

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority  
held in the Oak Room, Shrewsbury Fire Station  
on Wednesday, 17 December 2025, at 2.00 pm**

**Present****Members**

Councillors Bentley, Clayton, Coleman, Evans, Fejfer, Handley, Husemann, Minnery (Chair), Mosley, Radford, Waite and Walmsley

**Officers**

Simon Hardiman	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Marc Millward	Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer	T/ACFO
Richard Phillips	Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer	Deputy Clerk
Joanne Coadey	Head of Finance	HoF
Scott Hurford	Head of Transformation and Collaboration	HoTC
Chris Haigh	Head of Digital and Data	HoDD
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Team Leader	ESTL
Jo Pritchard	Executive Support Officer	ESO

**Externals**

Marc Bayliss	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner	DPCC
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**1 Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Blundell, Hannington, Kerr, Mehta and Overton (Vice Chair)  
Sam Burton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Germaine Worker, Head of HR and Administration

**2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None

**3 Public Questions**

None

**4 Member Questions**

None

## **5 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved** that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

The T/ACFO left the meeting at this point (2.05 pm)

## **6 Appointment of Assistant Chief Fire Officer**

This report asked the Fire Authority to ratify the decision of its Brigade Managers' Employment Panel (BMEP) on the appointment of a new Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority

- a) Ratify the recommendation of the Brigade Managers Employment Panel that Mr Marc Millward be appointed to the post of Assistant Chief Fire Officer, subject to the usual employment checks; and
- b) Approve the use of members who have completed recruitment training on future member interview panels.

The meeting reverted to an open session at this point (2.15 pm) and the T/ACFO returned to the meeting.

## **7 Fire Authority Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting, held on 15 October 2025, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

## **8 Strategy and Resources Committee Non-Exempt Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 20 November 2025, be noted and the recommendations at item 5 of those minutes, as given below, be agreed.

### **Item 5 – Financial Performance to September 2025, including Annual Treasury Review 2024/25 and Mid-Year Treasury Review 2025/26**

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested;
- c) Note the position of the capital programme;
- d) Note the annual review of treasury activities for 2024/25
- e) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2025/26; and
- f) Note the mid-year review of treasury activities for 2024/25/26.

## **9 2026/27 and Later Years Budget Summary**

This report summarised the budgets that are proposed by the Strategy and Resources Committee. The results are put forward to the Fire Authority for approval as the basis for consultation, leading to a final decision at the Fire Authority meeting in February 2026.

The HoF presented this report and advised that the budget settlement is expected to be announced this afternoon. Considering this, the HoF tabled a document to the meeting which socialised another budget modelling which gives a vastly different picture to the one included in the report, however, which model will be used depends on the budget settlement. The HoF undertook to send a summary of the budget settlement and its implications to Members before Christmas.

The HoF explained that the Fire Authority is about to enter year 2 of its structural review and at this point there are no capital charges or growth items that need to the Service needs to budget for.

The Chair commented that there is little that the Fire Authority can do at present. There are clearly two options, and the Authority must continue as it is already doing.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the report;
- b) Agree the recommendations on expenditure for 2026/27 and later years set out in report 6 of the Appendix;
- c) agree the recommendations on Reserves and Provisions, set out in report 7 of the Appendix; and
- d) request the Strategy and Resources Committee to prepare a final budget package in January 2026, for final decision by the Fire Authority in February 2026.

## **10 Meeting Schedule 2026**

This report set out the Fire Authority and Committee meeting dates to the end of the 2025/26 municipal year, for approval by the Fire Authority.

The Deputy Clerk presented the report to the meeting and explained that the meeting schedule attached at the Appendix to the report until the end of the current municipal year i.e. 2025/26. This schedule reflects the amended names of the Committees, following the recent Governance Review and includes the newly established Performance & Scrutiny Committee.

The Deputy Clerk also explained that to bring the Fire Authority meeting dates in line with those of its constituent authorities, a meeting schedule for the 2026/27 municipal year will be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority in June 2026.

