | 9 |



a. Perception of positive discrimination

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 115 | 37 | 57 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 16 | 20 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 12 | 19 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 1 | 5 | 3 | | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

b. Issues with senior management

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 113 | 23 | 55 | 30 | 4 | 1 |
| Retained | 39 | 9 | 14 | 14 | 2 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 36 | 6 | 17 | 11 | 2 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

c. Bullying

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 113 | 29 | 48 | 28 | 5 | 3 |
| Retained | 39 | 12 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| Wholetime | 37 | 6 | 16 | 14 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 |



d. Harassment

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 113 | 28 | 48 | 29 | 5 | 3 |
| Retained | 39 | 12 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 7 | 15 | 15 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 8 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |

e. Discrimination

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 113 | 34 | 54 | 23 | 2 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 15 | 18 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 8 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

f. Access to promotion

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 94 | 20 | 43 | 30 | 1 | 0 |
| Retained | 31 | 7 | 15 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 30 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

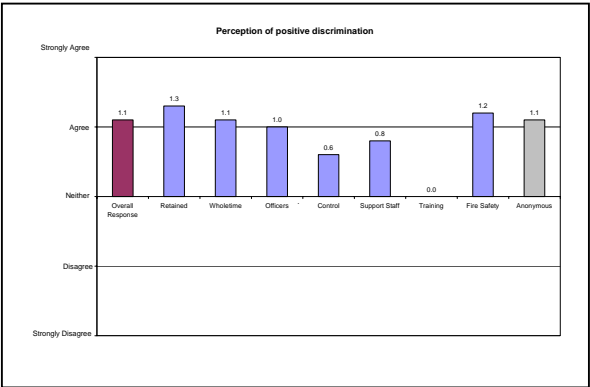


g. Bureaucracy

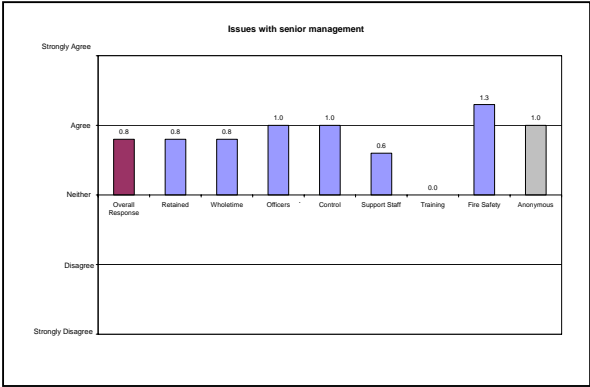
| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 110 | 26 | 50 | 33 | 1 | 0 |
| Retained | 40 | 10 | 19 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 36 | 10 | 14 | 11 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 7 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 9⁹

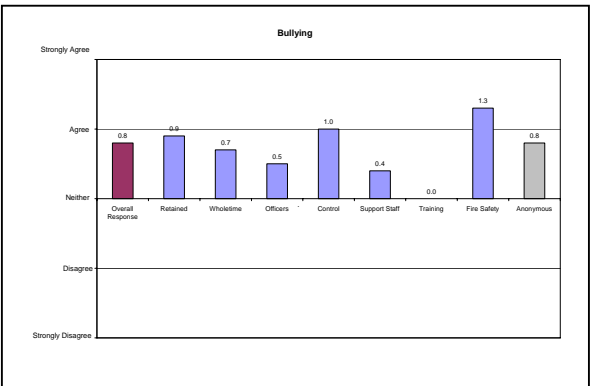
a. Perception of positive discrimination



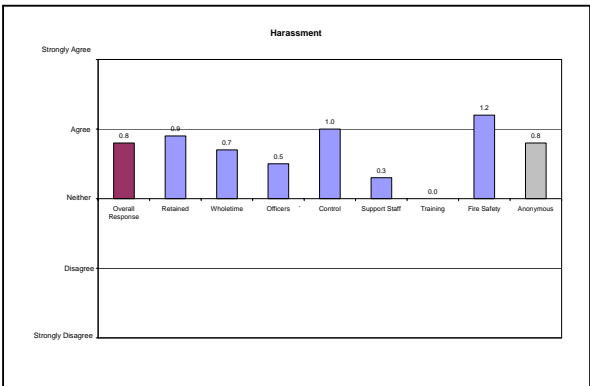
b. Issues with senior management



c. Bullying

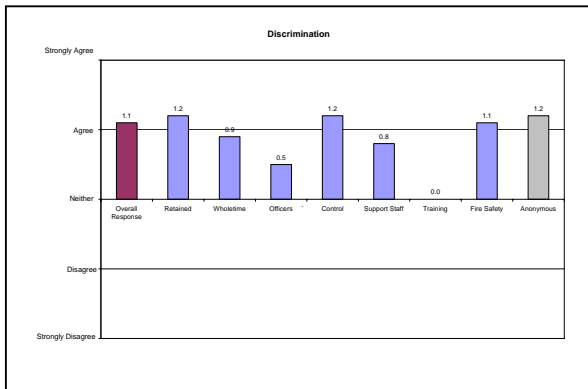


d. Harassment

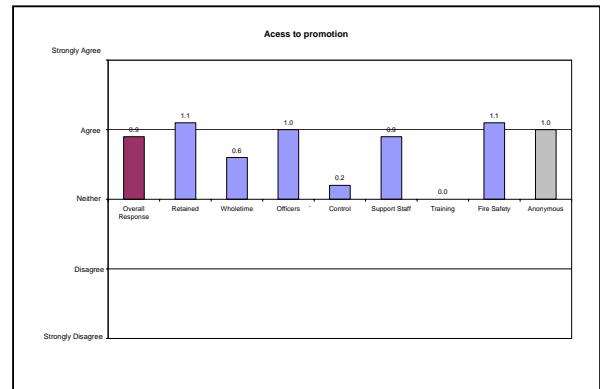


⁹ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

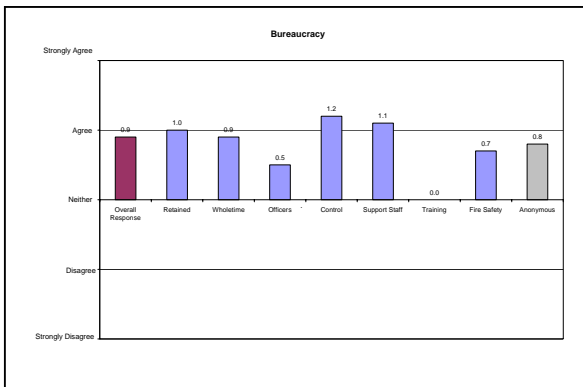
e. Discrimination



f. Access to promotion



g. Bureaucracy



Response Comments made in response to Question 9

Comments in agreement with statement

- o Yes - perhaps depending on the remit.

Neutral comments

- o I suspect the last area would be answered differently according to department. Specific localised discussion should also be included e.g. Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Community Fire Safety etc
- o DO identified senior management as him and the CFO. On completing the audit a senior manager could refer to even an Lf or above.
- o Areas could vary according to wishes of the Group.
- o As at this time has no immediate impact.
- o Are we talking a working party or watch based?

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- o Dealt with under legislation, no need to go against statutory obligations. These areas are implemented successfully.



- Perception of the above could be more easily addressed by communicating the facts

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

Whilst the FBU did not disagree with the areas highlighted they have also highlighted dissatisfaction as an issue: 'at least a quarter of staff that intend to leave in the next fire (sic) years, report dissatisfaction as their reason.... It indicates that something is going awry somewhere.'



Response to Question 10

Question asked:

Do you agree with the suggestion that we should have workplace visits?

Summary of responses

72% of respondents agreed that we should have workplace visits and 4% disagreed or disagreed strongly. The highest levels of support for this initiative came from Control, Retained Duty System staff and Fire Safety.

Fire Authority’s response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

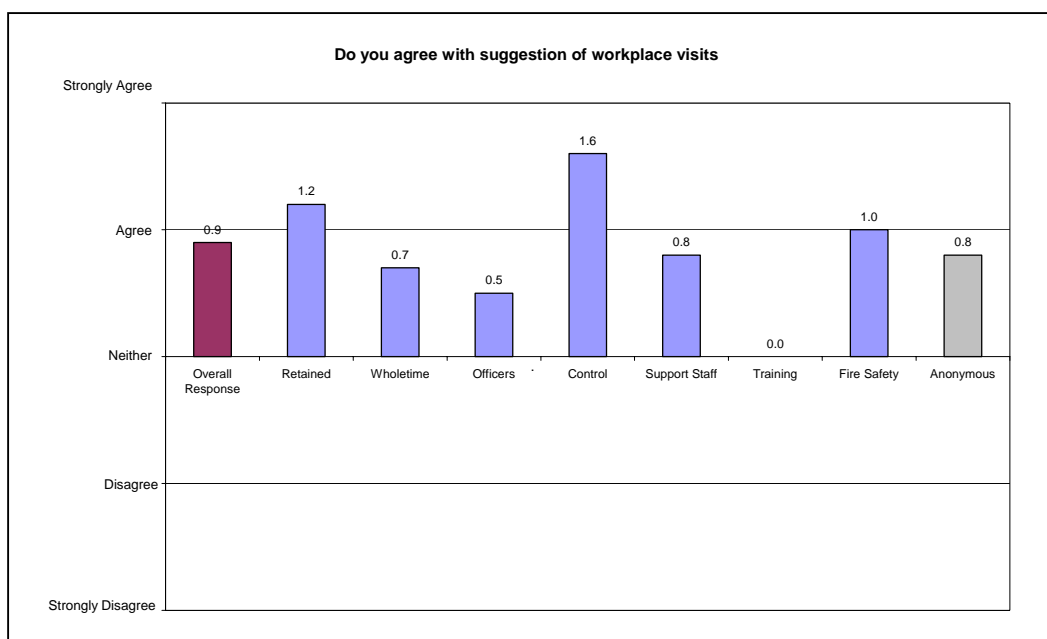
| | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 24 |
| Agree | 58 | 48 |
| Neither | 29 | 24 |
| Disagree | 3 | 2 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 2 |
| Total | 122 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 10

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 119 | 29 | 58 | 29 | 3 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 13 | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime Officers | 38 | 6 | 18 | 11 | 3 | 0 |
| Control | 4 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 11 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 12 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 10¹⁰



¹⁰ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 10

Comments in agreement with statement

- As a watch, we get frequent visits from DSO. I don't remember anything being discussed about workplace visits.
- Yes, with a cross section of the workforce i.e. mixed ranks.
- This is an area where it would demonstrate to staff members that they feel valued and senior management have not forgotten them and that their opinion is valued.
- Inter departmental and varying rank level group discussions may prompt more diverse discussions.
- Undisturbed if possible.
- On the proviso these are WELL coordinated with duty staff.
- To inform us of what is going on.
-

Neutral comments

- Consultation process is already a workplace visit.
- These could be very useful but will they be genuine opportunities for 2 way communication or just lectures?

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- No. If people want a career in the Fire Service there are numerous locations (i.e. Website) to gain knowledge.
- There is a tendency to celebrate the positives and explain away the 'issues' - if we accept one we must accept both.

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU made no comments for note in response to this question.



Response to Question 11

Question asked:

What information do you think we should communicate at a workplace visit?

- Information about positive discrimination and the law
- Information about our recruitment and selection process
- Information about our Assessment Development centres (ADC's)
- Process for dealing with bullying/harassment
- Other please state

Summary of responses

Each of the suggested areas to be covered at a workplace visit were supported by between 73% and 76% of the respondents with very low levels of disagreement (2-4%). In the comments made in response to this question, some other suggestions were made e.g. use of operational equipment and information relating to policies, change etc and these may be useful additional topics where time/resources permit.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

a. Positive discrimination and law

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 24 |
| Agree | 58 | 49 |
| Neither | 29 | 24 |
| Disagree | 3 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 119 | 100 |

b. Recruitment and selection

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 24 |
| Agree | 58 | 49 |
| Neither | 29 | 24 |
| Disagree | 3 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 119 | 100 |

c. Assessment Development Centres

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 31 | 27 |
| Agree | 56 | 49 |
| Neither | 26 | 23 |
| Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 115 | 100 |

d. Bullying/harassment

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 26 | 23 |
| Agree | 58 | 51 |
| Neither | 25 | 22 |
| Disagree | 4 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 113 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 11**a. Positive discrimination and the law**

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 116 | 25 | 63 | 28 | 0 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 13 | 19 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 5 | 23 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |

b. Recruitment and selection

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 115 | 32 | 64 | 17 | 2 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 17 | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 6 | 22 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

c. Assessment Development Centres

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 115 | 31 | 56 | 26 | 1 | 1 |
| Retained | 39 | 13 | 20 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 9 | 15 | 14 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

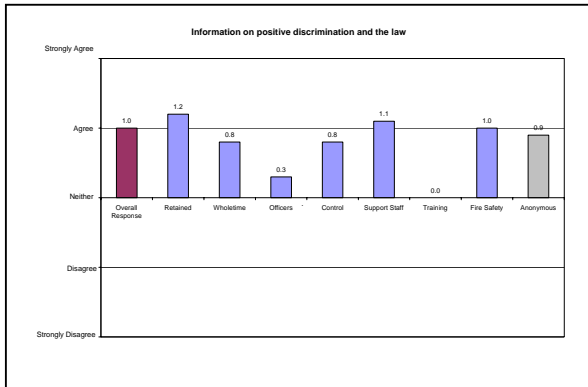


d. Bullying and Harassment

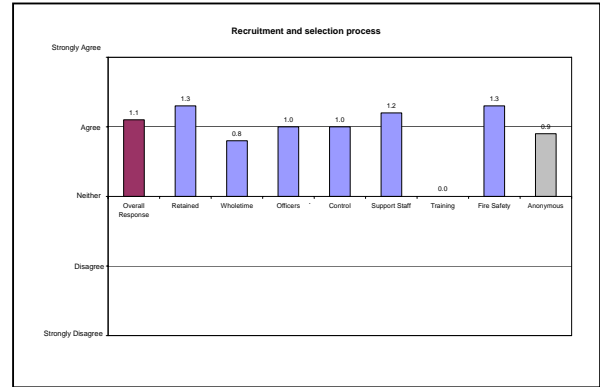
| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 113 | 26 | 58 | 25 | 4 | 0 |
| Retained | 39 | 14 | 18 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 36 | 4 | 19 | 12 | 1 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 11¹¹

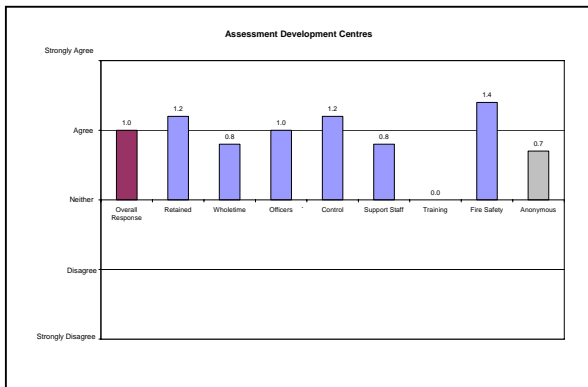
a. Positive discrimination and the law



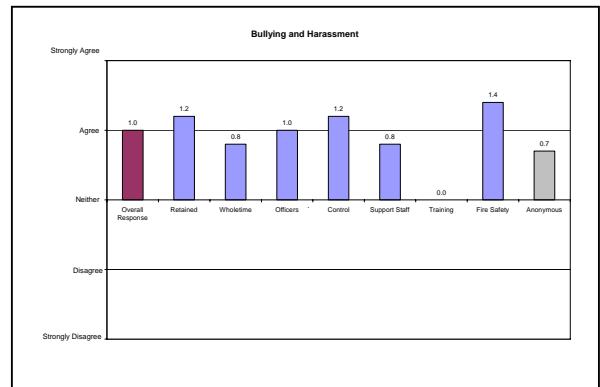
b. Recruitment and selection process



c. Assessment Development Centres



d. Bullying/harassment



¹¹ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 11

Comments in response to question

- Feedback team performance.
- Ops procedures for new equipment!
- Any information relating to policies, change, etc.
- If relevant (please see comment to Q10.)
- Stress and its effects in the workplace.
- Re: Process for dealing with bullying/harassment: Not sure if this is the right forum, perhaps sample those people who have been through the process.
- Have open forum, i.e. all issues.
- Already dealt with however, on Equality and Fairness Training session. 12. Scenarios or generic experience has to be used in training sessions.
- Work conditions.
- What is going on and why certain decisions are made.
- Any information on table!

