

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan

Report of the Section 151 Officer & Treasurer

For further information about this report please contact Jacqueline Dungey, S151 Officer, on 01743 260200.

1 Executive Summary

This report addresses the requirement to maintain an Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan, and proposed approach.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and approve the revised approach to the production of the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan and recommendation to remove the items on the existing plan.

3 Background

In accordance with the authority delegated to it by the Fire Authority, the Audit & Standards Committee are required to consider and approve the annual Statement of Accounts which includes oversight of the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan.

The Statement of Accounts contains a statement as to how effective the Authority complies with its Code of Corporate Governance and ensuring internal controls manage the risks to which the Authority is exposed. This is known as the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS improvement plan is produced to strengthen the AGS position and is reported to the Audit & Standards Committee on a quarterly basis capturing progress to date. This Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress, which the Service makes against the Plan.

4 Progress against the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan

A review of the existing AGS Improvement Plan has been undertaken. Whilst the plan captures activity that is in place to manage the Service, it does not directly relate to the AGS effectiveness of the Fire Authority against the Code of Corporate Governance and internal controls.

A copy of the prior AGS Improvement Plan is attached as an appendix to this report. It is recommended that the existing items continue to be delivered through existing Service governance arrangements but are removed from the AGS Improvement Plan.

To better align the improvement plan associated with good governance and controls, it is recommended that the plan is informed by the management actions plans agreed in response to internal audits as well as external audit recommendations.

The Committee are asked to endorse this approach.

5 Conclusions

The Committee is asked to review the recommendation on the future approach to the AGS Improvement Plan.

6 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications contained within this report.

7 Legal Comment

The AGS is a legal requirement under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

9 Appendix

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan

10 Background Papers

There are no further background papers associated with this report.

Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan

| Area of Review | | Improvement Required | Lead Officers | Service governance | Recommendation on inclusion in AGS Improvement Plan |
|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| People | 1 | Complete a review of the efficiency of the Group Support Team | Marc Millward | Service Management Team | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – to be conducted through Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Governance. |
| People | 2 | Employ specialist officers to develop, enhance and embed data and improve monitoring and reporting to key stakeholders | Chris Haigh | Digital Systems Governance Group | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – digital and data team leading. |
| Processes | 3 | Review current performance measures and implement a revised suite to measure, monitor and manage performance | Sam Burton / Scott Hurford | Service Management Team | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – New performance metrics being shared with Fire Authority Strategic Advisory Group and Strategy & Resources Committee in July 2026. |
| Processes | 4 | Continue to replace paper-based processes with streamlined electronic workflows | Chris Haigh | Digital Systems Governance Group | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – Continuous improvement, to be conducted through Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Governance. |
| Systems / IT Infrastructure | 5 | Review and enhance systems and cross team processes to improve reporting and monitoring | Chris Haigh | Digital Systems Governance Group | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – Continuous improvement, to be conducted through Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Governance. |
| Systems / IT Infrastructure | 6 | Develop systems to identify efficiencies and productivity improvements | Chris Haigh | Digital Systems Governance Group | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – Continuous improvement, to be conducted through Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Governance with Productivity and Efficiency Plans taken to Fire Authority. |

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| Building Facilities | 7 | Deliver the Authority's property capital schemes and introduce improvements to station access and security at all Service sites | Andrew Stirling / Chris Haigh | Service Management Team | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – capital programmes to be approved through the Fire Authority and delivery progressed through established governance. |
| Building Facilities | 8 | Review training facilities across the estate and consider feasibility study outcomes | Andrew Stirling / Mark Price | Portfolio Board | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – capital project to be approved through the Fire Authority and delivery progressed through established governance. |
| Appliances/ Equipment | 9 | Deliver the fleet and equipment strategy to include the introduction of new pumping and specialist appliances. | Mark Price / Andrew Stirling | Service Management Team / Portfolio Board | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – Business as usual and Community Risk Management Plan delivery. |
| Collaboration | 10 | Oversee the replacement of the new Command and Control (C&C) system. | Mark Price | C&C Project Board | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – existing governance in place to oversee delivery of this project. |
| Operations | 11 | Improve management of protracted incidents through establishment of significant incident room at Telford | Mark Price | C&C Project Board | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – existing governance in place to oversee delivery of this project. |
| Operations | 12 | Deliver against the recommendations made in the Community Risk Management Plan | Scott Hurford | Service Management Team | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – incorporate CRMP delivery into governance. |

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| | | (CRMP) and report progress | | | |
| Operations | 13 | Review current policies against Fire Standards | Mark Price | Service Management Team | Remove from AGS Improvement Plan – revised approach being reviewed at Strategic Advisory Group in July 2026 and monitored through Service governance. |