Bringing the scheduling of Fire Authority meetings in line with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Council meetings should hopefully avoid clashes and reduce the need for Fire Authority meetings to be rearranged.

The Fire Authority then debated the start times of full Authority and Committee meetings. Various views were expressed regarding this, but the consensus was that meetings should be held in the morning, with either a 10.00 am or 10.30 am start time.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority

- a) note the report
- b) agree the meeting schedule to May 2026, as attached at the Appendix to the report;
- c) agree the start time of Authority and Committee meetings as morning meetings; and
- d) approve that the meeting schedule for the 2026/27 municipal year be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority for agreement.

## **11 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection 2024**

### **11a HMICFRS Cause of Concern Progress Report**

This report detailed the Service's progress towards improvement identified by the HMICFRS Cause of Concern (CoC)

The HoTC presented this report and advised that four of the five CoC strands are on schedule for completion by the target dates. Information is provided in the report explaining why CoC R4 will not meet its target date.

Members queried when the Service was likely to catch up with digital and data elements. The HoTC explained that the HoDD has provided a revised plan for this CoC which is split into four areas. Completion is now predicted to be reached at the end of June 2026. The CFO added that the HMICFRS CoC revisit raised the issue of the timeline for CoC4 which has led to the target completion date being revised. Officers are confident that the Service is on schedule to meet the revised date.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority note the report.

### **11b HMICFRS Areas for Improvement Progress Report**

This report detailed the Service's progress towards improvement identified by the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement (AFIs)

The HoTC presented this report and drew Members' attention to the table that started on page 3 of the report.

This table groups the AFIs according to the Inspection pillars used by the HMICFRS. The HoTC talked through each of the columns in the table and advised Members that this report will in future be considered in detail by the Performance & Scrutiny Committee. The CFO added that the Service's approach to the AFIs has been to prioritise enabling AFIs.

Members raised a question around AFI 8 which relates to the Service being well prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA). The HoTC explained that the Service has plans in place for this scenario and these are being tested through training exercises. The CFO added that there are National Operational Guidance (NOG) plans in place which class the Service as being a non-specialist responder rather than a specialist asset. This issue links to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which highlights a move to different methods of attack. Training provided to staff will be around awareness of such events rather than the capability to respond to them.

Members also queried some of the AFIs that come under the People Inspection Pillar; in particular AFI 21 which relates to Workforce Planning and AFI 17 which relates to Senior Staff Values and refers to the Staff Survey in the commentary provided in the table. Members were particularly unhappy that no dates were specified in relation to the completion of the revised action plan for AFI 21 and that the timeline for the Staff Survey is only given as early 2026. The CFO explained that the Staff Survey had been deferred due to the ongoing Cultural Transformation Programme and that the Survey would be done in April / May 2026. Officers will try to include dates wherever possible in future versions of this report.

The Fire Authority commented that they appreciated the changes that had been made to the report which reflected feedback provided in recent Audit & Standards Committee meetings; the information in the report is now presented in a more accessible way. The HoTC thanked Members for the positive feedback on this.

In response to a query from a Member regarding the Service's contact with the HMICFRS outside of the Inspection visits, the CFO reported that the Service Liaison Lead (SLL), Mr Andy Groom, was in Service on 10 December to review progress against the AFIs. HMICFRS are providing guidance to the Service and the Service's progress reports are routinely shared with HMICFRS. The Service's relationship with the HMICFRS is quite different now to how it was after the 2022/23 Inspection. That Inspection raised 16 AFIs but there was no process in place for HMICFRS to monitor the Service's progress against the AFIs; regular contact is however being maintained following the last Inspection. The CFO also advised that Kathryn Stone, the new HMI for the Service, has met with both the Chair and the CFO since taking up her post.

The Chair commented that the process has matured, for example the template for assessment is reflected in the reporting that has come to Members today and it is steps such as this, that will enable the Service to address its CoC and AFIs.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority note the report.

Before closing the meeting, the Chair wished Members and Officers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thanked everyone for their work and commitment to the Fire Authority in 2025.

The meeting closed at 3.10 pm

**Chair**.....

**Date**.....