



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 6

MEETING	Shadow Policy and Resources Committee
DATE OF MEETING	5 November 2015
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Adoption of Key Policies
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>One of the five key objectives for the Combination Programme is to ensure legal compliance by putting in place high level policies and critical procedures for the new Authority prior to 1 April 2016.</p> <p>This paper introduces five draft policies for approval of the 13 that need to be put in place.</p> <p>It is proposed that seven of the remaining draft policies will be put before the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee in January. A Finance policy will go to the Shadow Authority meeting in February.</p> <p>Progress in developing these policies will be audited as part of the Fire Authority Combination Readiness Review in November.</p> <p>Following agreement of policies, officers will be developing the underpinning procedures necessary for 1 April 2016.</p>
RISK ASSESSMENT	A failure to reach agreement on the policies by 1 April 2016 would mean that the new Authority would not be legally compliant from the start of its operation. This would present risks of litigation and could lead to sub-standard performance and reputational damage.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report.
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None for the purposes of this report.
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee approve the draft policies detailed in Appendices A-E on behalf of the Shadow Authority.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None for the purposes of this report.

APPENDICES	A: Corporate Governance Policy B: Performance, Risk and Business Continuity Policy C: Information Management Policy D: Asset Management Policy E: Health and Safety Policy
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the key objectives for the combination programme is to ensure legal compliance through putting in place high level policies and critical procedures for the new Authority prior to 1 April 2016.
- 1.2 The two existing Authorities have their own policies and procedures. Whilst most of these are well documented, some are custom and practice. It is imperative that the new Authority's high level policies are agreed and documented prior to the start of the new organisation on 1 April 2016. Through the new policies, the Authority will set direction for the Service and provide clarity for internal and external stakeholders.

2. The First Set of Policies

- 2.1 This paper introduces the first five draft policies (Appendices A-E) for approval by the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee on behalf of the Shadow Authority.
- 2.2 Seven draft policies will be finalised in December. It is proposed that they be put before the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee meeting in January. These policies will be for the following subject areas:
 - ◆ Prevention and Community Engagement
 - ◆ Protection
 - ◆ Response
 - ◆ Employee Development
 - ◆ Employee Health & Well-being
 - ◆ Employee Performance and Reward
 - ◆ Equality
- 2.3 A further policy for Finance is being prepared for the Shadow Authority meeting in February.
- 2.4 A failure to reach agreement on key policies (together with the development of underpinning procedures) by 1 April 2016 would mean that the new Authority would not be legally compliant from the start of its operation. This would present risks of litigation and could lead to sub-standard performance and reputational damage.
- 2.5 There will be opportunities to provide external scrutiny of our new policies and to develop them further, where appropriate, as part of our continuous improvement processes.
- 2.6 Under the scheme of delegation the Chief Fire Officer (designate) has the responsibility for the delivery of these policies and thereafter the development and delivery of procedures.
- 2.7 There are over 100 critical procedures that underpin these 13 policy areas. The procedures have been prioritised to ensure legal compliance and to mitigate reputational damage. The key procedures will be in place for 1 April 2016.

2.8 During the development of the procedures the necessary impact assessment will be in relation to:

- ◆ Health & Safety
- ◆ Benefits/adverse impacts - Equality Act 2010
- ◆ Business Continuity
- ◆ HR Functions
- ◆ Privacy Impact Assessment
- ◆ Information Security
- ◆ Crime and Disorder Act
- ◆ Document Management

3. The Development of an Assurance Framework

3.1 Each policy document contains specific detail on how its implementation will be assured.

3.2 An assurance framework document is being developed to provide the overview of how all of these assurance processes will operate within the new organisation. This will provide the necessary 'line of sight' from the point of delivery to the performance management and governance arrangements of the new Authority. For example, assurance against many of the key policies will be a prerequisite in terms of our annual Statement of Assurance and Annual Governance Statement. It is therefore necessary to ensure that suitable frameworks are in place to allow the Authority to monitor critical policy compliance throughout the year.

4. Fire Authority Combination Readiness Review

4.1 At its meeting on 23 October 2015, the Shadow Authority agreed the terms of reference for a readiness review to be undertaken jointly by both sets of internal and external auditors. In November, as part of this review, our auditors will review progress in delivering agreed policies for the new Authority. Their remit will be:

- ◆ To ensure the identification and prioritisation of policies and procedures up until 1 April 2016 and beyond.
- ◆ To review and ensure legal compliance of new policies and procedures.

5. Summary

5.1 The development of the key 13 policies will assist shape our future operations, ensure legal compliance and also assist in the development of a culture of continuous improvement and excellence. In many areas, policy direction will be virtually the same as both Services currently follow, however, in all cases the opportunity will be taken to refresh policy direction and ensure it is aligned to a modern, flexible and effective organisation.