

Public Value Review Update

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact John Redmond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Steve Worrall, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260204.

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides a summary of progress against the agreed outcomes, as set out within the Fire Authority's Public Value review undertaken in 2010.

2 Recommendation

Members are recommended to note progress to date.

3 Background

At the outset of 2010 the Fire Authority commissioned a Public Value review of the Service to assess and address the impact of both the recession and the Coalition Government's austerity measures upon the Service. The Member-led review, through a structured process of staff and public engagement, sought the views, opinions and support of staff, united into a single team, to form a collective strategy to address the projected budget cuts.

4 Public Value Outcomes

The Public Value review identified a range of initiatives, which, if successfully managed and implemented, will result in an incremental and controlled 25 percent reduction of the Fire Authority's budget over a four-year period (2011 to 2015). These initiatives predominantly take advantage of natural staff turnover to secure savings, whilst maintaining, without significant reduction, frontline services to the community, as detailed within the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Essentially, and in accordance with earlier directions from Members, the proposals allow for a gradual budget reduction (estimated in 2010 at £2.7m to £2.9m in cash terms), whilst to date avoiding compulsory redundancies, maintaining all fire stations and alleviating the necessity for merger with one or more other fire authorities.

Appended is a summary of the previously agreed four-year Public Value programme.

Full details of the review may be viewed at:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/sites/alpha.shropshirefire.gov.uk/files/page/files/Public%20Value%20Review%202010.pdf>

The savings achieved / earmarked through the Public Value review are independent of those additional savings identified through the more recent IRMP / 2020 Strategic Planning Process.

5 Public Value Year 1 (2011/12) Review

A review of the Year 1 of the Public Value review has been previously presented and noted by the Fire Authority.¹

6 Public Value Year 2 Initiatives (2012/13)

The Public Value review has sought to maximise savings through aligning, where possible, initiatives to projected staff turnover, whilst limiting the impact on the Fire Authority's IRMP.

A summary of Year 2 savings is set out below.

Public Value initiatives Year 2 (2012/13)	Forecast Reduction £	Actual Reduction £
Removal of two support staff posts	50,000	-
Removal of 5 on-call firefighter posts	30,000	30,000
Reduction in rural firefighting budget	50,000	50,000
Reduction in Building Maintenance Budget	50,000	-
Reduction in capital programme	90,000	90,000
Cessation of permanent crewing of Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) (reduction of 8 posts)	297,000	297,000
Revised Incident Watching Briefs	30,000	30,000
Total	£597,000	497,000

Public Value Savings Year 2

¹ <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/sites/alpha.shropshirefire.gov.uk/files/fra/14-public-value-review-update.pdf>

The most significant initiative for Year 2 has been the cessation of permanent crewing of the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP). With a gradual wholetime firefighter reduction occurring during Year 1 (8 posts), the ALP ceased to be crewed on a permanent basis from 1 April 2012.

The current crewing arrangement, which is the subject of ongoing evaluation, involves firefighters at Shrewsbury Fire Station 'switch-crewing' between the normally crewed fire engines to the ALP (or rescue boat), dependent upon the nature of incident, to which they are summoned. The vulnerability of this approach occurs when wholetime crews are distant from Shrewsbury Fire Station or committed to other incidents, creating a delay in their return to station to crew the ALP (or rescue boat).

With the ALP not being a front-line appliance (i.e. it is requested by attending crews at an incident as required, rather than being mobilised on the first call from the public), there is minimal impact on operational provision, and no impact on either IRMP Response Standards or Public Value measures.

As part of the budget setting process for 2012/13, Members were informed that the saving of £50,000 on support staff was unlikely to be achieved, and consequently this budget reduction was not made. However, efficiencies were identified elsewhere in the revenue budget.

Reductions have been achieved within the retained duty system budget, with staffing remaining below the agreed establishment level for 2012/13.

Variances in the revenue budget for 2012/13 were reported to the Fire Authority in July, and these included an overspend in the building maintenance budget. The Authority was informed that the severity of cuts already made to the revenue budget would be considered, and these will be taken into account as the budget is set for 2013/14.

7 Public Value Years 3 and 4 (2013 to 2015)

The planned Public Value initiatives for the current year (year 3: 2013/14, see attached Appendix) will continue as planned with no known reason at this stage for any changes. These include the removal of primary crewing from the Rescue Tender (RT), later this year. This change could have an impact on the previous IRMP Response Standards (attendance of the RT at life risk incidents is measured), but proposals are being considered, as part of the IRMP / 2020 process, to look at how that potential impact can be reduced or eliminated. This demonstrates that the Service is putting great effort into preventing impact of its service delivery changes on the people of Shropshire during these difficult times, but that this is increasingly difficult to achieve.

8 Financial Implications

There are no further financial implications arising from this report.

9 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

10 Initial Impact Assessment

An Initial Impact Assessment has not been completed, as this report provides only factual information relating to the Public Value Review.

11 Appendix

Summary of Public Value Initiatives 2011/12 to 2014/15

12 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Summary of Public Value Initiatives 2011/12 to 2014/15

2011/12 Area:	Saving	2012/13 Area:	Saving	2013/14 Area:	Saving	2014/15 Area:	Saving
Legacy Inflation	£100,000	Reduction of 2 Non-Uniform Posts	£50,000	End to permanent crewing of RT (from 01/01/2014)	£80,000	End to permanent crewing of RT (from 01/04/2014)	£217,00
Insurance Premium Reductions	£100,000	Reduction of 5 RDS Posts	£30,000	Reduction of 2 Non-Uniform Posts	£50,000	Reduction of 2 Non-Uniform Posts	£50,000
Reduction of 2 Non-Uniform Posts	£50,000	Reduction in RDS budget	£50,000	Reduction of 5 RDS Posts	£30,000	Reduction of 5 RDS Posts	£30,000
Reduction of 5 RDS Posts	£30,000	Reduction in Capital Programme	£90,000	Reduction in Smoke Alarm Budget	£75,000	Reduction in Capital Programme	£125,000
Reduction of 4 planned DST officers	£148,000	Reduction in Building Maintenance Budget	£50,000	Reduction of 1 Training Instructor post	£43,000		
Reduction of 4 WT watch managers	£172,000	Revised Relief Crew Policy	£30,000	Reduction in Capital Programme	£160,000		
Reduction of 6 Incident Command posts	£372,000	Cessation of permanent crewing of ALP	£297,000	Reduction in Building Maintenance Budget	£50,000		
Removal of station messing	£61,000			Reduction of 1 Brigade Manager post	£100,00		
Reduction in RDS budget	£50,000						
Reduction in Capital Programme	£63,000						
Projected Savings:	£1,146,000		£597,000		£588,000		£422,000
Projected Accumulative Savings:	£1,146,000		£1,743,000		£2,331,000		£2,753,000
Actual Savings to date:	£1,146,000		£1,643,000				

Key to abbreviations

RDS – Retained Duty System personnel, **WT** – Wholetime Duty personnel, **DST** – District Support Officers, **ALP** – Aerial Ladder Platform, **RT** – Rescue Tender