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU made no comments for note in response to this question.



Response to Question 12

Question asked:

Do you agree that the comments given in confidence should be shared with small groups of staff/ reps to enable us to identify further areas for development or improvement?

Summary of responses

The majority of respondents agreed to the comments given in confidence being shared with small groups of staff/reps. 73% of the 119 respondents agree or strongly agree. The strongest levels of agreement came from Control, Support staff and Fire Safety. Some anonymous respondents (6 out of 10) did not agree.

There were only three comments made in this area and they all relate to concerns about confidentiality. The aim was to seek permission to use generic comments where an individual was not identifiable and therefore we aimed to allay such concerns.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made and thanks staff for their support in this area.

Summary table of responses to this question

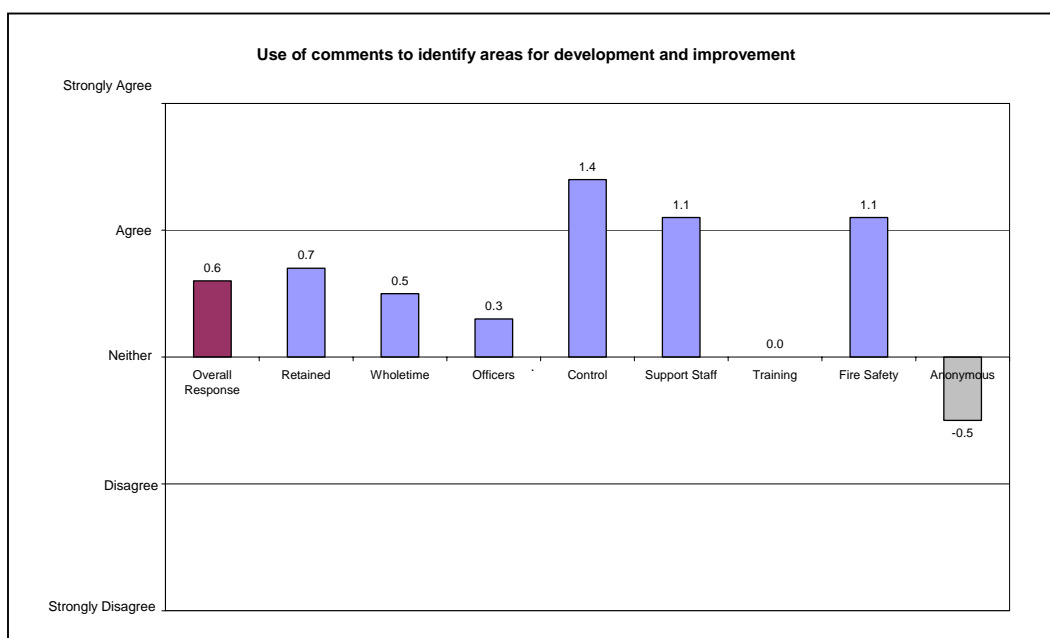
| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 24 |
| Agree | 58 | 49 |
| Neither | 29 | 24 |
| Disagree | 3 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 119 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 12

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 119 | 28 | 53 | 12 | 16 | 10 |
| Retained | 39 | 10 | 16 | 6 | 6 | 1 |
| Wholetime | 39 | 6 | 19 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Officers | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Control | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 12¹²



Response Comments made in response to Question 12

Comments in response to this question

- Must be with permission only, even if generic.
- As long as confidentiality is maintained. Generally, I feel any comments which may improve areas for development should be shared/ considered.

Comments in disagreement with the statement

- Some individuals can be traced back.

¹² See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU commented that *'a great deal of credence must be given to text comments, as these have required effort on behalf of the staff rather than just ticking boxes. It would therefore indicate that these comments are sincerely meant, whatever the format of these texts.'*



Response to Question 13

Question asked:

The results presented have given you a general overview, are there any specific issues you would like to comment on?

Summary of responses

The majority of staff, 82% had no comment to make. None of our Control staff chose to make comment but of the other departments that responded, small numbers from each commented. Of the eight comments received equality and promotion were each mentioned twice

Fire Authority’s response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

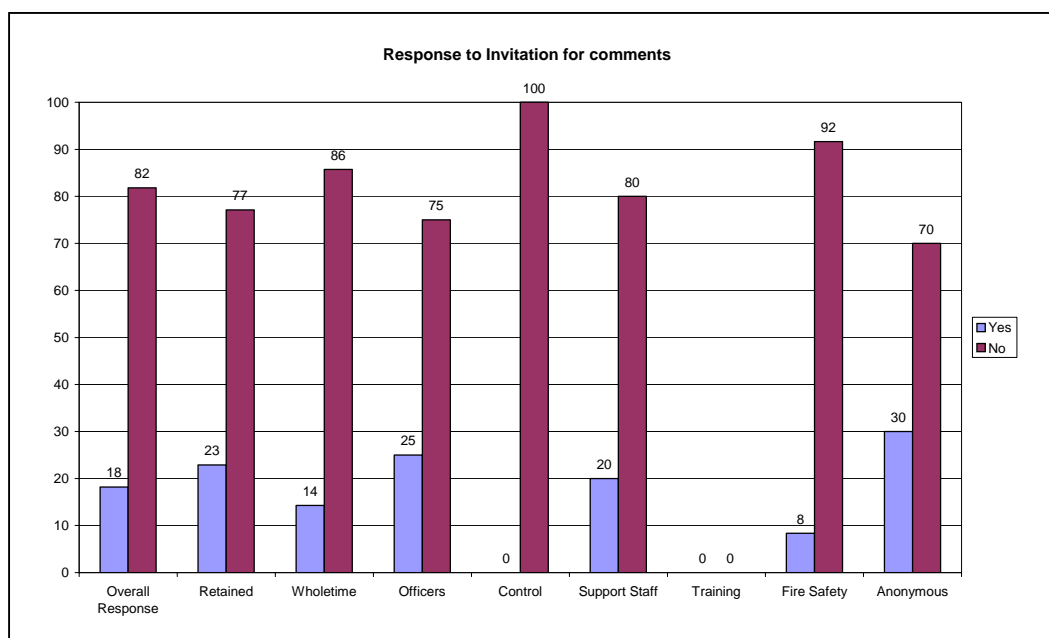
| | Count | Total % |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 20 | 18 |
| No | 90 | 82 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 13

| | Number of responses | Yes | No |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall response | 110 | 20 | 90 |
| Retained | 35 | 8 | 27 |
| Wholetime | 35 | 5 | 30 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Control | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Support Staff | 10 | 2 | 8 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 1 | 11 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 3 | 7 |

Response Graph for Question 13



Response Comments made in response to Question 13

Comments received

- Welfare/equality/standards in which we work in and use.
- CFS in rural properties as before.
- Future open days should be for everyone together so all genders and races are treated equally. No positive discrimination.
- I do not personally consider this to be a good review. Senior management and HR have a serious image problem. Consistent policies on selection and promotion of staff may help!



- Identification of departmental issues to be made available to managers.
- Should be regular feedback.
- Having to take exam for promotion
- Not sure whether 55% of staff thinks senior management give clear leadership should be a positive.

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

It is incredulous that a nationally thought out document could deal with discrimination, bullying and harassment in such a ham-fisted way. The design of these questions severely limits the conclusions that could be reached from the responses. Despite this, it is of concern that where such cases have been handled by management, 74% felt that it was dealt with ineffectively. It is understandable that this may include significant numbers who have been dissatisfied with the outcome, whether that outcome was a fair one or not, but the magnitude of this figure is surprising.

On the issue of positive discrimination, the Service should not account for this as a general misunderstanding in the questionnaire for positive action. During the IRMP consultation this year, discussions have centred on this point. However, we believe that there is a high number of staff that do believe that SFRS practice positive discrimination, regardless of the low amounts of women and ethnic minorities that have been successful in joining the service.



Response to Question 14

Question asked:

How do you think we should communicate progress against the action plan/keep staff up to date with what is going on?

- a. Updates on The Pink
- b. CFO Newsletter
- c. Officer in Charge Meetings
- d. Team/Watch Meetings.

Summary of responses

The highest individual positive response was for the suggestion of providing updates on 'The Pink' (85%) however the highest consistent score across all departments/teams was for team/watch meetings as a means of communication.

Fire Authority's response

The Fire Authority notes all comments made.

Summary table of responses to this question

a. Updates on the Pink

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 44 | 37 |
| Agree | 57 | 48 |
| Neither | 10 | 8 |
| Disagree | 6 | 5 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 118 | 100 |

b. CFO Newsletter

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 29 | 26 |
| Agree | 50 | 45 |
| Neither | 26 | 23 |
| Disagree | 6 | 5 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 112 | 100 |

c. Officer in Charge Meetings

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 27 | 25 |
| Agree | 47 | 43 |
| Neither | 27 | 25 |
| Disagree | 8 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |

d. Team/Watch Briefings

| | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 27 | 25 |
| Agree | 47 | 43 |
| Neither | 27 | 25 |
| Disagree | 8 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |



Detailed summary of responses to Question 14**a. Updates on the Pink**

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 118 | 44 | 57 | 10 | 6 | 1 |
| Retained | 39 | 16 | 20 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 12 | 18 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Officers | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Control | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 13 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 11 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

b. CFO Newsletter

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 112 | 29 | 50 | 26 | 6 | 1 |
| Retained | 35 | 11 | 17 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 37 | 5 | 13 | 15 | 3 | 1 |
| Officers | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 11 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 |

c. Officer in Charge Meetings

| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 110 | 27 | 47 | 27 | 8 | 1 |
| Retained | 37 | 12 | 16 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 8 | 15 | 13 | 2 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Control | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 10 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 9 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 |

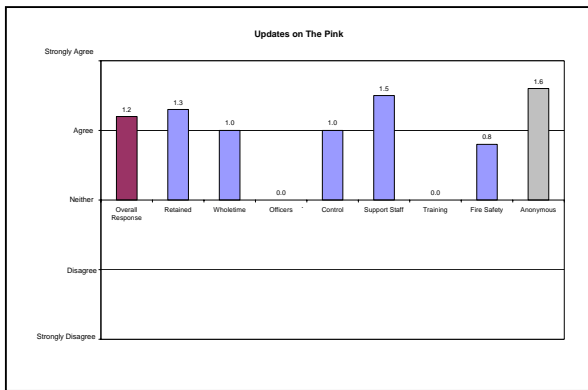


d. Team/Watch Briefings

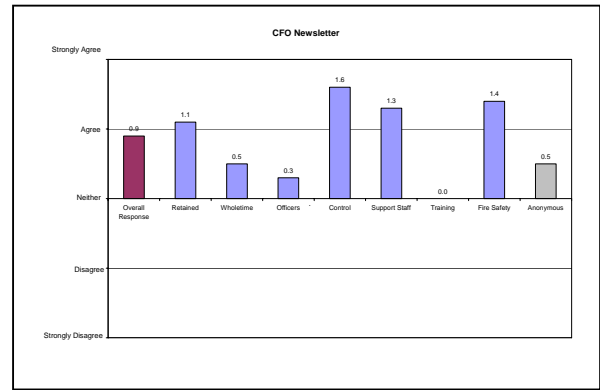
| | Number of responses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Overall response | 115 | 49 | 51 | 11 | 4 | 0 |
| Retained | 38 | 16 | 15 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Wholetime | 38 | 17 | 19 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Officers | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Control | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 11 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fire Safety | 12 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Anonymous | 10 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 |

Averaged Response Graph for Question 14¹³

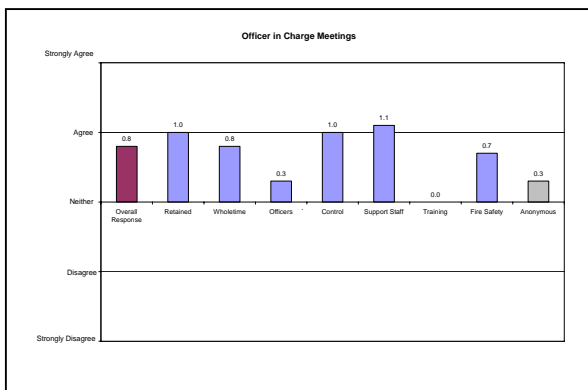
a. Updates on the Pink



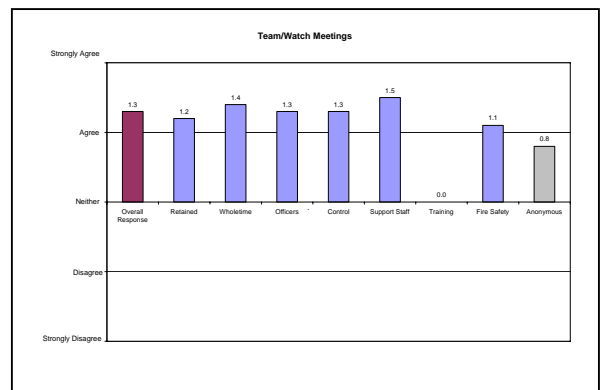
b. CFO Newsletter



c. Officer in Charge Meetings



d. Team/Watch Briefings



¹³ See appendix A for how these figures were calculated.

Response Comments made in response to Question 14

Other suggested methods

- On parade on drill nights.
- Via the website maybe intranet.
- Intranet.
- Email
- Visits from management.
- Review by external facilitator.
- Email/using as many options as possible to communicate.
- Email
- If Watch meetings, then someone external so that Watch should take the meeting and it doesn't become biased.
- All of above and forums.
- Use all available avenues.
- Internet as long as it is accessible to everyone.
- Emails? Personal letters?
- Quarterly short meetings with senior officers.
- Update meeting with the people making the decisions
- It is always good to have 2-way communication

Comments made by the Fire Brigade's Union

There were no comments from the FBU to note in this specific area.



Other comments received

Other comments received from staff

- We should be more proactive in water rescue. Somebody is drowning and we can only go up to our knees. Where's the RESCUE in Fire and Rescue Service???
- I would have liked an overview of fire cover in the Telford area.
- LPU to stay in Shrewsbury, no need to move it!!
- Feel unhappy about relocation LPU
- The presentation although said to be unbiased, was not balanced, particularly officer resilience. There was nothing constructive spoken about water rescue.
- LPU should stay in Shrewsbury
- I would like to see the interim measure put into place for the Ironbridge contingency plans which was discussed in line with last year's IRMP and the small fires unit i.e. the ranger configured with equipment for an initial attack of appropriate fire.
- The future development of Wellington station be fully transparent and done in partnership with the Watches that work there.
- There is a tendency to celebrate the positives and explain away the 'issues' - if we accept one we must accept both.

