



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 20/11

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	12 February 2020
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Review of Policy Statements and Authority Terms of Reference
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For consideration and approval
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>As Members are aware, the Service is currently working to align to the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) methodology, to build the inspection process into business as usual to help reduce the burden of inspection.</p> <p>In line with good governance practice, the Authority reviews its policy statements on a biennial basis. Therefore, the alignment to HMICFRS methodology is timely.</p> <p>Appendix A provides Members with the proposed revised policy statements, which have been aligned to HMICFRS methodology. In support of this alignment Members will note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Safety policy statement has been separated into individual policy statements for Prevention, Protection and Response and Resilience • Safeguarding has been built into the Prevention policy statement • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded within the other policy statements • There is no change to the Health & Safety policy statement.

	<p>It should be noted that, whilst these policies have been aligned to HMICFRS, there are no policy changes to draw to Members' attention.</p> <p>During the Authority meeting in June 2018, Members agreed its revised governance arrangements following the reduction from 30 to 18 Members. This included the approval of the current set of policy statements. Members also requested a review of the revised governance arrangements after 12 months of operation.</p> <p>The Local Government Association (LGA) were commissioned by the Authority to undertake a two-day peer review in June 2019, following which Members were given positive assurance over the Authority governance arrangements and six recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>At the Authority meeting on the 30 September 2019, Members approved the actions to be taken against the LGA's recommended improvements, which included to strengthen and clarify the Authority terms of reference. Appendix B to this report provides the revised terms of reference for consideration and approval.</p>
RISK ASSESSMENT	Failure to have appropriate and robust governance arrangements may adversely affect the efficiency, effectiveness and reputation of the Authority.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None associated with the content of this paper
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None associated with the content of this paper
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the proposed Policy Statements 2. Consider and approve the proposed revised Authority Terms of Reference
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority Members Handbook and Scheme of Delegation https://www.dwfire.org.uk/fire-rescue-authority/members-handbook/policies-orders-and-regulations/</p> <p>Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service current policy statements https://www.dwfire.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/service-plans-and-policies/</p>

	Local Government Association Peer Review of the Authority's governance arrangements (Report to the Authority, 30 September 2019, item number 19/37) https://www.dwfire.org.uk/fire-rescue-authority/meetings/fire-rescue-authority/
APPENDICES	Appendix A – Proposed Fire and Rescue Authority Policy Statements Appendix B – Proposed Authority Terms of Reference
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1. Background

- 1.1 In September 2017, Members agreed to reduce their membership from 30 to 18, and a revised Combination Order was subsequently laid before Parliament on 4 December 2017.
- 1.2 Membership of the Authority was varied with effect from the 6 June 2018 by the Fire and Rescue Authority (Membership) Order 2017 (Statutory Instrument 1165), where Authority membership was reduced to 18
- 1.3 At their meeting on the 6 June 2018, Members approved the revised governance arrangements and requested a review after 12 months of operation.
- 1.4 In support of this, and with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) developing their approach to a thematic governance inspection, the Authority commissioned the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a free of charge independent peer review of the Authority's governance on 24 and 25 June 2019.
- 1.5 The LGA's review and report provided positive assurance on the Authority's governance arrangements and suggested six improvement areas for further consideration.
- 1.6 A Member working group, led by the Chair of the Authority, reviewed the LGA report and its suggested improvements in July 2019 and the LGA report was formally presented to the Authority at its meeting on 30 September 2019, where actions from the recommendations were agreed.
- 1.7 At the Authority meeting on 18 December 2019, Members received a progress update report against the agreed actions, advising that the Authority Terms of Reference will be updated and brought to the February Authority meeting along with the realigned policies.
- 1.8 At the inception of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority on 1 April 2016, Members approved the initial Authority policy statements. In line with good governance, these policies were revised and approved by Members during their Authority meeting on 6 June 2018.
- 1.9 In 2017, the then Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary was awarded the contract to inspect fire and rescue services in England, renaming as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- 1.10 In the knowledge that the inspection will be a continuous process for fire and rescue services, as Members are aware, the Service is currently working to align to the HMICFRS methodology, to build the inspection process into business as usual.

2. Policy Statement Review

- 2.1 In line with good governance practice, the Authority reviews its policy statements on a biennial basis. The Authority's policies were last reviewed in June 2018.
- 2.2 As Members are aware, the Service has begun to align its performance management and reporting processes to the HMICFRS methodology and their 'Good' judgement criteria. Building this into business as usual practice, the Service will be able to naturally evidence and assure performance against the inspectorate's judgement criteria, whilst also reducing the burden of inspection.
- 2.3 To positively support this realignment, it is recommended that the Authority endorse the realigned policies.
- 2.4 Appendix A provides Members with the proposed policy statements aligned to HMICFRS methodology. In support of this, Members will note that:
- The Community Safety policy statement has been separated into individual policy statements for Prevention, Protection and Response and Resilience
 - Safeguarding has been built into the Corporate Governance policy statement
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded across all policy statements
 - There is no change to the Health & Safety policy statement
- 2.5 The alignment to HMICFRS methodology will continue from the policy statements across the Service's performance management arrangements through to the annual assurance processes which enable the delivery of the Statement of Assurance. This will be brought to the Authority in September 2020.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1 During the Authority governance review in 2017-18, preparing for a reduction in Authority Members from 30 to 18, the Authority agreed to maintain the efficiency of the committee structure.
- 3.2 In response to an LGA improvement recommendation and to ensure clarity of their responsibilities, Members agreed at their meeting 30 September 2019 to strengthen the Authority Terms of Reference.
- 3.3 This included returning the delegation of 'ensuring high standards and arrangements to support good governance and approve the annual Statement of Assurance back to the Authority from the Finance & Audit Committee.
- 3.4 The Authority Terms of Reference have been updated following this direction and is provided as Appendix B to this paper.

4. Summary and key points

- 4.1 The realignment of policies will ensure that there is a clear and tangible line of sight to on the ground Service activity. This will help maintain clarity of governance and support the evidencing of strategic alignment necessary for the HMICFRS inspections.

February 2020