

Changes to Member Appointments and Meeting Dates

Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Jonathan Eatough, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Fire Authority, on 01952 383200.

1 Purpose of Report

This report requests the Fire Authority to agree to changes in member appointments following the resignation of Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col) Allen from the Fire Authority. It also requests the Fire Authority to decide how the Authority meetings that were due to be held in June and July 2009 should be rescheduled.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Agree Councillor Kiernan's appointment to Committees as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
- b) Appoint a member as Asset Management and Procurement Champion;
- c) Endorse Councillor West's continuation in the role of Director of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Limited Company;
- d) Agree that the role of Alternative Director be left vacant until the Annual General Meeting of the Fire Authority;
- e) Appoint a Conservative member to the Urgency Committee to replace Councillor West; and
- f) Decide whether Option A or Option B, as set out in paragraph 5, should be taken with regard to rearranging Fire Authority meetings

3 Background

Lt Col Allen left Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority on 19 December 2008, therefore making it necessary for the Fire Authority to determine who they would wish to replace Lt Col Allen on committees and as

Asset Management and Procurement Champion. A change to the Regional Control Centre Director role also needs to be endorsed.

At the Fire Authority meeting in December 2008, it became apparent that it would not be possible to hold the June 2009 meeting of the Fire Authority on the date scheduled (10 June 2009) due to the timing of the Shropshire Council elections. The Fire Authority requested officers to bring a revised date back to the February meeting of the Authority. Officers have identified two possible options for rearranging this meeting and this report asks the Fire Authority to decide which one they would prefer.

4 Member Appointments

Committees

Councillor Terry Kiernan, Conservative, Telford & Wrekin Council has replaced Lt Col Allen on the Fire Authority. As there is no change to the political balance of the authority it is proposed that Councillor Kiernan take Lt Col Allen's place on the following committees:

Audit and Performance Management Committee
Health Panel (Additional Member)
Disciplinary Appeals Tribunal
Community Liaison Panel

Asset Management and Procurement Champion

The Fire Authority is asked to appoint a Member as Asset Management and Procurement Champion, a role which was previously held by Lt Col Allen. The role description for the Asset Management and Procurement Champion is appended to the report.

Regional Control Centre Director

The Fire Authority appointed Lt Col Allen as a Director of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Limited Company on 18 July 2007. On 30 April 2008, the Fire Authority appointed Councillor Stuart West, as an Alternative Director who would be able to attend Control Centre meetings in the absence of Lt Col Allen. Since Lt Col Allen left the Fire Authority, Councillor West has taken on the role of Director and the Fire Authority is asked to endorse this change. The Authority is also asked to agree that the role of Alternative Director be left vacant until the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Fire Authority at which all Member appointments will be reviewed.

Urgency Committee

In July 2008, the Fire Authority agreed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Urgency Committee which, amongst other things, would allow it to consider and make decisions on matters relating to the Regional Control Centre (RCC) Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC). As a consequence of this decision, Lt Col Allen was removed from the Urgency Committee due to a possible conflict of interests with his role as LACC Director. Councillor West took Lt Col Allen's place on the Urgency Committee

but he is unable to continue on this committee if he is the LACC Director. Therefore the Fire Authority is asked to appoint another Conservative Member to the Urgency Committee to replace Councillor West.

5 Meeting Dates

As discussed at the December 2008 meeting of the Fire Authority the elections for the new Shropshire Council will be held on Thursday 4 June 2009. This means that the Fire Authority meeting scheduled for Wednesday 10 June 2009 is unable to go ahead and Officers were tasked with bringing a revised date back to the Fire Authority.

The following factors have been taken into account when looking to address this issue:

- 1 The June meeting of the Fire Authority considers and approves the Statement of Accounts. This should be done by 30 June in order to comply with the Statutory Instrument on Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006, which places a duty on the Authority to adopt the accounts by that date. The Audit Commission have advised that a failure to adopt the Statement of Accounts by 30 June would have to be considered as part of the Use of Resources assessment but a reasonable approach would be taken if the adoption was delayed by only a few days.
- 2 Shropshire Council has advised that their AGM, at which they will agree their appointments to outside bodies, is likely to be held on Friday 19 June 2009. This means that the earliest date on which officers will know the Fire Authority membership is Monday 22 June 2009. Therefore 30 June 2009 is the earliest date on which a Fire Authority meeting could be held, in order to allow papers to be distributed.
- 3 The Fire Authority's AGM is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 22 July 2009. At this meeting, the Chair and Vice-Chair are normally elected and the membership and constitution of the Committees is considered and agreed. In order to do this the political balance of the Authority needs to be calculated and this cannot be done until Shropshire Council have confirmed their appointments to the Authority.