Other comments received from the Fire Brigade's Union

The FBU gave a very detailed response to the Fire Authority's Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09 for which the Authority is grateful. A copy of their response will be made available to all Fire Authority Members and members of the public as part of the consultation report presented to the Fire Authority on 19 December.

Fire Authority's response to other comments made

The Fire Authority notes the all comments received.

The Fire Authority wished to put on record their thanks to all of its Staff and the Fire Brigades Union for their constructive input and involvement in the IRMP process.

In addition the Authority particularly wished to record its thanks to all Staff Representative Bodies (RB's) for their positive and enthusiastic work in supporting and developing the response to the Cultural Audit with the Assistant Chief Officer.



Appendix A - How the figures shown in the 'Averaged Response Graph' were calculated.

The 'Averaged Response Graphs', included as part of each section of this report, provide a simple way of representing the level of agreement various groups of staff feel with each statement. They attempt to visually summarise the data portrayed in the detailed response tables provided above each graph. To ensure the information conveyed in these graphs is kept in proper context, they should be viewed in conjunction with the detailed data tables.

The figures presented in the 'Averaged Response Graph' were calculated as follows:

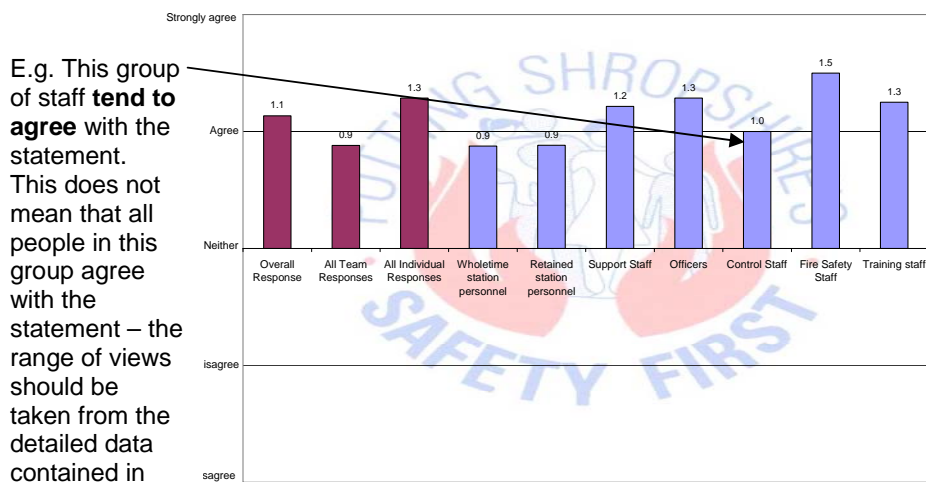
An individual or team were asked to rate their response to each statement about the Fire Authority's IRMP and Action Plan on the following scale:

Strongly Agree --- Agree --- Neither --- Disagree --- Strongly Disagree

These responses were given a score (an 'agreement rating') relating to their level of agreement with the statement. The scores used were as follows:

| Agreement rating | Score |
|-------------------|-------|
| Strongly Agree | 2 |
| Agree | 1 |
| Neither | 0 |
| Disagree | -1 |
| Strongly Disagree | -2 |

These scores are then averaged for various group groups of staff (i.e. the 'agreement rating' from all respondents in a group were averaged for the number of respondents in that group). This 'Averaged Response' score has then been graphically represented against an axis showing the average level of agreement with each statement by that particular group (see example graph below).





Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09

Stake Holder and Public Consultation Response Document

November 2007



Putting Shropshire's Safety First
www.shropshirefire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Following the release of its Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan for 2008/09 in August 2007, the Fire Authority has conducted three months of consultation with all interested parties. This report summarises the feedback received by the Fire Authority from members of the public and stakeholder organisations.

The Fire Authority's approach to the consultation process complied with guidance issued by both the Cabinet Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). Additionally, the consultation process followed the recommendations of Opinion Research Services (ORS), who are independent research consultants contracted to assist with this and other consultation exercises on behalf of the Fire Authority.

The feedback received during this process has been extremely perceptive and constructive. The significant outcomes from the consultation process are as follows:

- There is strong support for the Authority's remaining IRMP Priorities
- There is a higher level of support for the refurbishment of Shrewsbury than that for relocation
- There was unanimous support and recognition that increased Officer Cover Resilience is required
- Overall there is a high degree of satisfaction with the Authority's IRMP consultation process

These findings will be reported to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 19 December 2007, when the Fire Authority will make any changes it considers appropriate to its Draft Action Plan 2008/09. The Action Plan 2008/09 will be published by 1 April 2008 and the changes it contains will be implemented.



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| 2. Do you agree with the Fire Authority’s remaining stated Strategic Priorities..... | 10 |
| a. Community Safety in the rural community..... | 10 |
| b. Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury | 10 |
| c. Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire. | 10 |
| 3. Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review..... | 11 |
| a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion..... | 11 |
| b. I believe that the refurbishment of the existing site is the best option | 11 |
| c. I believe that relocation to separate sites is the best option..... | 11 |
| 4. Officer Resilience | 17 |
| a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion..... | 17 |
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Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform all interested parties of:

- The details of the stakeholder and public consultation process undertaken by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority, on its Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan for 2008/09;
- The comments received from stakeholders and the public of Shropshire from this consultation process; and
- Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's response to the comments made on its Draft IRMP Action Plan.

All of the feedback contained in this report, combined with that received from the Fire Authority's consultation with its staff, will be used to inform the projects that have been proposed as part of the Fire Authority's Draft Action Plan for 2008/09.



Approach to Consultation

As described in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), the Fire Authority's approach to consultation complied with guidance issued by both the Cabinet Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). The central tenet of this guidance is that the extent of consultation should be proportional to the scope of the proposed changes contained in the Draft IRMP Action Plan, and should focus upon communities or interest groups particularly affected by these changes.

To ensure the Authority received independently corroborated feedback from this process, the Fire Authority solicited the help of a consultancy company (Opinion Research Services or ORS) to conduct a significant part of the consultation process. ORS have many years experience in consulting on behalf of Public Service bodies across the whole of the country, including involvement in many fire authorities IRMP processes.

The area for consultation in this year's action plan was the future provision of fire cover in Shrewsbury. Unlike previous years, the major issue under consideration in this year's IRMP consultation did not offer a definitive proposal. Rather it was an opportunity to inform the Fire Authority of the preferred option in relation to redevelopment or relocation to an alternative site(s) for the Shrewsbury facilities. As such any changes in this year's consultation would primarily affect staff at Shrewsbury, Workshops and Headquarters, together with the local communities in those areas.

In addition the future provision of Officer Cover to meet periods of peak activity and provided resilience for Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service formed part of the public and stakeholder consultations.

The consultation results in this report form only part of the consultation process undertaken by the Fire Authority; with additional consultation also having been undertaken with the staff of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. Results from the staff consultation process have been included in a separate report.

This report summarises the consultation process with members of the public, their representatives, the business community and other organisations that have a vested interest in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Consulting with the Public

The two methods of consultation with members of the public involved:

- Formal 'Public Scrutiny Panels';
- An on-line questionnaire.



Public Scrutiny Panels

Building on experience from previous years consultation with ORS the Fire Authority determined that the most effective means for consulting with members of the public remained through the use of 'Scrutiny Panels'.

There is an increasing need for the Fire Authority to have an ongoing process of consultation. This is not only for its IRMP's, but also for other issues upon which it must consult each year (e.g. budgetary planning). In order to maximise the quality of public involvement, it is important that people should be able to voice 'informed' opinions.

One of the main issues that emerged from the consultation undertaken during the Fire Authority's first year IRMP was that there was a relatively low level of awareness of the changing role of the Fire Service amongst the general public. This necessitated a significant amount of time being spent on providing information to enable people to discuss the issues in an informed manner.

For this reason ORS recommended that 'Scrutiny Panels' be set up within Shropshire. A 'Public Scrutiny Panel' is a group of people, representing a cross-section of the community, who can be called upon for various consultation requirements, over a number of years. These Panels will therefore build up a level of knowledge and expertise regarding the workings of the Fire and Rescue Service. The benefit of taking this approach is that the Fire Authority is able to demonstrate that an 'informed' process of consultation has taken place. Essentially, the more people know, the more likely they are to have useful insights and ideas to contribute.

ORS recruited a total of 31 people who attended one of two panels, held in the Ludlow and Shrewsbury. The recruitment process ensured that panel members represent a true cross-section of the community.

These panel members received the Fire Authority's IRMP documents prior to the meetings. During the meetings, the Fire Authority's IRMP Team gave a summary presentation on the purpose of IRMP and the specific proposals contained in its proposed Action Plan. After a lengthy question and answers session, the group was split into several smaller groups. Each group then discussed and agreed responses to various questions relating to the Fire Authority's proposals. Whilst the IRMP Team were available to answer any additional questions, they did not take part in these discussions.

A summary of the responses received is provided in the next section and details all responses received including a further 12 responses generated on the Shropshire Star's website following a press article. The ORS report is included as an Annex to this report.

On-line Questionnaire

To enable more members of the public to contribute to this consultation process the Authority included an on-line questionnaire within the IRMP section of its website. However due to the development of the SFRS web site it was only possible to



provide a very limited on-line questionnaire facility. This work was not conducted by ORS.

The questionnaire provided the respondent with information about the Fire Authority's IRMP proposals and asks a series of questions on which the Fire Authority was seeking specific comments. Space was also provided for any other comments they wished to make. The questionnaire was made available for three months, giving ample time for people to respond.

Awareness of the questionnaire was raised with the public by signposting it on the homepage of the Service website and through the distribution of posters, advertising its existence, to all Post Offices, supermarkets and Parish notice boards in the county. Press releases were also sent to all news media outlets in and around the county, which resulted in several articles in the local press and interviews on the subject on local radio stations.

Only three responses were received via this means, they have therefore been included within the main response section rather than as a separate section of the report.

Consulting with Stakeholder Organisations

Two methods were used to consult with organisations that have a vested interest in the service delivered by the Fire Authority. Namely;

- Formal 'Stakeholder Forums'; and
- A paper questionnaire.

Stakeholder Forums

On the recommendation of ORS the Fire Authority determined that the most effective means for consulting with organisations and businesses most likely to be affected by the Authority's proposals was through stakeholder forums. This format of consultation allows for the proposals to be explained on a face-to-face basis prior to obtaining the views of stakeholders through in-depth discussion.

More than 430 organisations were therefore informed of the Fire Authority's Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09 and the possible impact it could have on them, and were invited to attend the forum. This included:

- Local County and Unitary Councils;
- District and Borough Councils
- Police and Ambulance Services in Shropshire;
- Neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services;
- Primary Care Trusts;
- The top 100 largest employers in Shropshire;
- The Environment Agency and Environmental Health departments;



- Shropshire's diversity forums.

The Authority was disappointed that only 9 people attended the forum, however it did prove to be a valuable event bringing together views of other elected members, officers of the local authority and members of the business community.

The forums were managed through a structured approach by ORS, and the forum members views on the Authority's proposals were obtained and reported to the Authority in a 'Consultation Report'. The findings from this work with stakeholders are summarised in the relevant sections of the full ORS report included as annex A.

Questionnaires

The Fire Authority was keen to make sure that those organisations that were unable to attend one of the Stakeholder Forums had every opportunity to comment on its proposals. Therefore, every invite to the forums that was sent out also included a paper questionnaire which gave details of the proposals and asked for their thoughts.

Also, in recognition of their involvement in, and impact on, the local communities of Shropshire, the Fire Authority put great effort into obtaining feedback from Shropshire's Parish Councillors. This involved;

- Sending a questionnaire to the Clerk of all parish councils;
- Presentations to;
 - Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) Executive Committee;
 - North Shropshire District Council;
 - Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council;
 - Bridgnorth and Shifnal Area Committee;
 - Shrewsbury and Atcham Area Committee;
 - Wrekin Area Committee; and
 - Oswestry Area Committee.

In total 81 elected representatives of the local community received the presentation and 33 completed questionnaires were returned.



Summary of Responses from the Public and Stakeholders

This section contains a summary of the feedback received from members of the public and stakeholders via paper questionnaires, the on-line questionnaire and the Public Scrutiny and Stakeholder Panels.

The section has been split into five parts, dealing with each of the consultation questions in turn:

- Did you consider the Draft Action Plan
 - Easy to read;
 - Informative.

- Do you agree with the Fire Authority's remaining stated IRMP Priorities?
 - Community Fire Safety in the rural community;
 - Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury;
 - Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire.

- In relation to fire cover the Shrewsbury Area;
 - Was enough information provided to form an opinion;
 - Is refurbishment of the existing site the best option;
 - Is relocation the best option?

- Are you satisfied with the IRMP Consultation Process?

The graphs included within each part have been compiled from the information provided in all the questionnaires that were returned, including those returned anonymously. All of the comments received via the questionnaires have also been included.

Each part also includes a summary of the views expressed during the Public Scrutiny Panels held at Shrewsbury and Ludlow. The full Public Scrutiny Panel report from ORS has been included as an Annex to this report.



1. Did you consider the Draft Action Plan;

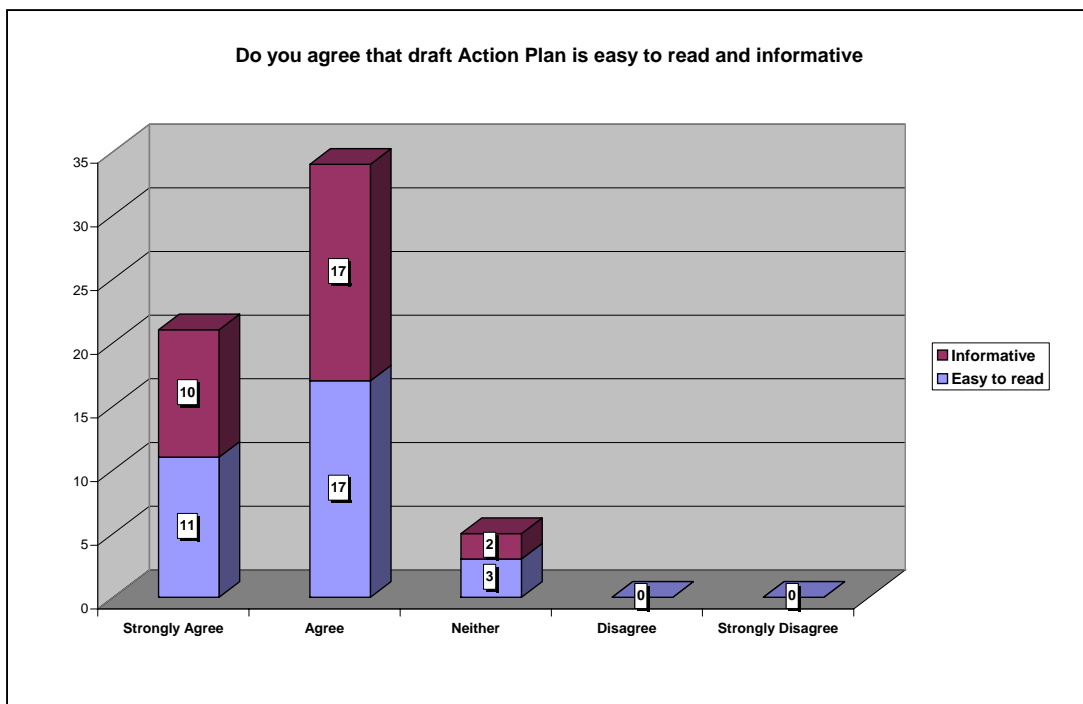
- a. Easy to read
- b. Informative

Questionnaire Response

The overwhelming number of respondents (90%) felt that the Draft Action Plan was easy to read and informative.

| Easy to Read | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 11 | 35 |
| Agree | 17 | 55 |
| Neither | 3 | 10 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |

| Informative | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 10 | 34 |
| Agree | 17 | 59 |
| Neither | 2 | 7 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 29 | 100 |



Comments Received

- I still find it hard to read some of the details on paper but find the information at our meetings much easier to comprehend. Hence (tick) for Question 1 for "Easy to Read" (neither agree nor disagree).
- The information is not easily accessed and viewed on-line and even more difficult to complete excel based questionnaire. It would be easier if reference documents

opened in separate windows, so that form and document could all be open at the same time.

2. Do you agree with the Fire Authority’s remaining stated Strategic Priorities

- a. Community Safety in the rural community
- b. Review of Fire Cover in Shrewsbury
- c. Remaining Fire Cover in Shropshire.

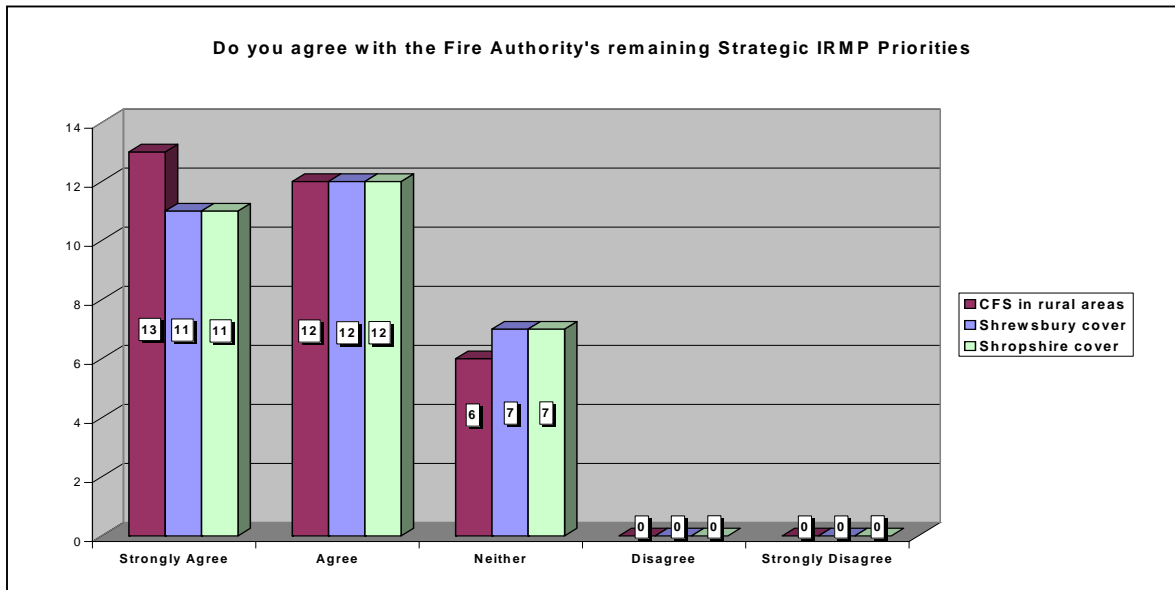
Questionnaire Response

The response received gave overwhelming support to each of the individual remaining IRMP Priorities, with no respondents disagreeing.

| CFS in rural com'ty | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 13 | 42 |
| Agree | 12 | 39 |
| Neither | 6 | 19 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |

| Shrewsbury cover | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 11 | 37 |
| Agree | 12 | 40 |
| Neither | 7 | 23 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |

| Shropshire cover | Count | Total % |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 11 | 37 |
| Agree | 12 | 40 |
| Neither | 7 | 23 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |



3. Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review

- a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
- b. I believe that the refurbishment of the existing site is the best option
- c. I believe that relocation to separate sites is the best option.

Questionnaire Response

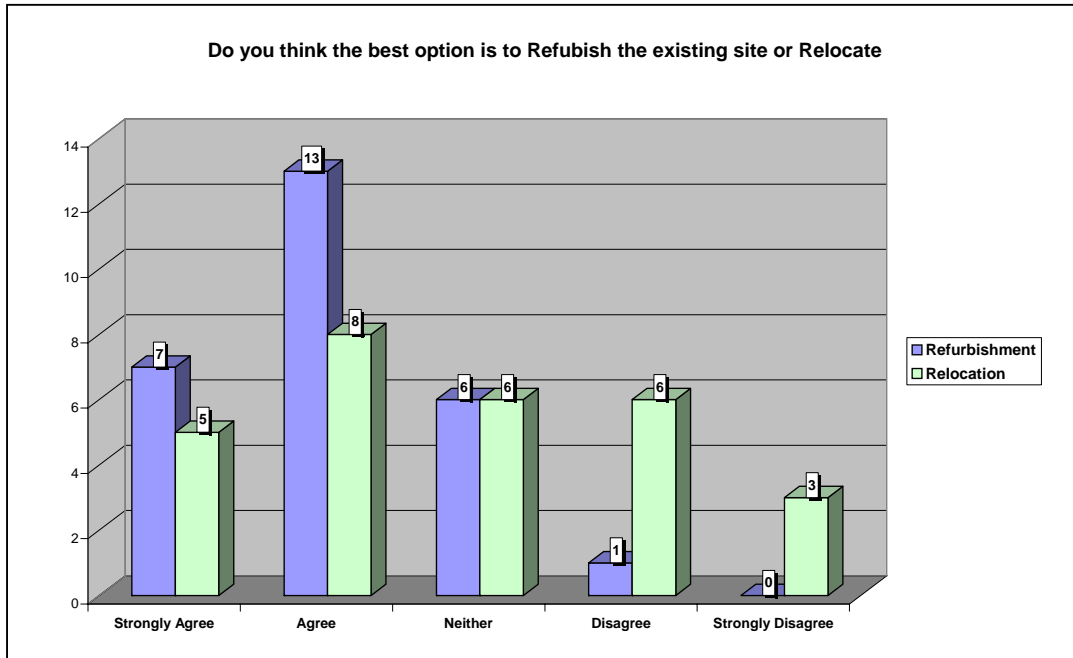
Overall there is clear support from those respondents who expressed a preference for the refurbishment option. There was a significant majority disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the relocation option.

| Information | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 10 | 36 |
| Agree | 15 | 54 |
| Neither | 3 | 11 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 28 | 100 |

| Refurbishment | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 7 | 26 |
| Agree | 13 | 48 |
| Neither | 6 | 22 |
| Disagree | 1 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 27 | 100 |

| Relocation | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 5 | 18 |
| Agree | 8 | 29 |
| Neither | 6 | 21 |
| Disagree | 6 | 21 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 11 |
| Total | 28 | 100 |





Comments Received

- We feel that if refurbishment of the existing site goes ahead, then there is money available for more firefighters, officers and equipment. This will ensure continued coverage in Shrewsbury but also will release more money/resources to the rural areas where we rely on excellent retained firefighters who need as much support and financial help as those in Shrewsbury. We agree that from the information given it is not justifiable to have two fire stations in Shrewsbury.
- Relocation of HQ away from the town centre would potentially increase the attendance time for fires in homes - most of which are located within the town centre.
- Existing fire station to be refurbished and satellite stations in a useable or high risk area for the incidence of fires. As this questionnaire was sent to me at Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury is too remote to deal with major fires in Bridgnorth as Telford Fire Station is the nearest major fire station.
- From the information given, which appears to indicate that any performance improvements resulting from relocation would be minimal, there can be no justification for spending more than twice the amount that would be needed for refurbishment of the existing facility.
- If there is significant gain from change, then this is justified. I do not believe this is the case in respect of the Shrewsbury site and so it should stay. The money saved could then be put to better use for equipment and manpower. I live in rural South Shropshire, so any changes in my area affect me, not those made for the inhabitants of Shrewsbury.



- I have been given more detailed information from Group Manager, Joe Whelan and this has helped to form my opinions. I believe there are various options regarding St Michael's Street and with our council tax payers in mind, as well as public safety, we vote for refurbishment.
- The choice of whether to refurbish the existing Shrewsbury site or relocate to two (?) alternative sites is not an easy one. In the short term refurbishment seems the best option but a better long term option may be to keep the present site as refurbished but to have one additional site to the south of the river. The existing site provides good access to the Town Centre but not to the south of the river. Flooding will only exacerbate this problem.
- Prior to the consultation meeting in Ludlow, I had not realised how dilapidated and inadequate the Shrewsbury Fire Station was. The best solution would appear to be a staged withdrawal from this site. First establish a new station in the south, then move the HQ and transport management. Finally establish a new site in the north and dispose of the existing. I was pleased to learn that consideration is being given to flooding and water incident response, particularly in the Ludlow area. The Service's response to last summer's floods was excellent.

Comments from Shropshire Star website

- What an absolute nonsense and waste of public money to say that a small town the size of Shrewsbury requires 2 sites. What next, 2 ambulance stations, 2 police forces. Unload the clowns who come up with these inspired follies and lets get back to spending our money sensibly
- Where does it end? Two fire stations...then they'll want three, four and so on. WHERE IS ALL THE MONEY COMING FROM?
- Great idea. A comfort for those of us living in the south of the town who would have to wait for an appliance to negotiate the town centre traffic. Also appliances would be able to get to RTA's on M54/A5 and A49 faster as they would be closer geographically
- A fire station at Heathgates island... um, just exactly where?!!
- why not build a road straight from the fire station to the by-pass or have fire engines parked on the side of the road like the AA used to do waiting for a call
- Whilst I have generally been opposed to recent change for change sake agendas within what was once the finest of British Institutions; this is actually PURE COMMON SENSE and is long overdue. The current town centre location of Shrewsbury's fire station greatly hampers response times. By relocating to two separate sites this will provide a much better spread of fire cover and will ensure that ALL parts of the town and surrounding areas can be reached as quickly as possible. I would think that any logically minded resident of Shrewsbury would be grateful of improved response times and would seize this opportunity with both hands. I fear that yet again the 'we only think about the emergency services when we need them lobby' have jumped on the band wagon. The fire service



strives to keep abreast of the latest developments and therefore quite rightly need to have access to the latest facilities. Since the current fire HQ was built there have been far more developments and advancements in the service than the previous fifty years. As a consequence the current site is limiting their operations, training, logistics and management and they have literally out grown out it. Yes the cost is huge but what price would you put on yours or your loved ones lives. Heaven forbid that I should require their services but if I did I would want the best trained, best resourced, best motivated and best managed fire fighters I could get. Provided there is astute project management and lets not forget the potential revenue that could be generated from the sale of the current 'prime' location of the existing site, I have no objections whatsoever. Keep up the amazing work Shropshire's firefighters and stay safe!

Further to my last post, let's not forget that as well as being the site of the town's fire station, it also functions as the headquarters and also the workshops for the whole of Shropshire. Being central to the county it is also home to a multitude of specialist appliances (as opposed to conventional fire appliances) which also serve the whole county. Furthermore, lets also not forget how much Shrewsbury has been expanded and how much development / new accommodation has been built in Shrewsbury and the surrounding areas since the current station was built. Far from being a small town, most towns of a similar size (which would not have such a large surrounding area to cover as well) would easily require at least two fire stations, possibly three! Stafford is in a very similar situation and is considering an additional station to supplement its existing one. Wolverhampton is served by four fire stations no less! In fact, our nearest comparable neighbour Telford has three! Food for thought perhaps? But don't think too long as its way overdue.

- Yes, a very sensible idea, as Shrewsbury develops it should give some sense of security to people at both extremes of the town. It does not mean that each station will require all the resources of the existing main station. They could each have enough for first response then rely on mutual aid from each other if the first response is inadequate to deal with a situation. Sensible Richard is not so sensible - in fact quite the opposite. Contrary to his not very sensible views, the same case could be made for both the Ambulance and Police Stations on the same principle
- This idea has been in consideration for over 4 years. The old station would be sold for housing, and the new station to the north would be at the Heath gates public house which has closed down.
- What a bunch of moaning Minnie's!

Of COURSE a town the size and shape of Shrewsbury needs two fire stations.

And why would the construction of two fire stations mean that there would be an argument for two police FORCES?

- I think having two fire stations serving our area would be an excellent idea. As other people have stated in their posts, the traffic can be a real issue in the small



streets and having a service either side would speed up the response and inevitably save more lives

- Wouldn't a station at the RSH be an idea instead of Meole Brace, they seem to spend half their time going up Cophorne Rd to callouts up there?

In Response

Andy Johnson (Head of Risk Management, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service) said:

I am pleased to see that so many people are interested in the developments going on in their Fire and Rescue Service.

Whilst we will of course take all of these comments into consideration, I would like to point out that if people go to the Service's website they will be able to look at the evidence that sits behind this proposal, as well as the other proposals included in this year's draft Integrated Risk Management Plan. The website also offers respondents the opportunity to feed their comments directly into the Fire Authority, through an online or printable questionnaire. Alternatively people may wish to contact the Service Headquarters and we can arrange for all relevant information to be forwarded to you by post.

The website address is <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/> - the IRMP link will take you to all of the relevant information.

The telephone contact number is 01743 260200. Ask for either Joe Whelan (the IRMP Manager), or myself.

Once again, thank you all for your very valued comments

Scrutiny Panel Results¹

Overall views

- All Shrewsbury participants (public and stakeholder), as well as the majority in Ludlow, agreed that SFRS should refurbish its St Michael's Street station and relocate its workshops, stores and command functions elsewhere
- Cost-effectiveness was thought to be the primary advantage of refurbishment – especially when compared to the proposed cost of potentially relocating to, and running, two separate sites at Meole Brace and Heathgates.
- Several expressed concern regarding the short-termism of refurbishment; they strongly suggested that relocation is considered for the long-term (30 – 50 years and beyond) – particularly in regard to the provision of another fire station in the south of Shrewsbury.

Advantages of Refurbishment

¹ Opinion Research Services – Report on Consultation on Integrated Risk Management Draft Action Plan 2008/09



The following were seen as the main benefits of refurbishing the existing site;

- Better value for money – Cost effective
- Central Location
- Two vehicles arriving together at incidents faster than two sent from separate sites.

Disadvantages of Refurbishment

The perceived disadvantages expressed were;

- Disruption to staff during refurbishment
- Access and egress from the site
- Operation fragmentation resultant from division of functions

Advantages of Relocation

The following were seen as the main benefits of relocation from the existing site;

- Potential service improvement and faster response to a larger area
- Better access to the road network
- Purpose built and modern

Disadvantages of Relocation

The perceived disadvantages expressed were;

- Extra capital and running costs
- Increase in response times for two fire engines
- Traffic congestion delaying response to Shrewsbury Town Centre

Overall Comments

Following a debate of the issues **the majority agreed that SFRS should refurbish its St Michael's Street station and relocate its workshops, stores and command functions elsewhere**. This compromise, it was felt, represents the greater value for money and creates much needed space at the existing site through the removal of certain functions.



