



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 12

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| MEETING | Wiltshire and Swindon Combined Fire Authority |
| DATE OF MEETING | 24th September 2015 |
| SUBJECT OF THE REPORT | Combination progress up date |
| STATUS OF REPORT | For open publication |
| PURPOSE OF REPORT | For information |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | This report provides an overview of the progress made towards establishing the new Authority and Service on the 1 April 2016. The paper builds upon the last update considered by the Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority in June. Good progress is being made with the combination programme. Key projects and activities are currently on track and there are no significant concerns to be raised at this time. A detailed progress report, to be considered by the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 17 September, is available from the Service's website or via the new intranet http://dwfirestaff.com/ . |
| RISK ASSESSMENT | Failure to provide a robust oversight of the programme may lead to heightened risks for a successful combination |
| COMMUNITY IMPACT | None for the purposes of this report |
| BUDGET IMPLICATIONS | None for the purposes of this report |
| RECOMMENDATIONS | i. It is recommended that Members note and comment upon the contents of this report |
| BACKGROUND PAPERS | 1. Combination progress reports to shadow Policy and Resources Committee 19 March, 30 April, 4 June, 22 July and 17 September. Available through the website and via the new intranet http://dwfirestaff.com/ |
| APPENDICES | None |
| REPORT ORIGINATOR | Derek James, Assistant Chief Officer Tel: (01305) 252606 |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper provides a general update on the work so far undertaken in establishing the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority from the 1 April 2016. The report should be read in conjunction with the programme progress reports considered by the Joint Committee and now Shadow Policy and Resources Committee (P&R). In addition, Members may also wish to refer to the monthly e-mailed updates provided to all Members from the CFO (designate).

2. Programme governance and management

- 2.1 On the 26 January 2015, the then Joint Committee approved the governance and management arrangements for delivering the combination programme. At its meeting on the 19 March, Officers outlined in some detail the precise programme management processes. Members confirmed their endorsement and support for the way the combination programme would be taken forward.
- 2.2 During May and June internal auditors examined four key areas namely: programme planning arrangements; strategy and leadership; finance and governance and the approach to policies and procedures. Their report, presented to the shadow Policy and Resources committee on the 22 July stated *"We have been impressed by the attention to detail and robustness of the work so far undertaken and have therefore given a positive risk rating against all of the dimensions that we have reviewed. Our conclusion is that the "Successful delivery of the programme appears highly likely and there are no major issues at this stage that appear to threaten delivery"*.
- 2.3 Whilst placing a high degree of reliance on this work, our external auditors (KMPG) are also reviewing these areas and in addition looking at our transition planning and management arrangements associated with ICT and People. Early indications are that they are confident in the approach and controls in place. Their findings will be reported to the Shadow Authority at its meeting on the 23 October in Salisbury.

3. Strategic objectives and success factors

- 3.1 At its January 2015 meeting, the Joint Committee agreed the following key objectives:
- i. Legal and statutory requirements in place for the new CFA on 1 April 2016.
 - ii. The transition to cause no significant adverse impact on service delivery.
 - iii. A strategic vision and direction for the new CFA and Service. are both efficiently and economically applied and in support of our longer term vision and aspirations.
 - iv. Successful delivery of the transformation bid.
 - v. £800k-£1m saved during 2015/16.
- 3.2 In addition there were a number of factors that needed to be put in place and maintained if the programme was to have the right 'environment' for successful delivery. These were:

- i. Strong political leadership and direction of the transition to a new CFA and Service centred on the development and delivery of a modern and compelling vision
- ii. Strong managerial leadership and direction
- iii. Sound programme management with clear strategic, tactical and administrative coordination
- iv. Ensuring that strategic Leads have the capacity and resources to meet the expectations and deadlines set out within the combination programme
- v. A clear focus on the benefits and management of the threats and risks to achieving them
- vi. Robust stakeholder engagement that is proactively monitored and managed
- vii. Close monitoring and cost control of the transition
- viii. Co-ordination of existing financial, contractual and risk management arrangements to support the transition to a new CFA
- ix. Close monitoring and management of existing standards and KPIs within each Service

3.3 The Shadow P&R Committee considers these objectives and their success factors at each meeting as part of the programme report. The delivery of the strategic programme objectives are on track with the success factors in place and with no areas of particular concern to be raised with respective authorities.

4. Progress by workstream

4.1 As Members are aware the combination programme has been divided into six workstreams. Each workstream is sponsored by a nominated principal officer who maintains strategic oversight and reports progress to both the Joint Leadership Team and the Shadow P&R Committee. In addition, a number of workstreams have nominated Members from the Joint Committee on working groups helping to develop proposals. The Shadow P&R Committee considers the progress of each workstream at its meetings along with the associated projects and key activities. The latest programme report, to be considered on the 17 September, is available through the Service's website and via the new intranet <http://dwfirestaff.com/>. In broad summary, the progress is as follows:

4.2 *Workstream 1: Corporate governance*

4.2.1 This workstream is largely concerned with developing the governance arrangements for the new Authority. This includes such areas as initial governance arrangements; key policies and procedures; top team transition and other areas such as branding. Officers and nominated Members have an established working group to support this workstream. The workstream is well advanced with a high proportion of the anticipated outputs delivered including the recruitment of designate officers to form the senior leadership team going forward. The remaining aspects of the workstream remain on track with no significant issues causing particular concern.

