



Dorset Fire Authority

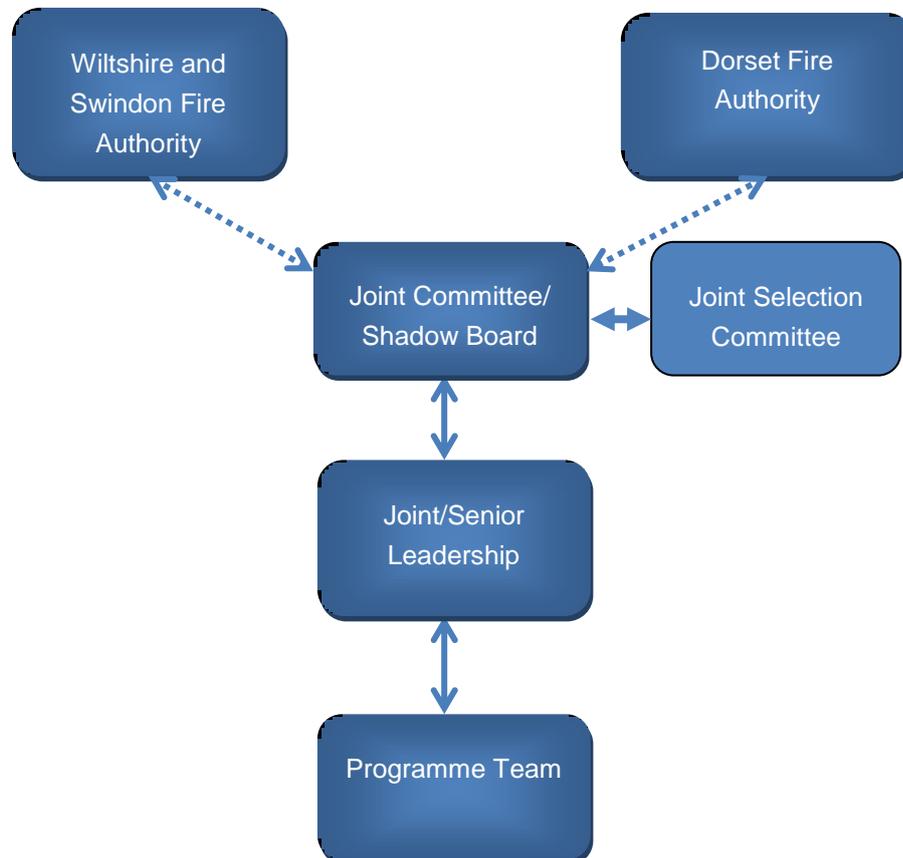
MEETING	Dorset Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	10 February 2015
OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Combination Update
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	This report provides Members with an overview of the progress made towards achieving combination by 1 April 2016. It outlines at a strategic level the governance and managements arrangements of the programme and updates Members on the latest position with regards to the Combination Order.
RISK ASSESSMENT	The Combination programme represents a very significant transformational change for the Authority. Failure to establish sound governance and management arrangements will increase the risks of a successful combination being achieved.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report. <i>Note: If the matrix indicates negative impacts on the community or staff, an equality impact assessment (EIA) will need to be completed.</i>
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None for the purposes of this report
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that Members note and comment upon the report.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Strategic overview of the Combination programme and governance arrangements for 2015/16. Report to the Joint Committee. 26 January 2015. Available on our website http://www.dorsetfire.gov.uk/working-with-us/about-us/dorset-fire-authority/dfa-meetings/joint-committee-meeting-of-dfa-wsfa/
APPENDICES	None
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Derek James, Assistant Chief Officer Tel: (01305) 252606