4. Officer Resilience

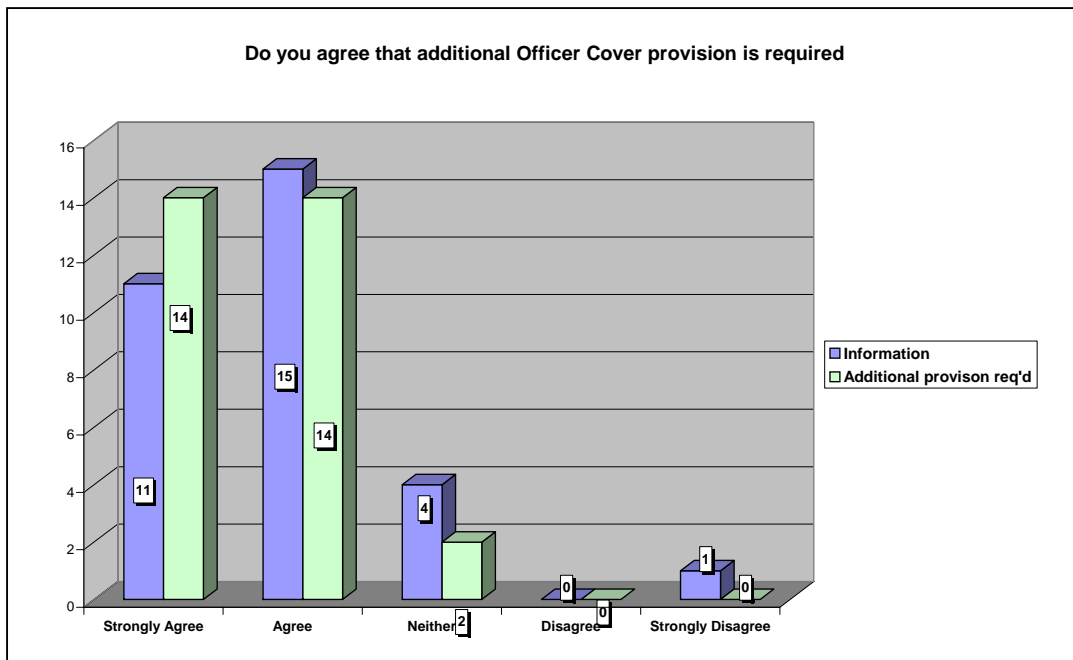
- a. I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion
- b. I agree that additional Officer Cover provision is required.

Questionnaire Response

There is overwhelming support for the increase in Officer Cover provision from all respondents with no respondents disagreeing with the proposal.

| Information | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 11 | 35 |
| Agree | 15 | 48 |
| Neither | 4 | 13 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |

| Provision Req'd | Count | Total % |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 14 | 47 |
| Agree | 14 | 47 |
| Neither | 2 | 7 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |



Comments Received

- With regard to officer resilience and the question, 'I have been provided with sufficient information to form an opinion', you will note that I have selected 'strongly disagree'. To allow me to make an informed judgement regarding this issue, I would be grateful if you could provide additional information in the

following areas: (A detailed list of questions was submitted to which a response was made on behalf of the Authority by the IRMP Manager. The following response was received in reply)

Many thanks for taking the trouble to answer my questions. It is very much appreciated. May I wish you and the service continued success with your plans for new stations in Shrewsbury. Furthermore, I applaud your attempts to provide all one pump retained stations with the rescue equipped eight seater cab appliances. (Don't think the retained have ever had such advanced appliances!), the RDS review, the small fires unit, the forward thinking approach to USAR and the upgrading of Tweedale to wholetime status.

- More effective recruitment of on-call officers should the Shrewsbury fire service be divided in two locations
- Flexible working patterns for officers to have a more effective role will benefit everyone.

Scrutiny Panel Results²

Overall views

- Overall, participants across all three meetings were unanimously in favour of improving officer cover resilience by means of this proposal.

Advantages

Participants expressed unanimous approval for this proposal and saw the following as the primary advantages:

- Greater cover equals safer working, locally and nationally
- Shropshire personnel would have better welfare out of area
- Health and Safety of other firefighters
- Extra support to improve efficiency
- Performance will be more efficient

Disadvantages

- More shifts and extra working could lead to more stress
- You must ensure that the officer would be happy with existing terms and conditions
- It's necessary but could a new full-time post be created to avoid extra work for the officers?

² Opinion Research Services – Report on Consultation on Integrated Risk Management Draft Action Plan 2007/08



Overall Comments

With regard to the proposals themselves, the balance of opinion was **unanimously for increasing resilience** in officer cover for emergency cover. There were a few minor concerns allied to the proposal but, on the whole, it was endorsed by participants, who agreed that the advantages overwhelmingly outweigh the disadvantages.

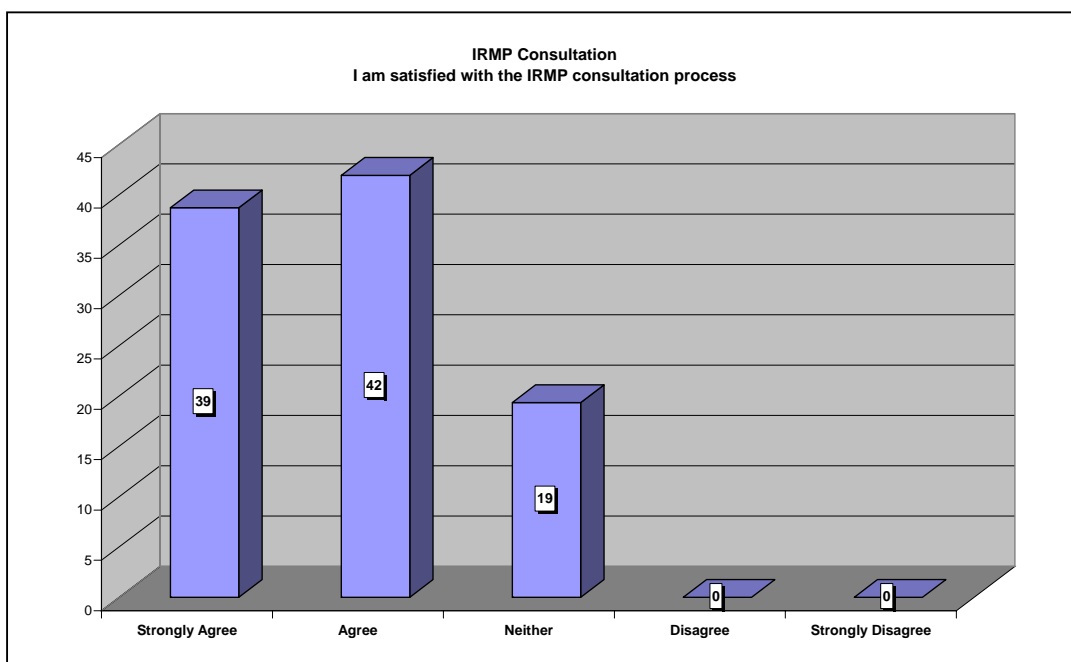


5. I am satisfied with the IRMP consultation process.

Questionnaire Response

Overall there is satisfaction with the Authority's IRMP Consultation process with no representative from any group indicating that they were dissatisfied.

| Consultation Satisfaction | Count | Total % |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 12 | 39 |
| Agree | 13 | 42 |
| Neither | 6 | 19 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |



Other Comments Made on the Questionnaires

The additional comments detailed below were also made.

Comments Received

- Excellent presentation by one of your officers at recent Area Committee meeting of Parish Councils.
- I hope the relocation or what ever happens - that the services for small villages will continue as now. (Thanks for talk at North Shropshire District Council) Wem.
- The very very BEST OF LUCK!
- We do NOT agree with moving the control room out of the area



Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's Consultation Response

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority is very grateful to the stakeholder organisations and members of the public that have contributed to this consultation process. The feedback that has been received has been extremely perceptive and constructive and will help to inform the projects that will be undertaken as a consequence of the IRMP Action Plan 2008/09.

The Fire Authority would like to make the following responses to the comments received on its draft proposals.

IRMP Strategic Priorities

The Fire Authority is pleased to note that there is such a high level of support for the IRMP process and the remaining IRMP Priorities.

Shrewsbury Fire Cover

The Fire Authority notes all comments made on this subject and in particular the recognition that the current facilities provided at Shrewsbury are inadequate and in urgent need of improvement through either refurbishment or relocation.

It is particularly pleasing to note the recognition that any proposal should reflect not only the current position but take into account future development of the town and plan accordingly.

Officer Resilience

The Fire Authority notes all comments made on this subject and the recognition that there is a need for further investment in the provision of 'Officer Cover'.



SHROPSHIRE & WREKIN FIRE AUTHORITY

Report of Consultation on Integrated Risk Management Draft Action Plan 2008/09



Opinion Research Services

SHROPSHIRE & WREKIN FIRE AUTHORITY

Integrated Risk Management Draft Action Plan 2008/09

Report of Consultation with Public and Stakeholders

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ORS is pleased have worked with Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority in conducting the research reported here – not only because respondents shared their views readily on the proposals being put forward by the Authority, but also because the study was undertaken in order to inform the future development of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

We thank the Authority for commissioning the project as part of an ongoing programme of consultation. We particularly thank those involved in preparing information and presenting it during the sessions, namely Joe Whelan, Assistant Divisional Officer and Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer. The presence of a number of Fire Authority members was also very welcome. The input of all was essential to achieving an informed debate.

We are also grateful to all of the participants who took the time to attend and actively participate in the process, and who evidently enjoyed the experience.

At all stages of the project, *ORS*' status as an independent organisation consulting the public and stakeholders as objectively as possible was recognised and respected. We are grateful for the trust, and we hope this report will contribute usefully to thinking about the Authority's development.

We hope that *ORS* has been instrumental in forging and maintaining a link between the public, stakeholders and their Fire Service, and that the information in this report accurately reflects participants' views and priorities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

This is a summary of the main outcomes – readers are encouraged to consult the main body of the report for a fuller discussion of the issues.

1.2 Methodology

The following report details the outcomes from the following:

- ♦ Two scrutiny panels with members of the public in Shrewsbury and Ludlow
- ♦ One stakeholder forum with organisation and business representatives in Shrewsbury

The groups discussed the proposals contained in the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's Draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09.

The three meetings were qualitative forms of consultation. While the findings cannot be certified as statistically representative of all people in Shropshire, the meetings included a wide range of people and allowed them to think as well as talk. While summarising the main themes and highlighting the key points, this report seeks to be faithful to what was said. The opinions expressed were not always unanimous, but we have endeavoured to reflect both the majority view and, where useful, the diversity of views. Comments in italics are direct quotations from respondents.

1.3 Key Findings

Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review

Advantages of refurbishing existing site

According to participants, the advantages of refurbishing the existing site at St Michael's Street were:

- ♦ Cost-effectiveness
- ♦ The centrality of the location
- ♦ Two vehicles being sent from one location which would arrive together at an incident faster than two sent from separate sites
- ♦ That *response targets are being met and will continue and there may even be some response improvement*

- ◆ Refurbishment would ensure that the working environment is compliant with Health and Safety
- ◆ The running costs for one building would be less

Disadvantages of refurbishing existing site

The perceived disadvantages of refurbishing the existing site at St Michael's Street were:

- ◆ The prospect of disruption to the Service and its staff during the refurbishment process
- ◆ Problematic access to and egress from the fire station
- ◆ Potential divide of operations from the fragmentation of functions
- ◆ *Limited cover to the south of Shrewsbury*
- ◆ The short-termism of refurbishment i.e. spending money on a site that is of limited size for future development

Advantages of relocating

In support of the possible relocation from St Michael's Street were given the following reasons:

- ◆ Potential service improvements such as *a faster response to a larger area* and *a better response to outer areas and Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)*
- ◆ Better access to the road network which could aid response and be *better for RTCs*
- ◆ Providing the FRS with *purpose-built, modern facilities* and *better and safer working conditions*
- ◆ BUT several participants at the meetings could not attribute any advantages to the proposed relocation

Disadvantages of relocating

On the downside of the possible relocation were:

- ◆ The extra capital and running costs
- ◆ The longer length of time taken to get two engines to an incident from two separate sites
- ◆ Traffic congestion in Shrewsbury affecting response times into the centre of the town
- ◆ The *chaos of moving*

Overall views

- ◆ All Shrewsbury participants (public and stakeholder), as well as the majority in Ludlow, agreed that SFRS should refurbish its St Michael's Street station and relocate its workshops, stores and command functions elsewhere
 - The general sense was that refurbishment represents the greater value for money, but that certain functions must be moved in order to create much needed space at the existing site
- ◆ Several expressed concern regarding the short-termism of refurbishment; they strongly suggested that relocation is considered for the long-term – particularly in regard to the provision of another fire station in the south of Shrewsbury.

Officer Cover

Advantages

- ◆ Participants expressed widespread approval for this proposal and saw the following as the primary advantages that would result from its implementation:
 - Improvements in Health and Safety and the welfare of personnel
 - Improved morale – inside and outside Shropshire
 - *Maintains resources while staff are away*

Disadvantages and Concerns

The perceived disadvantages of the proposal to improve officer cover resilience were:

- ◆ The potential for it to lead to a greater number of shifts, longer working days and more travelling for the officers concerned
- ◆ A marginal increase in costs – although these were deemed realistic, non-prohibitive and well-justified. Indeed, participants were wholly convinced of the cost-effectiveness of the proposal

Overall Views

- ◆ Overall, participants across all three meetings were unanimously in favour of improving officer cover resilience by means of this proposal

CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 The Commission

ORS was commissioned by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority (SWFA) to facilitate and report two public scrutiny panels and one stakeholder forum during October and November 2007.

It was agreed that ORS would work in collaboration with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to facilitate the meetings and prepare a report of the discussions, covering the arguments and points made as well as the conclusions. SFRS encouraged ORS to facilitate the meetings and prepare this report independently.

2.2 Schedule of Meetings

Public Scrutiny Panels

Two panels were held with members of the public in Shrewsbury and Ludlow – the make-up of which can be seen in the table below. Participants were broadly representative of their local communities and, encouragingly, represented a wide spectrum of ages and social-economic status:

| Scrutiny Panel | Number Attending | Constituents |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Shrewsbury | 16 | 8 Female, 8 Male |
| Ludlow | 15 | 8 Female, 7 Male |

Participants were invited by ORS and paid for their trouble and expenses in attending and taking part in lengthy and detailed meetings. About two-thirds of the participants had attended similar forums during previous years (again at ORS' invitation), and about a third were new recruits.

Stakeholder Forum

SWFA also invited a number of their stakeholders to a consultation forum in Shrewsbury. Nine stakeholders – including elected members and representative from the police, Fire Brigades Union and NHS Trusts – attended the forum and fully engaged with the issues.

2.3 Conduct of Meetings

All three meetings provided substantial information for the participants to understand, question and debate the issues fully. In order to make the meetings as useful as possible for the participants, SFRS prepared a detailed PowerPoint presentation about the principles of IRMP and its action plan proposals, covering:

- ♦ The meaning and background to *integrated risk management*
- ♦ SFRS's draft proposals in detail – covering the Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review and Officer Cover Resilience

The groups were then given the opportunity to ask questions and seek points of clarification, before dividing into small groups and considering a number of specific proposals in some detail. Finally, there was a plenary session where the groups had the opportunity to feed back their findings and views.

2.4 Informed Opinion

The meetings began with a detailed and informative presentation by SFRS to provide respondents with a substantial amount of contextual information so that they could understand and consider the Fire Authority's proposals. This approach was used for two main reasons:

- ♦ Members of the public are typically poorly informed about how Fire and Rescue Services operate and is managed. Although established panel members have, over the years, gained such background knowledge, this section was especially relevant for the new participants at each public panel
- ♦ The challenge was not to ask people's general impressions of the Fire and Rescue Service but to debate very particular proposals – so the meetings needed to focus on them and the reasons for them

Hence, a considerable amount of information was needed before participants could debate the main specific proposals in turn.

For these reasons, the consultation process should be considered as 'testing' the acceptability of the reasoning and conclusions of SFRS's IRMP draft action plan – by presenting its

principles and proposals clearly for discussion. The key question the researchers were asking was:

If people are made fully aware of the background to and arguments for the proposals, how convincing do they find them?

2.5 Inclusiveness and Representativeness

Although, the outcomes of these deliberative forums cannot be certified as statistically representative of staff and public opinion, the public and stakeholder meetings reported here certainly gave a very diverse range of people, drawn from differing areas of Shropshire, the opportunity to 'test' the proposals in detailed discussions. The participants were diverse in terms of gender, age, social, economic and professional status, housing tenure and many other criteria. Therefore we are satisfied that the outcomes of the meetings (as reported below) are soundly indicative of how Shropshire public opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.

In summary, then, the meetings are reliable as examples of the reflections and opinions of diverse informed people reacting to SFRS' proposals.

2.6 The Report

The next section of this report has been structured so as to address each of the agenda items in some detail. The views of the public panels and stakeholder forum have been amalgamated within these sections, as they were not significantly divergent on any of the issues.

Essentially, the report reviews the sentiments and judgements of participants about the Fire and Rescue Service in Shropshire. Some verbatim quotations (italics) are used – not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of views. ORS does not endorse opinions in question, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly. While quotations are used, the report is obviously not a verbatim transcript of the sessions, but an interpretative summary of the issues raised by participants in free-ranging discussions.

CONSULTATION FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

Each group was asked to address a series of questions, which were intended to focus their thinking but not necessarily constrain their thoughts. The 'worksheets' outlined some of the most relevant information to aid the panel in their discussions. Approximately 45 minutes was spent on the Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review and about 20 minutes on Officer Resilience.



Members of the public at the Ludlow meeting

3.2 Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review

Clarification questions and general comments

When the floor was opened the following comments were made and questions asked in relation to the Fire Cover Review:

- ◆ *This is Mickey Mouse money especially if we can afford £28m for a theatre. Where are the political priorities?*
- ◆ *Where is the best single centre site?*
- ◆ *You've made a play of the problems of the St Michael's Street site – where would you go?*
- ◆ *Do you consider relocating the HQ and workshop functions as a feasible compromise?*

- ♦ *What about keeping St Michael's Street **and** having Meole Brace?*
- ♦ *Where's the money going to come from if you keep St Michael's Street?*
- ♦ *If you sold the site would you have enough money?*
- ♦ *Will the existing site be a good one to refurbish?*
- ♦ *Knock it down and start again*
- ♦ *What will happen when you are refurbishing the site?*
- ♦ *What are the current operational benefits of having the two engines together?*
- ♦ *What are the implications for the downtime of appliances in the workshops?*
- ♦ *What about the predictive modelling of higher life risk buildings?*
- ♦ *What is the weight of attack to the hospital?*
- ♦ *What will you do with the third retained engine?*
- ♦ *What about sharing HQ functions with the police?*
- ♦ *This is an opportunity to do a complete job, so take it*
- ♦ *Will this affect the rural areas at all?*
- ♦ *Could a RDS station be found close to the centre?*
- ♦ *Does the cost offset the equity of the land?*
- ♦ *What would happen if you spent the £4m and the annual £200k on smoke alarms and prevention?*
- ♦ *What would the benefit be of relocating parts of the job?*
- ♦ *How does the new regional control centre fit with this?*
- ♦ *Is there any ground around the fire station that you could purchase?*
- ♦ *Are you going to have a health and safety problem without the right number of firefighters on each engine?*
- ♦ *Is there no way that you can reduce the numbers needed on each engine through greater automation?*

Advantages of refurbishing existing site

Refurbishing the existing site at St Michael's Street was thought to have several distinct benefits, as outlined below:

- ♦ Cost-effectiveness was thought to be the primary advantage of refurbishment – especially when compared to the proposed cost of potentially relocating to, and running, two separate sites at Meole Brace and Heathgates.
- ♦ The centrality of the St Michael's Street location was another factor in favour of its refurbishment. Panellists cited its proximity to the river and Shrewsbury's older, listed buildings, as well as its ability to serve the town's increasing city-centre population:
 - *Better service for water incidents and listed buildings*
 - *[Relocation could] increase risk for water incidents, listed buildings and all other emergencies happening centrally*
 - *No appliance to town centre in first few minutes*
- ♦ Participants considered that two vehicles sent from one location would arrive at an incident in less time than two being sent from separate sites, which was a distinct advantage.
- ♦ It was suggested that there *might be some response improvement* – or at least that *response targets are being met and will continue*. Indeed, it was generally agreed that there *would be no greater risk to life by staying*.
- ♦ The fact that refurbishment would ensure that the working environment is compliant with Health and Safety was a positive for participants.

Disadvantages of refurbishing existing site

Although some saw it as less unsettling than relocation, the prospect of disruption to the Service and its staff was one of the main concerns amongst both panels regarding the potential refurbishment of the existing site:

Having to work on a site being refurbished

May be challenges in running an efficient service whilst refurbishment happens

Other perceived disadvantages were:

- ◆ Problematic access to and egress from the fire station due to the road structure and *traffic congestion affecting response times*
- ◆ Potentially divided operations
 - It was acknowledged that *some relocation is necessary in order to secure efficiency benefits*. This led to concern amongst participants about the fragmentation of functions if most remain at St Michael's Street, but some are moved elsewhere
- ◆ *Limits cover to the south of Shrewsbury*
- ◆ *Prime valuable land which could be of benefit* would not be realised if the site was refurbished rather than sold
- ◆ *The lack of space at the existing site*

In relation to the final point above, there was some worry at Ludlow regarding what they saw as the short-termism of refurbishment. Expending capital on a site that is of limited size, and might continue to be so into the future, led some to question – *is this too short-term a vision?*

Advantages of relocating

Several participants at both Shrewsbury and Ludlow could not attribute any advantages to the proposed relocation:

Not really sure there are pros in having two new sites and losing a presence in the city centre

Nevertheless, it was seen in positive terms by some (especially at Ludlow), who acknowledged that relocation could result in service improvements:

A faster response to a larger area

Could get to some emergencies faster

Better response to outer areas and RTCs

This was, however, tempered by the belief that improvements would be marginal and would apply only to one appliance.

As regards other relocation advantages, the provision of two new sites in the north and south of Shrewsbury would, it was felt, ensure better access to the road network and thus be *better for RTCs*. It would also provide the FRS with *purpose-built, modern facilities* and *better and safer working conditions*.

Disadvantages of relocation

The cost of relocation was cited as a disadvantage. This was deemed applicable to both capital and operational expenditure, given that there would be an extra station in Shrewsbury with associated running costs.

It has already been noted that the dispatch of two engines from one location was deemed to be a factor in favour of refurbishing the fire station at St Michael's Street. Panellists and stakeholders were certainly of the view that two vehicles sent from there would arrive at an incident faster than two sent from separate sites. It thus follows that one of the perceived disadvantages of relocation was the longer length of time taken to get two engines to an incident:

Bigger difference between arrival times of engine one and engine two

Too expensive with no discernable service improvement

Only one appliance to most areas in short term

Other (albeit less weighty) concerns were...

- ◆ Traffic congestion in Shrewsbury affecting response times into the centre of the town:
 - *Would take longer to get back to town centre*
 - *No real improvement to response times. It's easier to get out than it is to get in*
- ◆ *The chaos of moving*
 - Especially on the psychology of the staff

Costs

A feeling that the cost of both options may have been underestimated was prevalent amongst many participants:

The final cost could be in excess of estimates

Financial estimates can be way off the mark so we would question their accuracy

They did, however, recognise the difficulty involved in evaluating the cost/benefit of the options. For example, it was suggested that the cost of refurbishment is hard to predict and that a *complete rebuild could be better*.

A few Ludlow participants were somewhat concerned about the unforeseen and wondered whether any money could be put aside to account for this and negate its potential impact.

On a final note, participants urged that the FRS *use value for money as the key criteria* in its decision-making process.

Overall views

The general sense across all groups was that refurbishment represents the greater value for money, but that certain functions must be moved in order to create much needed space at the existing site:

To relocate would not improve the service substantially to justify the extra cost

Refurbishment is cheaper and is better value for money...assuming that the best estimate of costs for moving has been sought

Greater space if HQ/workshop function was moved

This would improve car parking and the training area



Members of the public at the Shrewsbury meeting

Following a debate of the issues, the Shrewsbury public and stakeholder groups **unanimously agreed** that SFRS should refurbish its St Michael's Street station and relocate its workshops, stores and command functions elsewhere. The only

caveat expressed in Shrewsbury was by the stakeholders who felt that staying is the option to choose but on condition that it is a proper refurbishment and refit and that more information and further modelling including higher life risk buildings is a prerequisite before firm decisions can be taken.

The **majority of the Ludlow group** concurred, although there was more divergence of opinion at this panel than the meetings held in Shrewsbury. Several expressed concern regarding the short-termism of refurbishment and although in favour of this measure in the interim in order that the FRS is able to expend on initiatives such as fire prevention, they strongly suggested that relocation is considered for the long-term – particularly in regard to the provision of another fire station in the south of Shrewsbury:

Why take a short-term decision?

Having one new site in the south of the city would be good and help to cut relocation costs

Perhaps consider a further site near Emstrey or Meole Brace in future to help with cover in the south and west

The long-term financial and service gain was proposed to lie with relocation:

This might work for 10 years but what about longer again – 30, 50, or 100 years?

3.3 Officer Cover Resilience

Clarification questions and general comments

When the floor was opened the following comments were made and questions asked in relation to the Officer Cover Resilience proposal:

- ◆ *Will there be any problems in changing rotas?*
- ◆ *Could you call in support from other areas?*
- ◆ *Could we not get all of the additional costs back?*
- ◆ *There should be some account taken of the fact that the officers will be going across the border*
- ◆ *When you have no reserve can people not come in from home?*
- ◆ *Can't you just put someone else on call?*
- ◆ *Isn't there a stand-down time for officers?*

- ♦ *Is the main strain from flooding because you are sending officers elsewhere?*
- ♦ *Shouldn't it be that the receiving area supports the welfare of officers going across the border?*
- ♦ *Does it happen at all major incidents that you get your money back?*

Advantages

It is important to note that participants expressed unanimous approval for this proposal and saw the following as the primary advantages that would result from its implementation:

- ♦ Improvements in Health and Safety which would lead to *an improvement in service:*
 - *Greater cover equals more safe working locally and nationally*
 - *Shropshire personnel would have better welfare out of area*
 - *Health and Safety of other firefighters*
 - *Extra support to improve efficiency*
 - *Performance will be more efficient*
- ♦ Improvement to morale – inside and outside Shropshire
 - *Improvement in morale for having trusted officers to hand*
 - *It's better to work with people you know*
- ♦ *Cross border working as a spin-off will be good*
- ♦ *Maintains resources while staff away*
- ♦ *The impact of extra responsibility would equal money and there would be staff support for this*

Disadvantages and Concerns

A couple of minor negatives were identified in relation to this proposal, although no participant saw these as sufficiently powerful to make a case against it.

The first worry was that the proposed change could lead to greater hours, longer working days and more travelling for the officers concerned:

More shifts and extra working could lead to more stress



Members of the public at the Ludlow meeting

As such, participants desired extra rest time for officers in order that they are able to maintain safe working practices and a work/life balance:

You must ensure that the officer would be happy with existing terms and conditions

It was even suggested that a new full-time post be created to avoid a situation whereby officers are overworked:

It's necessary but could a new full-time post be created to avoid extra work for the officers?

It was also acknowledged that there would a marginal increase in costs – although this was not so much a concern as an observation as these were deemed realistic, non-prohibitive and well-justified. Indeed, participants were wholly convinced of the cost-effectiveness of the proposal – both in terms of improving officer cover and the provision of vehicles:

Costs for equipment and salary are adequate

The vehicle is very necessary

Costs seem reasonable...getting some back is good

Revenue coming in is positive...

...not excessive for experienced and skilled officers

Overall Views

Overall, **participants in all three groups were unanimously in favour** of improving officer cover resilience by means of this proposal:

It's a very positive move

Overall from the evidence [it's a] good use of resources and expertise and would secure service improvements

Good use of personnel resources and satisfies a growing need

3.4 Overall Comments

It is encouraging to note that, once again, all participants have actively engaged with the consultation process, carefully deliberated the issues under scrutiny and provided SWFA with considerable feedback on the proposals contained within its draft IRMP Action Plan 2008/09.

With regard to the proposals themselves, the balance of opinion was **unanimously for increasing resilience** in officer cover for emergency cover. There were a few minor concerns allied to the proposal but, on the whole, it was endorsed by participants, who agreed that the advantages overwhelmingly outweigh the disadvantages.

The Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review was a less straightforward issue for participants. All agreed that the current situation must change, but when asked whether this should be achieved by refurbishing the existing site or relocating to two different locations, panellists could see advantages and disadvantages to both options. Following a debate of the issues **the majority agreed that SFRS should refurbish its St Michael's Street station and relocate its workshops, stores and command functions elsewhere**. This compromise, it was felt, represents the greater value for money and creates much needed space at the existing site through the removal of certain functions.

It should be reiterated, however, that several participants expressed concern regarding the short-termism of refurbishment and strongly suggested that relocation is considered for the long-term – particularly through the provision of another fire station in the south of Shrewsbury to keep pace with the town's development and population growth.

All three sessions worked well in stimulating debate and it is hoped that the feedback received proves useful to the Authority in developing a way forward for its Fire and Rescue Service and in attempting to improve the provision received by the communities it serves.