4.3 *Workstream 2: Strategic and Organisational Development*

- 4.3.1 This workstream broadly covers three areas namely vision; performance management and financial management. All three main components are progressing well with officers and nominated Members having regular meetings of working group to support this workstream. A vision and associated corporate branding have been agreed and are being incorporated into a wide range of activities and projects. Officers and Members are also developing a short awareness DVD to support the new Vision of the Service as we move forward. This will be shared with key Partners as part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan at the end of 2015 and early 2016. In terms of performance management which is being led by CFO Routh-Jones, the new Service will be adapting the software package currently used in Dorset with the most recently released version to meet the needs of the new Organisation. The new Service will also be migrating to a finance system current used in Wiltshire. Again this workstream remains on track with no significant issues of concern.
- 4.4 *Workstream 3: and Joint Command and Control, Strategic Hub and Safety Centre,*
- 4.4.1 This workstream is divided into four main projects namely; Joint Command and Control Centre and the Networked Fire Control Services Partnership, Strategic Hub and Safety Centre. As Members are aware, both Services are now operating through a single Service Control Centre based in Potterne. Officers and nominated Members have an established working group to support this workstream. Although there are a few, somewhat expected minor teething issues, the system is operating well with the staff wearing new corporate wear and operating as one team. Negotiations with Wiltshire Council to locate strategic hub at the River Rivers campus are now nearing completion with an anticipated occupation in Feb/March 2016. Officers are currently determining which staff posts will need to be located in the Salisbury hub. A review of existing Service property will be commenced to further identify opportunities to rationalise the existing estate. The Safety Centre is still the subject to an options appraisal although a preferred site is emerging in the Swindon/Wiltshire border. Again this workstream remains on track with no significant issues of concern.
- 4.5 Workstream 4: Service Delivery and Operational Assets
- 4.5.1 This workstream is concerned with ensuring that the form and function of service delivery is in place for 1 April 2015. This includes harmonising our flexi-duty officer rotas and ensuring that operational assets support the new arrangements. Representative bodies are being engaged to help expedite a harmonised operational rota. Structures to support operational commands and the delivery of the agreed vision are currently being developed. There are no significant issues and progress remains on track.
- 4.6 Workstream 5: People and Organisational Design
- 4.6.1 This workstream is one of the more complex as it has impacts on all staff. The workstream is required to develop a wide range of policies, procedures and requirements associated with both the transfer of staff to the new Authority and ensuring that new employing arrangements are established from 1 April 2016. This workstream also involves reviewing new staffing structures to meet the financial objectives set out in the business case. These are now in the final stage before being released to staff in October

for consultation. Staff transition is programmed to start in early January 2016. The associated transition process is also being developed with legal support and draws upon experience elsewhere. There are resourcing issues that are being carefully monitored by senior managers. At this stage there are no significant issues at this stage of the programme.

4.7 Workstream 6: ICT and information management

4.7.1 This workstream is focused on ICT and information management. In order to reduce risk and deliver the strategic programme objectives, we are seeking to narrow the ambition to harmonising the hardware infrastructure i.e. network, servers, station mobilising equipment and telephony. To help reduce migration risks, no new technology is being introduced that is unfamiliar to either of our existing Services. This work is being supported by independent expertise and technical auditors are involved in the planning stages for each project. We are also limiting the number of software systems to harmonise to focus on finance; performance management and operational rota management with the remaining systems to be captured within a 3 year transition plan commencing from April 2016. All of the projects and activities within the workstream are currently on track with Members involved in the progress monitoring arrangements. There are no significant issues associated with this workstream and progress remains on track.

5. Stakeholder management

5.1 A stakeholder engagement plan has been developed to support the delivery of the programme and was endorsed with some amendments requested by the Joint Committee at its March meeting. The delivery plan is monitored by the Joint Leadership Team on a monthly basis and the shadow P&R Committee at each of its meetings. A wide variety of arrangements have been put in place including a monthly Members up date from the CFO (designate); one to one meetings between the CFO (designate) and new/existing Members; letters to MPs, partners, business, voluntary sector groups; letters or meetings with council leaders; press releases. Staff are receiving monthly newsletters including podcasts; an internal website for all staff is being developed; staff focus groups on key issues are being organised along with middle manager workshops for June and over 70 workplace visits are currently being undertaken. Meetings with representative bodies are now regularly held following the adoption of an industrial relations protocol by the Joint Committee at its April meeting.

6. Financial management

6.1 As part of the programme management report, the Treasurer to Wiltshire and Swindon CFA provides a financial summary of costs and savings associated with the combination programme including details of the DCLG transformation grant awarded in April 2015. Expenditure is currently on track with no significant issues to raise. A full breakdown of costs and savings is detailed in the programme report to the shadow P&R Committee on 17 September available from the website.

6.2 Officers are in regular contact with DCLG over the preferred option of securing an Alternative National Amount (ANA) to harmonise the council tax from 2016 rather than through regulation over a five-year period. The Minister has acknowledged this desire and

a meeting between the Chairmen of our respective Authorities is being arranged. It is unlikely that we will have certainty over this issue until after the referendum principles have been set and the provision grant settlement is announced in mid-December.

7. Looking forward

- 7.1 As Members are aware there is a detailed work programme covering the period to cut over on the 1 April. The next meeting of the shadow Authority is to be held on the 23 October at Milford Hall Hotel 10am-12pm. Immediately following this will be a Member seminar until 2pm to discuss the emerging governance arrangements.

8. Conclusion

Although there is considerable resource strain on the existing Services, good progress is being made with the combination with no significant risks to the delivery of the strategic programme objectives outlined in section 3.1. Governance and programme management arrangements are working well. Members on the shadow P&R Committee and auditors are confident around how they are operating. Detailed programme progress reports continue to be produced for the shadow P&R Committee, all of which are available on the Service's website.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note and comment upon the report.

Simon Routh-Jones
Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive