



**HAMPSHIRE  
FIRE AND  
RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

Purpose: Approved

Date 04 OCTOBER 2017

Title HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY GOVERNANCE  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Report of Committee Clerk

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report relates to the Authority paper published in June 2016, whereby the Authority approved a number of recommendations related to the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) Governance Review, including actions within the Governance Improvement Plan.
2. This report seeks approval for closure of the Governance Improvement Plan.

### BACKGROUND

3. At its December 2015 meeting, the HFRA (the Authority) commissioned a cross party, Member led Working Group to review its governance arrangements and framework. The aim of the work was to ensure that the Authority was in the best position to continue to lead Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service in delivering excellent quality services to the residents of Hampshire, whilst remaining resilient and responsive to change and challenges in the future and operating efficiently.
4. The report of the Working Group was considered at the Authority's June 2016 meeting and a number of recommendations were approved.
  - (a) The Authority accepts a strategy to offer the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) a seat on the Authority with effect from the beginning of the 2017/2018 municipal year.
  - (b) With immediate effect, invite the PCC to future full Authority meetings, in a non-voting capacity but with the ability to comment on items of business.
  - (c) Open dialogue with South Central Ambulance to identify options for reciprocal input into each other's strategic decision making.
  - (d) Approve the contents of the Governance Improvement Plan.

In addition to the recommendations above, the Authority also agreed to consult with stakeholders on size options for the Authority.

5. At its September 2016 meeting, the Authority considered the outcomes of stakeholder consultation and subsequently agreed to reduce the number of Members from 25 to 10 with effect from the annual general meeting in June 2017. The Authority also agreed to the inclusion of the PCC as an HFRA Member with full voting rights from June 2017 and instructed the Clerk to make the necessary amendments to the Combination Order to facilitate this.
6. During the September 2016 meeting, the HFRA delegated authority to the Clerk to prepare appropriate draft revisions of the Authority's Standing Orders, the Authority's Scheme of Delegation, Committee Terms of Reference and other relevant governance documentation for consideration at the annual general meeting in June 2017.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JUNE 2016 AUTHORITY MEETING

7. *The Authority accepts a strategy to offer the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) a seat on the Authority with effect from the beginning of the 2017/2018 municipal year*

The HFRA Combination Order is currently in draft with the Home Office for Home Secretary approval. Once the Combination Order has been approved, the PCC can request a voting seat on the Authority, as is stated in the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

8. *With immediate effect, invite the PCC to future full Authority meetings, in a non-voting capacity but with the ability to comment on items of business.*

The PCC is invited to all Fire Authority meetings. He has attended and has taken part in meetings.

9. *Open dialogue with South Central Ambulance to identify options for reciprocal input into each other's strategic decision making*

Dialogue has started with the Chair of the Council of Governors from South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) to identify how the Authority could be represented on the Council of Governors. It has been identified that the composition of the Council of Governors is reviewed every couple of years with the next review likely towards the end of the year. HFRS Officers have expressed an interest in creating more political linkage between SCAS and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and this has been well received by the Chair of the Council of Governors. Officers have asked for these views to be fed into the next review. Conversations continue with the Chair of the Council of Governors and Members will be updated on any developments.

10. *Approve the contents of the Governance Improvement Plan*

The Authority approved the actions within the Governance Improvement Plan in June 2016. During the September 2016 meeting, delegation was given to the Clerk to prepare appropriate draft revisions of the Authority's Standing Orders, the Authority's Scheme of Delegation, Committee Terms of Reference and other relevant governance documentation for consideration at the annual general meeting in June 2017. This actions is included within the Governance Improvement Plan.

The Governance Improvement Plan has nine actions. The table in appendix A gives an update on the key pieces of work that have taken place to complete the nine actions. The table illustrates that all actions are now complete and Authority approval is required to close the plan.

#### SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

11. A Governance Review was carried to ensure that the Authority was in the best position to continue to lead Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service in delivering excellent quality services to the residents of Hampshire, whilst remaining efficient, resilient and responsive to change and challenges in the future. The Governance Review and the Authority wanting to be in the best possible position to lead the Service supports the Service Plan 2015-2020 in its aim to make life safer for everyone in Hampshire.

#### CONSULTATION

12. There is no statutory duty to consult required for the closing of the Governance Improvement Plan.

#### COLLABORATION

13. The Fire Authority welcome the opportunities that collaboration with our blue light partners present and will consider further opportunities as they arise.

#### RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

14. Officers from HFRS and Hampshire County Council work together to ensure that the administration of the Fire Authority runs as efficiently and effectively as possible. Any further work required as a result of not closing the Governance Improvement Plan will be carried out with current resources.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15. Legal implications of the HFRA Governance Review have been considered in previous reports. There are no legal implications to consider for this report.

## PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16. A people impact assessment is not required for the closing of the Governance Improvement Plan.

## OPTIONS

17. Option one: Acknowledge the completion of the Governance Improvement Plan and approve its closure.

The actions within the Governance Improvement Plan have all been completed with the majority having been included within the Constitution which was approved by the Authority at the June 2017 Annual General Meeting.

The closure of the Governance Improvement Plan does not restrict further refinement and development of all HFRA governance documents. It would be beneficial for the Fire Authority to evaluate itself one year on from operating in its new model to ensure it is continuously learning and evolving.

It would be beneficial to acknowledge that the actions are complete and give the Authority the opportunity to embed the new operating model and reflect on the changes made and new governance processes at a later date.

18. Option two: Choose not to close the Governance Improvement Plan.

The Authority may choose to leave the Governance Improvement Plan open and may request further work be carried out by Officers.

This is not the preferred option. A considerable amount of work has gone into ensuring the actions within the Governance Improvement Plan are carried out. Leaving the plan open and requesting further work could mean that the new operating model isn't given a chance to embed itself.

## RISK ANALYSIS

19. The new style Fire Authority is currently operating with its reduced number and newly created Constitution. It would be beneficial to allow the Authority time to embed the new ways of working. To close the Governance Improvement Plan would conclude the Governance Review and mean Members can proceed with fulfilling the role of ensuring that Hampshire has an efficient and effective fire Service which makes life safer for everyone. The Authority carried out the Governance Review to operate in the most efficient and effective way, there is a risk that if the Governance Improvement Plan is left open and the loop not closed, that the Authority are not demonstrating efficient and effective practice.

## CONCLUSION

20. The Authority carried out a Governance Review in 2016 which resulted in several actions and recommendations requiring completion. In June 2017, the newly formed Fire Authority approved a new Constitution and began working with their new more efficient and effective model. The Governance Improvement Plan has been completed and it is recommended that the Authority approve closure of the plan.
21. It should be noted that the Fire Authority are a progressive team striving to lead the Service to make life safer for Hampshire. Further reviews and refinement to any of the documents created can be carried out as required.

## RECOMMENDATION

22. That the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority approve closure of the Governance Improvement Plan.

## APPENDICES ATTACHED

23. Appendix A – Governance Improvement Plan

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