Timetable of Presentations given during the IRMP Consultation

| Visit No. | Station/Watch/Name | Date | FA Member Attending | Officers Attended | | | | | | | | Venue |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------|--|-------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|--------------------------------|
| | | | | AT | PR | SW | LMc | AK | AJ | JW | JH | |
| 1 | Policy Group | 29/08/2007 | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Fire Service HQ |
| 2 | Staff Reps | 30/08/2007 | David Minnery | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Fire Service HQ |
| 3 | Ludlow | 04/09/2007 | Adrian Coles & Chris Mellings | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | Ludlow Fire Station |
| 4 | Albrighton | 05/09/2007 | Stuart West & John Hurst-Knight | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Albrighton Fire Station |
| 5 | Shrewsbury Blue Watch | 06/09/2007 | No Member Avail | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Fire Station |
| 6 | Newport | 06/09/2007 | David Minnery & Rod Davies | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Newport Fire Station |
| 7 | Telford Blue Watch | 07/06/2007 | Stuart West | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Telford Fire Station |
| 8 | Shrewsbury Green Watch | 10/09/2007 | Jean Jones & Yvonne Holyoak | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Fire Station |
| 9 | Much Wenlock | 11/09/2007 | Stuart West & John Hurst-Knight | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Much Wenlock Fire Station |
| 10 | Baschurch | 12/09/2007 | Nigel Hartin | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | Baschurch Fire Station |
| 11 | Wellington Red Watch | 13/09/2007 | Nigel Hartin | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | Wellington Fire Station |
| 12 | Headquarters Staff | 14/09/2007 | Jean Jones, Stuart West & Yvonne Holyoak | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Fire Service HQ |
| 13 | Telford Green Watch | 18/09/2007 | Nigel Hartin, Bob Groom & Clive Mason | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | Telford Fire Station |
| 14 | Craven Arms | 18/09/2007 | David Minnery & Stuart West | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | Craven Arms Fire Station |
| 15 | Oswestry | 19/09/2007 | Stuart West | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | Oswestry Fire Station |
| 16 | Cleobury Mortimer | 25/09/2007 | Nigel Hartin | | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | Cleobury Mortimer Fire Station |
| 17 | Headquarters Staff | 26/09/2007 | Stuart West & Nigel Hartin | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | Fire Service HQ |
| 18 | Clun | 27/09/2007 | David Minnery | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | Clun Fire Station |
| 19 | Shrewsbury Red Watch | 28/09/2007 | Bob Groom | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | Shrewsbury Fire Station |
| 20 | Wellington Blue Watch (at TC) | 01/10/2007 | Stuart West, Nigel Hartin & Clive Mason | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | Telford Fire Station |

| Visit No. | Station/Watch/Name | Date | FA Member Attending | Officers Attended | | | | | | | | Venue |
|-----------|----------------------------|------------|---|-------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|-------------------------|
| | | | | AT | PR | SW | LMc | AK | AJ | JW | JH | |
| 21 | Shrewsbury White Watch | 02/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway & Stuart West | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Shrewsbury Fire Station |
| 22 | Fire Control (Blue Watch) | 04/10/2007 | Nigel Hartin | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Control Rm. |
| 23 | Telford Training Centre | 08/10/2007 | No Member Available | | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | Telford |
| 24 | Minsterley | 10/10/2007 | Jean Jones, Yvonne Holyoak & Chris Mellings | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | Minsterley Fire Station |
| 25 | Headquarters Staff | 11/10/2007 | Jean Jones | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | Fire Service HQ |
| 26 | Fire Control (Green Watch) | 15/10/2007 | Stuart West & Nigel Hartin | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Control Rm. |
| 27 | Fire Control (Red Watch) | 15/10/2007 | David Minnery & Stuart West | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Shrewsbury Control Rm. |
| 28 | Hodnet | 16/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway Rod Davies Chris Mellings | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Hodnet Fire Station |
| 29 | Telford White Watch | 18/10/2007 | Bob Groom | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Telford Fire Station |
| 30 | Bishops Castle | 18/10/2007 | No Member Available | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | Bishops Castle |
| 31 | Bridgnorth | 23/10/2007 | Jean Jones, David Minnery, Stuart West & John Hurst-Knight | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Bridgnorth Fire Station |
| 32 | Tweeddale | 24/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway, Jean Jones & Stuart West | | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | Tweeddale Fire Station |
| 33 | Prees | 25/10/2007 | Jean Jones & Nigel Hartin | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Wem Fire Station |
| 34 | Wellington White Watch | 26/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway & Nigel Hartin | | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | Wellington Fire Station |
| 35 | Telford Red Watch | 30/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway, Nigel Hartin & Bob Groom | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Telford Fire Station |
| 36 | Shrewsbury Retained | 30/10/2007 | Nigel Hartin | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Fire Station |
| 37 | Wellington Retained | 30/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway & Nigel Hartin | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Wellington Fire Station |
| 38 | Ellesmere | 31/10/2007 | David Minnery & June Drummond | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | Ellesmere Fire Station |
| 39 | Wem | 01/11/2007 | Chris Mellings | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Wem Fire Station |
| 40 | Wellington Green Watch | 05/11/2007 | Clive Mason | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | Wellington Fire Station |

| Visit No. | Station/Watch/Name | Date | FA Member Attending | Officers Attended | | | | | | | | Venue |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|------------|--|-------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----------------------------|
| | | | | AT | PR | SW | LMc | AK | AJ | JW | JH | |
| 41 | Market Drayton | 06/11/2007 | No Member Available | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Market Drayton |
| 42 | Whitchurch | 08/11/2007 | Nigel Hartin | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | Whitchurch Fire Station |
| 43 | Fire Control (White Watch) | 12/11/2007 | No Member Available | | | | | | | ✓ | | Shrewsbury Control Rm. |
| 44 | Church Stretton | 13/11/2007 | David Minnery & Rod Davies | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | Church Stretton |
| 45 | Shrewsbury & Atcham BC Area Committee | 11/09/2007 | Chris Mellings | | | | | | ✓ | | | Shire Hall |
| 46 | SALC | 17/09/2007 | Chris Mellings | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Shire Hall |
| 47 | Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council | 24/09/2007 | Stuart West & Yvonne Holyoak | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | | The Guildhall Shrewsbury |
| 48 | Bridgnorth & Shifnal Area Committee | 25/09/2007 | David Minnery | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | Council Offices Bridgnorth |
| 49 | Wrekin Area Committee | 27/09/2007 | Jayne Greenaway | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | Castle Farm Centre |
| 50 | Oswestry Area Committee | 17/10/2007 | Phil Box | | | | | | | ✓ | | Council Offices Oswestry |
| 51 | North Shropshire District Council | 29/10/2007 | David Minnery | | | | | | | | ✓ | Council Offices Wem |
| 52 | Public Forum Shrewsbury | 31/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway & Stuart West | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | Lord Hill Shrewsbury |
| 53 | Stakeholder Forum Shrewsbury | 31/10/2007 | Jayne Greenaway, Stuart West & David Minnery | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Lord Hill Shrewsbury |
| 54 | Public Forum Ludlow | 01/11/2007 | Jayne Greenaway & Stuart West | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | Feathers Ludlow |

Key AT - Alan Taylor, PR - Paul Raymond, SW – Steve Worrall, LMc – Louise McKenzie, AK – Andrew Kelcey, AJ – Andy Johnson, JW – Joe Whelan, JH – John Harrison.

***THE
SHROPSHIRE
Fire Brigades Union***



***PRELIMINARY
OBSERVATIONS and
OBJECTIONS to Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service's
Draft IRMP Action Plan
2008/2009***

The IRMP Theory

We have in previous years outlined our support of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process, and there is no need to re iterate that support or our views on the process of IRMP. Sufficed to say, that previous documents produced by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in Shropshire, are readily available upon request.

Effective Integrated Risk Management Planning is a detailed and complex process. A large number of apparently conflicting factors have to be taken into account. However as the IRMP process should essentially be about reducing risk, the correct application of sound risk management needs to be applied to each and every proposal in a local IRMP. These proposals, which then need to be monitored and reviewed will measure whether the proposed strategy increases risk or decreases risk.

By using risk/task analysis as in the FBU's Critical Attendance Standard (CAST), or similar methodology, public protection should be improved, whilst the safety of firefighters must not be compromised. Integrated Risk Management Planning should directly address risk to life, should reduce risk to property, heritage and to the environment.

The change in focus of the British Fire Service onto life risk rather than building is supported by all parties. However, the risk of losing businesses and so people's livelihood must also now concentrate the minds of the British Fire Service. The trend in commercial loses due to fire is increasing steadily. In 1997, commercial fire damage was at £492 million rising to £744 million in 2006. Numbers of fire deaths continue to drop in recent years and the long term statistic is that, in 2005 there were 484 deaths in fires compared to 1958 when there were 451.

The FBU is well aware of the constraints of budget placed upon the Fire Authority (FA). The outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review is estimated that by 2011, SFRS may either be in debt £585,000 or surplus £446,000. This makes any sort of future planning unnecessarily complicated.

It is reassuring in Shropshire that both the FA and the management in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) take a pragmatic and sensible viewpoint, in contrast to the actions taken in many other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs). The commitment to maintain frontline appliances in their current configuration, in terms of staff and conditions of service is commendable.



The National Situation/Standard

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) represents approximately 48,000 members covering all ranks and duty systems in the fire & rescue service including approximately 4,000 officers, 11,500 firefighters working the retained duty system and 1,500 firefighters (control). This represents over 85% of all uniformed operational personnel currently serving in the fire & rescue services in the UK.

The FBU has consistently made known its serious concerns regarding the lack of any national system or comparison or standardisation between local Integrated Risk Management Plans.

The current system of fire & rescue authority IRMP means that central government has effectively been able to skirt around the concerns of MP's and their constituents by directing concern back to individual fire & rescue authorities.

The FBU believes that if IRMP is intended to be the driving force for the change/modernisation programme within the fire & rescue service it has to take place against some kind of agreed standard.

Risk-based response planning methodology, and the system of measurement which underpins it, should be the same throughout England to allow valid comparisons between brigades on a like-for-like basis, and to satisfy communities that like-risk will receive a like-response irrespective of location in England.

There is little evidence that CLG has given sufficient, if any, guidance on this matter; guidance that is urgently needed before the collective national response capability of the service is degraded any further.

Modernisation/Cutbacks

To bring about the fundamental culture change within the service which is needed to support IRMP, FRSs must put IRMP at the very heart of what it does. Integrated Risk Management Planning should influence all aspects of central and local service delivery and policy. Optimising the mix of prevention, protection and emergency response to improve both community and firefighter safety.

However, without proper coordination in current national resilience planning, IRMPs have allowed many fire & rescue authorities to “manage” their local risks and in some instances contemplate and carry out significant cuts in personnel. In these instances, there is little evidence



that they are properly assessing risk or planning their levels of personnel with any view to the national need to be capable of responding to a series of protracted major incidents.

One aspect of the cuts that have taken place in other counties and causes great concern is firefighter safety. In Merseyside, the number of fire-fighters injured at emergency incidents has risen by 118 per cent in the past three years. This rise coincides with large reductions in the number of frontline appliance staff.

The Future and Resilience

The public are repeatedly told of the risks now faced in the new and changed world; risks which are now reality, and becoming more commonplace. The fire service is a service which provides the frontline response to any major incident, whether that be from weather extremes or terrorist action.

Despite the rising grassland fires and flood threats, little has so far been done. A Local Government Association document looking ahead to the future of firefighting in 2017 makes no mention of climate change. And the government is reluctant to increase funding when the number of property and vehicle fires is falling.

The terror incidents and remaining threat are still at the forefront of people's minds, because of their severity, unpredictability and constant media attention on Iraq and Afghanistan. Although global warming and the environment also receive media attention, the affects of extreme weather can be overlooked by those not directly affected. Below is just one news article that describes the chaos that extreme weather has brought us this year.

Terror storm hits Leeds

By Jo Rostron and Vicki Robinson

A terror tornado ripped through Leeds yesterday, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage.





A young lady in the thunderstorm

Shops were shut due to flooding, snapped trees and roads riddled with water, and the fire service received a record number of calls.

One man was taken to hospital after being hit by a falling tree, and the council carried out repairs to more than 300 homes.

There was havoc across the city when a tornado hurtled across the north and east of Leeds at around 3pm.

East End Park and Harehills was strewn with branches, leaves and trees which had been lifted out of the ground by the fierce weather.

Harrogate and Shadwell were also affected.

West Yorkshire fire service said it received 90 calls in 30 minutes when the storm broke shortly after 3pm. A brigade spokeswoman said BT engineers told them it was the largest number of calls ever received by a fire service in a half-hour period in 20 years.

A spokeswoman for West Yorkshire Ambulance Service said a man, believed to be in his 30s, was taken to hospital after an incident in Compton Road, Harehills.

Around the corner, Harehills Children's Centre narrowly escaped being hit after a series of trees clattered to the ground in the park outside.

Police and council workers were dotted around East End Park yesterday afternoon, shredding the fallen trees in the roads and the park around Victoria Avenue.

Karl Simpkins, 27, was decorating one of the homes on the road at the time.

He said: "It was like a tube which was swirling around, and all you could see were leaves everywhere. The sky was full of leaves, it went quiet then it started to pour with rain. Then I saw a tree fall to the ground, just skimming a car parked nearby."

Karen McIntosh, 42, was sitting in her home on Ecclesburn Avenue, around the corner, when one of the windows was twisted off its hinges.

She said: "It just went really dark, the sky was almost green. The wind came from nowhere and it felt like the air was being sucked out of the windows. I was terrified – I was really shaking."

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15 September 2006



Floods and FRS performance

In a Populus poll from the Times 29 July 2007 the FRS came out very well in the eyes of the public compared to other services and politicians.

Below are the results of that poll:

| (Average mark out of 10) | All | Men | Women | Lab | Con | LD |
|--|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| The fire service | 8.72 | 8.68 | 8.75 | 8.50 | 8.93 | 8.58 |
| The armed forces | 7.82 | 7.79 | 7.85 | 7.63 | 8.23 | 7.64 |
| Local authorities in the affected areas | 6.14 | 6.13 | 6.14 | 6.23 | 6.31 | 6.25 |
| The Environment Agency | 5.94 | 5.74 | 6.12 | 6.03 | 5.93 | 5.96 |
| Gordon Brown | 5.05 | 4.96 | 5.14 | 6.47 | 4.52 | 5.11 |
| The government as a whole | 4.89 | 4.89 | 4.88 | 5.97 | 4.60 | 4.85 |
| David Cameron | 3.75 | 3.56 | 3.94 | 3.44 | 4.82 | 3.73 |

It is worth remembering that at the same time as the service faced the challenges of these floodings it has also played a key role in responding to and dealing with the terrorist incidents in Glasgow and London on 29th and 30th June.

These events are a stark reminder of the scale of incidents which the Fire and Rescue Service may be called upon to deal with at any one time

No statutory duty for floods

For many years, the fire service has carried out services for which it has no statutory duty to carry out; RTCs historically being the main example but which is now within FRS responsibility. Although there is a general duty to protect the public, flooding is also a service that the fire service has no statutory duty to carry out. Firefighters and members of the public are less interested in which government department is responsible, but more that someone gets the job done.

The Fire Service is renowned for attending hazardous situations, where no other agency is able to deal with. The mass flooding this year has highlighted yet again that no other service can respond like the fire service can. There is a public expectation of the fire service to succeed where other agencies cannot.



Funding

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) said on Friday that 27,000 homes and 5,000 businesses had been affected and that clean-up costs could reach £1bn.

The effect on SFRS resources during the flooding was; of the 450 calls to flooding for the period, 70 rescues were carried out at 320 incidents.

Therefore the Fire Authority should be pressing Government through the LGA and CLG to secure funding for training and equipment for these types of incidents. The employers will also need to address the contractual issue through the National Joint Council.

We therefore also conclude that there should be further thorough investigation into how Shropshire's staffing and training provision is resilient enough to cope with a plethora of incidents across the whole spectrum especially simultaneously occurring incidents. There may be a need for greater provision of water safety teams, rescue from height, a USAR capability.

This investigation would need to take into consideration the national lessons to be learnt from the flooding as well as other recent major incidents such as Buncefield.

Lessons

Despite the perception by the public of a job well done by the fire Service during the flooding, there were many problems.

Flood water tends to become mixed up with the contents of sewers. There are hundreds of bacteria which could be contained within flood water, including salmonella, campylobacter and cryptosporidium. These can get into small skin wounds and make you seriously ill with symptoms including diarrhoea, headaches, vomiting and stomach cramps

During the June floods in Hull and Sheffield, a firefighter having rescued someone from a flooded ditch, went down with a virus, thought to have been contracted from the water. He was in hospital for six days and off work for two weeks

The public were being warned not to go into floodwater unprotected. But, during the floods, firefighters were seen many times, wading up to their waist into contaminated flood water, without appropriate protective clothing.

Firefighters must not be sent on rescue missions in floods, wearing equipment designed for fighting fires, it is dangerous and negligent.



The lessons to be learnt from these events should centre around the following areas:

- Equipment;
- Training;
- Planning and Coordination;
- Conditions of service issues;
- Welfare arrangements;
- Working in other fire authority areas;

Timely reminder

Following on from the flooding theme during the “summer”, resources have been sent to Norfolk in the second week of November this year, in anticipation of flooding due to an abnormally high tide.

These resources were water rescue and pumping units. The concern for SFRS, is whilst sending resources as part of a national response; what resilience is left behind to protect the people of Shropshire?