With this in mind, officers have identified two possible options for rearranging the meetings and these are set out below:

Option A

Hold a meeting of the Fire Authority on Tuesday 30 June 2009 which would probably take the following format:

am Training session for newly elected members of the Fire Authority

12pm Presentation on Statement of Accounts to all members

2pm Formal Fire Authority meeting at which the Chair and Vice-Chair would be elected and the Statement of Accounts considered and agreed.

The AGM on Wednesday 22 July would then still need to go ahead as usual.

Advantages / Disadvantages

This option would allow the Statement of Accounts to be adopted within the correct legal timeframe however it would mean that there would need to be another Fire Authority meeting within three weeks of this one.

Option B

Hold the AGM on Friday 3 July 2009. At this meeting the Chair and Vice-Chair would be elected and all the usual AGM business would be considered together with the Statement of Accounts, as officers, with the assistance of political group leaders, should have enough time to calculate the political balance of the Authority and its Committees.

This one meeting would then replace the two meetings scheduled for June and July 2009.

Advantages / Disadvantages

This option would mean that only one Fire Authority meeting would have to take place, however, the Authority would be three days overdue in adopting its Statement of Accounts although the Audit Commission have advised that they would take a pragmatic approach to this.

Audit and Performance Management Committee

There is a meeting of the Audit and Performance Management Committee scheduled for Thursday 4 June 2009. This meeting will be rearranged once the revised membership of the Audit and Performance Management Committee is known following the AGM of the Authority.

6 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report however it should be noted that Councillor West will not receive the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) associated with the role of LACC Director as he is already in receipt of an SRA as Chair of the Fire Authority.

7 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report and the legal advisor is satisfied that the recommendations the Fire Authority are asked to make are valid.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Fire Authority's Member Appointments and Constitution of Committees was undertaken in July 2008. This assessment looked at all of the Fire Authority's Committees and identified any issues that needed to be addressed. Therefore an Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report.

9 Appendix

Role Description for Asset Management and Procurement Champion

10 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

18 July 2007, Report 18c – Election of Director to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre and minutes

30 April 2008, Report 16 – Appointment of Alternative Director and minutes

16 July 2008, Report 7 – Member Appointments and Constitution of Committees 2008-09 and minutes

17 December 2008, Report 18 – Schedule of Meetings 2009 and minutes

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 and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Role Description

Office: Member Champion for Procurement and Asset Management

Allowance: None

Responsible To: Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government advocates that:

...the strategic importance of procurement should be reflected in an executive portfolio – creating a member – ‘procurement champion’¹.

Although Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority does not operate executive arrangements, it has recognised the importance of procurement as a strategic driver of improvement and efficiency in the appointment of a Member Champion. The Fire Authority considers that procurement, whilst a strategic discipline in its own right, is closely linked to the Asset Management² function and it has, therefore, established a joint Champion for Procurement and Asset Management.

Purpose of Role

The overall purpose of the role of the Member Champion for Procurement and Asset Management is to promote, encourage, challenge and drive improvement in procurement and asset management.

Main Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the Member Champion for Procurement and Asset Management are:

- To instigate Best Value Reviews of procurement or asset provision

¹ Member Champion Responsibilities are set out in the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government p26, and IDeA Members' Guide to procurement.

² Asset Management Planning is a business discipline for managing the life cycle of infrastructure assets to achieve a desired service level while mitigating risk. The objective is to optimise the whole life business impact of costs, performance and risk exposures of the organisations physical assets. It encompasses management, procurement, financial, customer, engineering and other business processes.

- To champion the corporate procurement strategy, its alignment with corporate objectives and the Performance Plan and its implementation
- To champion the corporate asset management strategy, its alignment with corporate objectives and the Performance Plan and its implementation
- To ensure systems are in place for procurement and contract management, supplier management and asset management and that they are operating effectively
- To ask challenging questions about value for money, sustainability and risk management in relation to procurement and assets
- To ensure effective systems are in place to factor equality and sustainability into the strategy and that they are considered at each stage of the procurement process
- To ensure that systems are in place to facilitate Member engagement in the making of key decisions in the procurement cycle for major projects (which would include agreeing the outline business case as well as awarding contracts)
- To advocate the need for the completion of Gateway Reviews on high value/high risk projects
- To ensure effective systems are in place for monitoring the performance of partnerships and other key contracts, and their impact on staff
- To ensure effective systems are in place for capturing lessons learnt from major projects and partnerships
- To report annually to the Fire Authority (in April) on their work as Member Champion

Accountability

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

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

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

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