

**REPORT OF THE HERFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY TO THE CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES
MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2008**

1.	<p>SERVICE REPORT</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer presented a report regarding recent key developments and activities together with performance information for the period 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2008. More details can be found on the service website (www.hwfire.org.uk).</p>
2.	<p>JOINT SERVICE REVIEW</p> <p>The Authority considered the findings of the Strategic Options Appraisal conducted by the Joint Review Group established to examine opportunities for closer working arrangements between HWFRS and Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>The Authority noted that subject to the development of a full business case, the Joint Review Group was of the view that it was in the strategic, operational and financial interests of both Authorities to initiate a period of structural collaboration, leading towards full combination in 2010. It was agreed that a corporate Joint Project Board should be established, consisting of Chief Officers from both Warwickshire County Council and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, to develop a single business case to provide adequate information for each of the Authorities to make an informed judgement on the benefits and disadvantages of each of the options identified in the Strategic Options Appraisal and on appropriate timescales for any potential structural collaboration and/or combination.</p> <p>The Authority also agreed that the business case addressing the options and their impact on Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire residents and appropriate timing for any potential structural collaboration and/or combination should be brought to Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority and Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet in December 2008. In addition, the Joint Review Group was tasked to oversee the work of the Joint Project Board in developing the full business case and to agree its final recommendations to go to the Authorities.</p>
3.	<p>FIREGUARD CONTRACT</p> <p>The Authority discussed the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Fireguard Project which had been carried out nationally to award a contract for the provision of emergency fire cover which could be called on during scenarios such as pandemic flu, industrial action or natural disaster. The resilience model had been based on the current statutory responsibilities of the Service but this would be reviewed if any statutory duties changed.</p> <p>Due to the costs of the proposed Fireguard contract and the ability for the Service to provide its own minimal response capability, the Authority agreed not to enter into the proposed Fireguard contract.</p>

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	<p>The Authority acknowledged that the basis of resilience proposed was the <u>minimum</u> that would be considered to discharge current statutory duties under foreseeable circumstances and instructed Officers to seek this same level of resilience through managerial means and at minimal “steady state” cost to the Authority. It was agreed that Officers would advise the Authority should the contract provisions be changed in such a way that Members would wish to reconsider the recommendations.</p>
4.	<p>WORCESTERSHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2008-2013</p> <p>The Authority approved the adopted Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2013, which had been endorsed by the Authority’s Best Value Policy and Performance Committee at its meeting on 8 September 2008.</p>
5.	<p>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT</p> <p>The Authority noted the publication of the Annual Governance Statement, which was a summary of the governance arrangements of the Authority and had been approved by the Authority’s Audit Committee at its meeting on 30 June 2008.</p>
6.	<p>PROPERTY UPDATE</p> <p>The Authority noted the current progress and future plans for the Service property portfolio.</p>