Fires

Storms and flooding are not the only problem. Between 1986 and 1993 there were on average 37,371 grassland and heathland blazes a year in Britain. But in the 11 years from 1994 to 2005 the average rose to 60,332 a year. Showing again that tackling the new threats associated with climate change is not just an aside to our job it is becoming a core part.

Examples of devastation are being witnessed around the world; forest fires which ravaged Greece this summer, killing 65, and again for a consecutive year raging fires in California approaching Los Angeles causing devastation.

Traditional Firefighting

We know that climate change and international terrorism mean that firefighters must operationally, do a great deal more than fight fires. But, notwithstanding the above, the spectre of what we are traditionally expected to do cannot be overlooked, especially with events this year both locally and nationally.

Shropshire has experienced several large fires in recent times, culminating in greater use of the ALP; Acoustafoam being the latest such fire which SFRS was able to deal with. But there is no doubt that such incidents do stretch the service to the limit.



However, failure through lack of resources, as in the Penhallow Hotel, should be a warning to those FRSs that are continually making drastic cutbacks. Below is an example of the media spotlight and the venom with which it can strike, the extract is taken from a national newspaper:

“...Due to enforced changes, fire cover in Newquay is provided by "retained" part-timers. On Saturday, only nine responded to the call, meaning only one sixman machine could leave the station.

A machine that didn't have the platform needed to fight a blaze in a multi-storey building. Cornwall does have two hydraulic ladders but both were off the road. Which meant a 90-minute wait while an engine arrived from Plymouth, 50 miles away.

The critical time for determining if a fire will be small or large is the first 20 minutes. If it is not contained, you've had it.

Which is why the Penhallow Hotel is now gone, along with three people. Several are seriously injured and dozens of others, including children, are mentally scarred.

So what's the difference between the Algarve police and the Cornish fire service? One lacked expertise, the other lacked money. An entire county in the world's fourth biggest economy didn't have the right ladder to fight fires with, because of cuts.

They dress it up with words such as "embracing new practices" but it's all about cutting vital, life-saving services back to the bone and camouflaging it with meaningless jargon.

The decision to be reliant on Devon for vital equipment has been defended on the grounds that "it's part of our cross-border support arrangement".

Try telling that to the bereaved and traumatised. Try telling that to the hundreds of thousands of holidaymakers who have stayed in Cornish hotels this summer with their lives at risk.

Those people in Newquay needed a first-class service on Saturday and instead they got Trumpton Fire Brigade with a machine about as effective as a water-pistol.

And we all know what they'll get now: an inquiry, pledges that lessons will be learned, more cuts, more gutless fire chiefs keeping shtum and more lives at risk.”

This type of scathing attack is not what the FRS needs anywhere in the country. Such disasters, although regrettable, need the cold reflection of hindsight to be applied, so that the proper lessons can be learnt and events such as these can then be avoided in future.



Firefighter Safety

Penhallow Hotel is an incident that could easily have endangered firefighter's lives as well as members of the public.

It must be said that one of the greatest concerns to our members and no doubt to FAs is the number of firefighter deaths this year. The Watch Manager of the watch that lost two firefighters at a high rise fire two years ago, lost his life whilst attending a car fire in June this year.

And now four firefighters lost at one incident at a fire at Atherstone on Stour in Warwickshire. The thoughts of everyone in the fire service community are with the families of the bereaved at this time.

The nature of the calls that firefighters attend is inherently dangerous. There are two distinct factors that need to be applied to minimise risk to firefighters and the public. These are numbers of resources and training.

Shropshire

Training

The question of resources has historically been at the fore of fire service debate, pre and post IRMP. The issue of training has also been an important matter, but one that has not understandably enjoyed as high a profile.

It is pleasing that the SFRS has highlighted the need for training more vehemently in very recent times. That it has been given equal status to the targets required for CFS and Business Fire Safety realigns the balance that is need between protection, prevention and intervention. It means that the Service is concentrating on all aspects of service delivery, rather than those arbitrarily identified by Government through BVPIs.

NVQ and ADC

The FBU in Shropshire feel that the new NVQ and ADC structures for training and advancement have their merits and have high hopes for these systems despite there being some gaps and difficulties encountered in the early years.



Those systems that need to be developed include:

- Assessment of how staff progress through the organisation, this should include how ADC link up with development programmes
- Operational preparedness of those staff who may attend incidents, either in or outside of their routinely anticipated response requirements.
- Assurance that the required technical and practical competencies are in place for all levels. This should include operational and non operational work.
- Sufficient numbers of staff are available not just to provide for an operational response, but also to facilitate for training and operational preparedness.

It is the duty of SFRS and our members to ensure that incidents such as the Penhallow, Buncefield and Atherstone on Stour do not occur in Shropshire, through directed prevention and adequate intervention. This we all hope will be achieved by having the adequate resources in the right place at the right time with a professional and well trained staff.

Tweedale

The redistribution of the appliances and personnel from Telford to Tweedale is an example of concentrating resources at the right place and time.

The FBU in Shropshire have fully supported the moving of one appliance from Telford Central to Tweedale. The risk benefit analysis was fairly clear that a potentially large improvement in intervention service delivery could be achieved for a relatively low financial burden.

However, in our response to this proposal last year, we outlined our concerns that a realistic timetable would be needed with enough flexibility to facilitate the mechanics of the move. The timetable showed implementation from September 07 onwards. Recruitment, promotion and transfer selection has taken place and building work has begun. There are still a number of points that will need to be clarified before the move takes place and we are cognisant that the Service is working toward a January 08 start date, and that these issues will now need to be addressed urgently.

There has been an apparent decision to not provide Tweedale with a station cook and also to abandon the current catering arrangements that are in place at the other wholtime stations. This is extremely disappointing to us and the staff being transferred to Tweedale. We also believe that the value to the organisation of this provision has been underestimated by the Service.

The Service has been commended by the many audits carried out on the Service over the last few years, and the Fire Authority, the Management and all staff should feel proud of that



achievement. The value of a station cook and the associated catering arrangements; is that the Crews at wholetime stations are fully enabled to carry out community fire safety, business fire safety and meaningful training without the hindrance of catering arrangements interfering. Our fear is that the targets reached over previous years may be jeopardised.

Small Fires Unit (SFU)

The pilot scheme recommended by this proposal started earlier this year. The Service has freely admitted during the consultation period this year, that there have not been ideal conditions to measure the value of this proposal, due the poor weather this summer. The intimation that the pilot will be extended so that a more accurate evaluation can be made is probably a sensible approach

However, the FBU in Shropshire still have many misgivings about the validity of the claimed benefits that a SFU will provide for service delivery. We are aware that appliances have had to be mobilised where the SFU was not able to cope with an incident. We cannot see that an SFU is going to provide any significant benefit either financially or logistically.

We still have concerns over the vulnerability of firefighters that may come under attack (which is becoming a more common occurrence) and the moral pressure placed upon them to act, by the public.

Moral Pressure

We have pointed out in previous responses to IRMP about the pressure to act outside Standard Operating Procedures when faced with high pressure situations where lives may be at risk. This type of situation has been illustrated prolifically in the media this year when, two Police Community Support Officers were completely lambasted by the national media for not taking action at a drowning incident on the 3rd May. This was followed up with severe criticism on 3rd October from David Cameron. This also has great relevance to our own water safety provision of course and will be dealt with later.

Vulnerability

Crews of two are going to be far more vulnerable than crews of five. Nationally the number of attacks on firefighters is increasing in spite of the Emergency Workers Act. Below is an article of attacks on firefighters late last year:

Firefighters attacked by youths

Firefighters were attacked by a group of up to 20 children and young people as they tried to tackle a blaze.

Members of Shropshire Fire and Rescue were pelted with stones and bricks as they dealt with a fire in Woodside, Telford, during Wednesday evening.



A fire service spokesman said the children were also using aerosol cans as flame throwers.

The firefighters had to withdraw from the scene and police were called. No-one was hurt during the incident.

Crews were called to the fire after the contents of wheelie bins were emptied and set on fire.

Similar scenes are now being witnessed in Shrewsbury and are the cause of great concern amongst our members.

Incidents Water and other Rescue

We feel that there is a need to further investigate both the nature and severity of incidents that we have attended and incidents that we may be called upon to attend, measured against the incident in Manchester this year (described earlier) balanced against the death of Paul Metcalf in 1999, also in Manchester, at a drowning incident.

Most particularly, after the flooding events this year, where 70 rescues were carried out in Shropshire at 320 incidents, further investigation is needed in this area not only to be able to deal with this type of response, but also to ensure that when this type of response is needed; then the ability to attend normal fire calls is not compromised.

The statistics show clearly that water incidents are by far the most common of the non fire, non RTC incidents that we attend. However, what provisions have we to deal with building collapse? This is obviously being addressed through the regional USAR capability, but this will only provide a delayed response. Statistically incidents such as building collapse happen infrequently, but when they do occur; the draw on resources can potentially be phenomenal.

Another, type of incident where the fire service may affect rescues is from height (silos and machinery are other considerations too). As with building collapse, this may be a rare occurrence, but may also tie up resources for a considerable time, compromising the ability to attend fire or RTC incidents.

This shift in focus was highlighted by the then Fire Minister Angela Smith who confirmed in the House of Commons on 5th March 07:

[Answer](#): Angela E. Smith: “Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) are required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to have in place and maintain an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. The IRMP enables the authority to tailor cover to fire and other incidents to local circumstances—evaluating where risk is greatest and allocating resource accordingly.”



IRMP 08/09

Shrewsbury Fire Cover Review

The evidence given to staff under consultation of the Shrewsbury fire cover review strongly suggest that the benefit of splitting the attendance at Shrewsbury by relocating from St. Michael's Street to two separate sites, is minimal at best from an operational point of view. This is against what may be regarded as a lenient attendance time success rate of 75%. Shrewsbury's record for last year at 81% would question the need for relocation in those terms.

The presentation also does not take into account the operational response of the RDS appliance at Shrewsbury. The statistics are also based on life risk incidents only which can only limit the accuracy of the empirical data. If all incidents and their times were taken into account, (even if unwanted fire signal automatic fire alarm calls were removed) this would give more convincing evidence.

However, the depth of investigation for this part of the IRMP is disappointing. The evidence concentrates solely on operational response and does not elaborate on the variety of options that may be available.

Control has been disregarded due to the assumption that the FireControl project is going to negate the need for any type of control in Shropshire. The assumption is also made that it the RCC will be in operation by May 2010. Considering the number and length of delays that have already dogged this project; some contingency may need to be added to the plan.

Headquarters, workshops and Fire Safety departments are also not entered into the equation as regards needs/benefit analysis.

One of the problems with the Shrewsbury site as outlined by the presentation is the available space on the yard being shared between workshops, storing appliances and car parking, resulting in the opportunity for operational personnel at Shrewsbury to train being severely limited. How refurbishing the site will remedy this particular problem is not identified in the IRMP.

Further consideration must also be given to investigating the long term needs of the fire service in Shrewsbury. If it is the case that a refurbishment of the Shrewsbury site brought it up to today's needs; how long will it be before this question needs to be revisited?

The costing of staying at St. Michael's £2-3 million compared to moving £5-8 million must be based on some sort of plan of what will happen to the other departments, what the long term future of the site is, and what the future development of the town will be.



Officer Review

There are two aspects to this proposal. Is there a need for greater officer provision? If so, what should that provision be?

The evidence put forward would strongly suggest that there is a need for greater officer cover for Shropshire. The number of occasions that an extra officer would have been required in the previous year (84) is too frequent and the recall to duty system is not meant to be used as a standard course of action. In fact, the situation at Acousafoam as described in the presentation, where officer cover was at full stretch and no one else was available even if there had been recall to duty, indicates the need for greater officer cover. This will also provide the facility to relieve officer at protracted incidents. The need to send an officer to over the border incidents, as has been planned for in New Dimension scenarios, is a welcome step in the right direction.

This is one particular area where the economies of scale work against small FRSs. There is a minimum amount of operational response required to attend incidents no matter what the population or land mass of a county is. There is also a minimum amount of management needed to deal with the systems, processes and policies that a FRS requires.

However, we all realise that the FRS is in an ever changing world and there is a need to progress and evolve. The proposal outlined here is disappointingly vague and therefore difficult for our members to work out the true benefits of this proposal. Thus, there will be a need for us to bring this back to our membership once the proposal has been hardened up.

But, reading between the lines of this proposal it is highly unlikely that there is justification for a quasi flexi system that appears to be intimated here. It would be of greater benefit and ease to appoint four further Station Officer personnel onto the present flexi system.

Cultural Audit

The FBU in Shropshire applaud the Service for including the Cultural Audit in this year's IRMP. There is much justification for dealing with these issues in this way, and giving it the weight of attention that it requires.

The FBU has been heavily involved in the initial stages of dealing with the results of the Cultural Audit, and we are grateful for the trust that the Service has placed in us to continue to deal with the outcomes of this.

It is perhaps for the Focus Groups (that hopefully will be set up) to deal with the issues identified by the Cultural Audit, but it is necessary that the FBU outlines some of its concerns in the results here.

At least a quarter of staff that intend to leave in the next five years, report dissatisfaction as their reason. The figures for this are difficult to interpret as there may well be overlap between the



categories. But, in contrast to those intending to leave the Service for positive or understandable reasons, there is a marked difference. It indicates that something is going awry somewhere.

A great deal of credence must be given to text comments, as these have required effort on behalf of the staff rather than just ticking boxes. It would therefore indicate that these comments are sincerely meant, whatever the format of these texts. Common amongst these texts are that more consultation, less bureaucracy, greater action on staff views, increased consistency in treatment of different roles and better communication from the management of SFRS.

It is incredulous that a nationally thought out document could deal with discrimination, bullying and harassment in such a ham-fisted way. The design of these questions severely limits the conclusions that could be reached from the responses. Despite this, it is of concern that where such cases have been handled by management, 74% felt that it was dealt with ineffectively. It is understandable that this may include significant numbers who have been dissatisfied with the outcome, whether that outcome was a fair one or not, but the magnitude of this figure is surprising.

On the issue of positive discrimination, the Service should not account for this as a general misunderstanding in the questionnaire for positive action. During the IRMP consultation this year, discussions have centred on this point. However, we believe that there is a high number of staff that do believe that SFRS practice positive discrimination, regardless of the low amounts of women and ethnic minorities that have been successful in joining the service.

The ambiguity implied during consultation between positive action and discrimination is not shown in the text of the questions, and is verified in text comments where many respondents supported positive action. Although the figure was surprisingly higher than expected, through anecdotal evidence conveyed to us by members and non members indicates that there is a significant number who do believe that positive discrimination does take place.

It is not all bad news of course, and it is extremely heartening to see that as high as 90% take equality and diversity as their personal responsibility.

On the question of whether requests for special arrangements for leave would be granted, the assumption that staff are ambivalent on the matter is extremely misleading. Such requests are important matters for our members. Experience of having such requests granted and not granted at different times would lead people to answer “neither likely nor unlikely”. It does not mean they are ambivalent!!!



Conclusion

We are aware that there are national drivers to concentrate the focus areas of IRMP. These are road safety, flooding, environmental protection, Heritage, Community Safety, Local Area Agreements, Equality and Diversity, Civil Contingencies Act and Wildfire.

We would support SFRS in looking more closely at these areas and also support SFRS in the continuing implementation of last year's IRMP, to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties. We also look forward to further involvement in the three Action Plan proposals in this year's IRMP and to continue the good working relationship between the FBU in Shropshire and SFRS.

