

## Integrated Strategic Planning Process 2009/10

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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### 1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines how the Service will continue to align service, financial and improvement planning, the result of which will culminate in the publication of the 2009/10 Corporate Plan.

### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Endorse the process and note the key milestones; and
- b) Recognise the interdependency behind service, budget and improvement planning.

### 3 Background

The strategic planning process is built around a number of dependencies and milestones which overlap into three key areas: service, financial and improvement planning.

During 2007/08 officers reviewed the approach to service planning and developed an integrated strategic planning process in order to demonstrate a more joined up approach to the whole issue of planning. The approach was endorsed by the Fire Authority and resulted in the production of a forward looking 2008/09 Corporate Plan and a backward facing 2007/08 Annual Report.

It is proposed to continue with this approach for the 2009/10 strategic planning process.

## **4 Service Planning**

Service planning for 2009/10 will continue with a series of workshops commencing in October 2008. These workshops will involve officers reviewing the Service's aims and objectives, determining improvement priorities, reviewing and refining the 2009/10 capital programme and determining any new growth requirements and efficiencies.

The outcomes of the workshops will be the basis for drawing up the Authority's 2009/10 Corporate Plan which will be presented for approval by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 11 February 2009.

Following the publication of the 2009/10 Corporate Plan a backward facing Annual Report will be produced. The Annual Report will look back over the previous 12 months and report on achievements and progress against the Authority's key priorities.

## **5 Financial Planning**

Financial planning each year centres around preparing three year revenue and capital budgets, leading in February to the fixing of the precept for the year ahead.

The process for budget planning is agreed in detail each year but must be led by service planning, Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP), revenue support grant and the level of the potential precept.

To be effective, strategic planning must ensure that service plans, the IRMP and partnership plans are all consistent with the budgets as agreed each February. This will also allow the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to be prepared in the same consistent way.

In the period April to June the accounts for the year are produced, both in statutory form and also in a more reader-friendly version. The latter version is currently posted on the web-site and can be incorporated into the Annual Report.

The process and timetable for producing the Authority's three-year budget will continue to link to the 2009/10 Corporate Plan, the MTFP, and to work with IRMP. A full detailed breakdown of the budget plan is set out in Appendix A of this report.

## **6 Improvement Planning**

Improvement planning covers two key areas:

- Improvements to the Service identified through IRMP;
- Improvements to the Service identified by the Audit Commission and through other internal and external audits e.g. Equality and Diversity.

## **IRMP**

The main thrust of IRMP throughout 2008/09 and 2009/10 will be the development of an overarching 3 year strategic IRMP, which will come into effect on 1 April 2010. Officers are currently working towards the development of a draft 3 year plan due to be presented to Members in June 2009. The draft plan will then be subject to a full round of consultation before coming into effect during the 2010/11 reporting year.

In developing a 3-year IRMP, Members will have to consider the levels of uncertainty surrounding future revenue support grant from 2011/12 onwards. With this in mind officers will consider a number of 'what if' scenarios prior to Strategy and Resources Committee on 13 November 2008. These scenarios will help to inform Members about the implications to the service of introducing future improvements when setting the next 3-year revenue and capital budgets.

## **Performance Framework**

The major milestone relating to the performance framework assessments, undertaken by the Audit Commission, is the publication of the performance framework results between January and March each year. This year's performance framework assessment is the last one prior to the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime being introduced. The results of the assessments, as in previous years, will help inform the Service of areas of focus for 2009/10 improvement priorities.

Officers continue to address improvements identified through the previous Operational Assurance of Service Delivery (OASD) assessment in 2006, together with last year's Use of Resources (UOR) and Direction of Travel (DOT) audits. The Performance Framework findings have been an important mechanism in shaping the Authority's key priorities, such as managing public expectations and promoting Equality and Diversity in 2008/09. As CAA is introduced in 2009/10 the Authority will continue to consider the findings of the Audit Commission when establishing future priorities for the Service.

## **7 Summary**

This report sets out the proposals to continue the process of aligning the Authority's and Service's various planning regimes into one Integrated Strategic Planning Process. The outcome of the proposals set out will deliver two overarching integrated strategic documents – a *forward* looking 'Corporate Plan' and a *backward* facing performance report - 'Annual Report.'

## **8 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## 9 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

## 10 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the services Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An initial Equality Impact assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## 11 Appendices

**Appendix A** Strategic Planning Timetable.

**Appendix B** Strategic Planning Gantt Chart

**Appendix C** Strategic Planning Gantt Chart interdependencies

## 12 Background Papers

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

Strategy and Resources Committee, 2 October 2007, Report 7 - Integrated Strategic Planning Process - Service, Financial and Improvement Planning October 2007.