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As Members are aware on the 17 December 2014, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) initiated statutory consultation associated with the formal combination of Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority and Dorset Fire Authority. Consultation through the Secretary of State closes on the 28 January 2015. On the 30 January, dependent upon the nature of the responses, he will decide if it is necessary to hold an inquiry. The precise trigger point and indeed form and nature of an enquiry remains unclear as one has not previously been within this context. Should he deem it not necessary to hold such an inquiry, then the Combination Order and Scheme will be laid in Parliament on the 6 February and be in force 21 days later. At the time of writing, the consultation process was still underway and a verbal update will be provided to Members at the meeting.
- 1.2 Given the pressing timescales associated with establishment of a new Authority and Service, it is important that time is not lost. To this end, the Joint Committee charged with overseeing the merge by the Authority has agreed arrangements for the governance and management associated with the delivery of the combination programme. This paper provides a strategic overview of the proposed programme to deliver a combination to meet the following agreed objectives:
1. **Legal and statutory requirements in place for the new CFA on 1 April 2016.** There are a large number of legal and statutory requirements that need to be put in place if the new CFA is to meet its legal obligations and minimise any unnecessary risk exposure for the new Authority.
 2. **The transition to cause no significant adverse impact on service delivery.** It is important that response, prevention and fire safety activities continue such that the public are largely unaware of the change to the services they currently receive. Indeed we want to ensure that where possible any difference noticed by the public and our stakeholders is a positive one.
 3. **A strategic vision and direction for the new CFA and Service.** It is important that the new CFA and Service have a clear strategic trajectory. This needs to be set out within a coherent corporate plan, supported by key strategies, roadmaps and medium term finance plan. In this way we will be able to ensure that all our efforts and investments are both efficiently and economically applied and in support of our longer term vision and aspirations.
 4. **Successful delivery of the transformation bid.** We have been successful in securing £5.54m from DCLG to support the combination. The grant has been offered with increased flexibility to support the combination.
 5. **£800k-£1m saved during 2015/16.** It is important that our programme is directly informed by the need to work towards financial solvency. We need to both find savings within 2015/16 whilst at the same time putting in place foundations to realise savings in the coming years and meet our financial savings profile. Close control of transition costs will also be necessary.

2. Governance and Management Arrangements

- 2.1 On the 26 January 2015, and in line with delegations agreed at our December meeting, the Shadow Board agreed the governance and management structure.



- 2.2 The transition to a senior management team has commenced under the auspices of the Joint Selection Committee that comprises of the Chairmen of the two fire authorities and two other members of each existing fire authority (a total membership of six) with the terms of reference being to appoint a Chief Fire Officer (Designate) for a combined authority including setting the salary of the new CFO and defining the job description.
- 2.3 Once this position has been filled and guided by the CFO (Designate), the Joint Selection Committee will then agree the size of and the filling of designate roles within the Senior Leadership Team. All such roles would remain “designate” and not take effect until the Combination Order is in place.
- 2.4 In terms of the combination programme, senior officers from both Services, acting through the Joint Leadership Team, are currently recruiting to staff the programme office with the intention that by end of February sufficient resources will be in place to progress the initial phases of the programme.

3. Structure of Combination Programme

- 3.1 The Joint Committee has agreed that the Combination programme will initially comprise of six workstreams namely:
- i. Corporate governance
 - ii. Strategic and organisational development
 - iii. Safety centre, strategic hub and joint command and control centre
 - iv. Service delivery and operational assets
 - v. People and organisational design
 - vi. ICT and information management
- 3.2 Each workstream has an agreed strategic lead to provide the focus for detailed planning of associated key activities/projects and reporting of performance to the Joint Committee and subsequent Shadow Board. Officers from both Services are to be engaged in all work programmes. The full details of the workstreams and associated management controls are available on our website.
- 3.3 The Joint Leadership Team is now meeting on a fortnightly basis to ensure a there is a robust focus on the delivery of the programme and to ensure that the two Services converge their 'business as usual' activities and decision-making as far as they are able during the transition period.
- 3.4 To support the above, the Joint Committee agreed to establish a programme of meetings on a 4-6 weekly approximate basis. It is intended that progress will be reported and monitored by the Joint Committee/Shadow Board with regular updates to be provided to Members following each Board and at each of their Authority meetings.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 There is a great deal of work to be undertaken to affect a smooth transition to the new Authority and achieve financial savings. In addition, there are considerable commitments that must be delivered as part of the successful DCLG bid. Some of the necessary work is already underway. Governance and management arrangements are being established to manage the process and to ensure that Members are closely involved in the oversight of the programme.

DARRAN GUNTER
Chief Fire Officer

2 February 2015