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	*

**Appendix A - Strategic Planning Process**

Month	Service Planning	Financial Planning	Improvement Planning	
			IRMP	Audit
July	<p><b>16<sup>th</sup> CFA approve proposal for 2009/10 Strategic Planning timetable</b></p> <p>Review Performance Indicators</p>	<p><b>16<sup>th</sup> CFA approves the 2009/10 Budget Plan</b></p> <p>Officers review and monitor Directorate/ Departmental Plans, revenue and capital budgets, and financial plans with partner organisations;</p> <p>Officers review overarching issues, such as pay awards, prices, efficiencies and grants;</p> <p>Directorate Heads consider service pressures and efficiencies over the next three years;</p> <p>Directorate Heads forward the three year capital programme and prudential guidelines, reviewing completed schemes and producing new project appraisals;</p> <p>Officers review the risk register and the level and nature of reserves and provisions.</p> <p>Lead officers and PAG consider partnership resource needs.</p>	Consultation	<p>Review OA outcomes</p> <p>Prepare self assessment for DOT/VFM</p>
August		Tasks above continue throughout August	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Development of what if scenarios</p>	<p>4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> E&amp;D Audit</p> <p>Review OA outcomes</p> <p>Prepare self assessment for DOT/VFM</p> <p>UOR Auditors on site</p>

Month	Service Planning	Financial Planning	Improvement Planning	
			IRMP	Audit
September	10 <sup>th</sup> PG Paper requesting officers to consider growth and impact on 09/10 capital scheme (review of 09/10 capital items and efficiency savings)	Tasks above continue throughout September  <b>18<sup>th</sup> S&amp;R receive progress report on budget planning issues and effect on 3 year budget and proposals for 2011/12</b>	Consultation  Development of what if scenarios	UOR Auditors on site  Review OA outcomes  24 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> DOT/VFM Audit and initial feedback
October	1 <sup>st</sup> Deadline for growth and capital items and efficiencies prior to evaluation  22 <sup>nd</sup> PG receives results of growth evaluation, capital items and efficiencies  28 <sup>th</sup> /29 <sup>th</sup> Strategic planning workshop	<b>15<sup>th</sup> CFA considers S&amp;R budget policy</b>  Officers review and consider for the next three years: Base budget Pay and prices Service growth and savings (including “what if” analysis) Efficiencies Implications of capital schemes Changes to reserves and balances	Consultation  Development of what if scenarios	28 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> OA outcomes reviewed at Strategic planning workshop
November	<b>13<sup>th</sup> S&amp;R receive report on growth and capital items and efficiencies, budget base, pay and prices, reserves and balances.</b>		<b>13<sup>th</sup> S&amp;R receive report on IRMP future budget implications.</b>  Complete consultation  <b>25<sup>th</sup> present findings to IRMP MWG</b>	
	<b>27<sup>th</sup> APMC receive report on monitoring responsibilities for strategic plan</b>  Develop 2009/10 Corporate Plan	Officers review and consider for the next three years: Base budget Pay and prices Service growth and savings (including “what if” analysis) Efficiencies Implications of capital schemes Changes to reserves and balances		

Month	Service Planning	Financial Planning	Improvement Planning	
			IRMP	Audit
December	Develop 2009/10 Corporate Plan	<b>17<sup>th</sup> CFA agree spending package, potential precept and three year budgets as a basis for consultation taking into account any government announcement.</b>  Consultation on budget	<b>17<sup>th</sup> Report to CFA on outcomes from consultation</b>	
January	Refine Corporate Plan and set performance targets  Produce draft Corporate Plan 2009/10  Officers develop Directorate/Departmental plans	Consultation on budget  <b>22<sup>nd</sup> S&amp;R finalise budget proposal</b>	Develop draft IRMP 3 year plan 2010/13	
February	<b>11<sup>th</sup> CFA agree 2009/10 Corporate Plan</b>  Officers develop Directorate/Departmental plans	<b>11<sup>th</sup> CFA fixes the precept for 2009/10 and agrees budget plans for 2010/11 and 2011/12</b>	Develop draft IRMP 3 year plan 2010/13	
March	<b>5<sup>th</sup> S&amp;R agree performance targets</b>  Officers develop Directorate/Departmental plans  Refine Corporate/Directorate/Departmental plans  31 <sup>st</sup> Release Performance Summary	Draft MTFP  Produce Budget Booklet	Develop draft IRMP 3 year plan 2010/13	Performance framework results  <b>12<sup>th</sup> APMC receive annual audit &amp; inspection letter.</b>
April	1 <sup>st</sup> Corporate Plan 2009/10 and Directorate/Departmental plans come into effect  Develop Annual Report		Take Draft IRMP 3 year plan to IRMP MWG	CAA audit regime comes into effect

Month	Service Planning	Financial Planning	Improvement Planning	
			IRMP	Audit
May	Develop Annual Report	<b>21<sup>st</sup> S&amp;R finalise proposals for 2010/11 budget process.</b>  Member conference to consider final accounts and amendments to MTFP.		
June	<b>10<sup>th</sup> CFA agree Annual Report</b>  30 <sup>th</sup> Release Annual Report	<b>10<sup>th</sup> CFA agree final accounts and final amendments to MTFP</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> CFA endorse IRMP 3 year plan prior to Consultation</b>	
July	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> CFA approve proposal for 2010/11 Strategic Planning timetable</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> CFA approve 2010/11 budget process</b>	Consultation	

Key:

CFA	Combined Fire Authority	OA	Operational Assurance
UOR	Use of Resources	DOT	Direction of Travel
PAG	Partnership Assessment Group	VFM	Value for Money
APMC	Audit and Performance Management Committee	IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan
S+R	Strategy and Resources Committee	MWG	Members' Working Group
PG	Policy Group	MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan
E&D	Equality and Diversity	CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment