

Due to the current heightened security level at all our premises, Members are reminded to wear their identity badges whilst attending meetings. Any visitors must produce photographic identification at Reception.

## **FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY SUMMONS**

### **SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

You are required to attend a meeting of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority to be held on:

**Monday, 25 September 2023 at 1030 hours**

**In person at South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters,  
Forest View Business Park, Llantrisant, CF72 8LX**

**or**

**Remotely via Microsoft Teams - <https://bit.ly/FireAuthority-25-09-23>**

**Please ensure you join the meeting 15 minutes prior to meeting time**

**Any issues please contact  
01443 232000 and ask for Member Services**

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.

3. Chairperson's Announcements
4. To receive the minutes of:

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Signature of Monitoring Officer:



## MEMBERSHIP

### Councillors:

J	Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
P	Ford	Bridgend
M	Hughes	Bridgend
C	Elsbury	Caerphilly
A	Hussey	Caerphilly
C	Wright	Caerphilly
D	Ali	Cardiff
K	Carr	Cardiff
S	Melbourne	Cardiff
D	Naughton	Cardiff
B	Proctor	Cardiff
D	Isaac	Merthyr Tydfil
M	Powell	Monmouthshire
L	Wright	Monmouthshire
M	Nuaimi	Newport
T	Watkins	Newport
S	Bradwick	Rhondda Cynon Taff
G	Holmes	Rhondda Cynon Taff
A	Roberts	Rhondda Cynon Taff
G	Williams	Rhondda Cynon Taff
A	Best	Torfaen
S	Evans	Torfaen
I	Buckley	Vale of Glamorgan
P	Drake	Vale of Glamorgan

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## SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

### MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY HELD ON MONDAY 17 JULY 2023 AT 1030 HRS IN MEETING ROOMS 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

#### 21. PRESENT:

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Authority</b>
S Bradwick (Chair)	Rhondda Cynon Taff
P Drake (Deputy Chair)	Vale of Glamorgan
D Ali	Cardiff
A Best	Torfaen
K Carr	Cardiff
S Evans	Torfaen
P Ford	Bridgend
G Holmes	Rhondda Cynon Taff
M Hughes	Bridgend
J Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
D Naughton	Cardiff
M Al-Nuaimi	Newport
M Powell	Monmouthshire
B Proctor	Cardiff
A Roberts	Rhondda Cynon Taff
C Wright	Caerphilly
L Wright	Monmouthshire

#### **APOLOGIES:**

I Buckley	Vale of Glamorgan
D Isaac	Merthyr Tydfil
S-E Melbourne	Cardiff
T Watkins	Newport
G Williams	Rhondda Cynon Taff
ACFO R Prendergast	Director of Technical Services
ACO A Reed	Director of People Services

#### **ABSENT:**

C Elsbury	Caerphilly
A Hussey	Caerphilly

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** CFO H Jakeway, Temp DCFO D Rose - Director of Service Delivery, Temp ACFO G Davies – Director of Technical Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, ACO G Thomas – Director of Corporate Services & Monitoring Officer, Mrs S Watkins – Head of Corporate Support & Deputy Monitoring Officer, Mrs Lisa Shroll – Head of People Services, GM S O’Connell – Operations Management Team

## **22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

Councillor Evans declared a personal interest in any items which related to New Inn Fire Station.

Councillors Evans and Morgan also declared a personal interest as Members of the Gwent Public Service Board.

## **23. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **WELCOME ADDRESS**

The Chair wished to extend a special warm welcome to Councillor Powell who had returned to the Fire & Rescue Authority following a short stay in hospital.

- **REAL LIVING WAGE ACCREDITATION**

The Chair was pleased to announce that the Service had received formal confirmation that they had been awarded the accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer. The Real Living Wage was based on the cost of living and was higher than the National Minimum Wage, which was currently set at £10.90 per hour.

- **REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT 1974**

The Chair informed Members that through a great deal of work and perseverance the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) had secured an amendment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which meant that Fire & Rescue Services would now be able to access higher levels of Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff that the Service employs. The Service was

considering the implications of this legislative change and would be engaging with Representative Body Officials to discuss the implementation of this essential legislation.

- **SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP FORUM FOR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES**

The Chair was pleased to report that he and the Chief Fire Officer had a positive meeting with the Deputy Minister and colleagues from the other two Welsh Fire Services.

The Chief Fire Officer also provided Members with a brief overview of the Social Partnership Forum meeting. He reported that the meeting covered an in depth agenda which included informative presentations and reports on key topics such as the risks and measures in place to deal with contaminants, as well as 'Broadening the Role of the Firefighter'.

- **RETIREMENT OF ACFO RICHARD PRENDERGAST**

As ACFO Richard Prendergast had been on an extended period of sick leave, the Chair was sad to inform Members that the Independent Registered Medical Practitioner had advised that his ongoing health would prevent him from returning to his fulltime employment. ACFO Prendergast's retirement would commence on 12 September, and the Chief Fire Officer would provide a report at September's Fire Authority meeting on the process to appoint a substantive replacement. On behalf of Members, the Chair took the opportunity to thank ACFO Prendergast for his service and advice over the years, and to wish him well for the future.

- **NEW APPOINTMENT**

The Chair took the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to Mrs Lisa Shroll into the Service as the new Head of People Services, following her success at the recent appointment panel process.

- **FIRE CADET PASSING OUR PARADES**

The Chair took the opportunity to thank all Members who had supported the recent Passing Out Parades for the Fire Cadets across the Service. The events had been very successful, and the

continued support of Members and Officers was appreciated by the proud individuals and their families.

- **FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS INDUCTION**

The Chair advised that an induction session had been arranged for new Members on the morning of 3 August 2023. If any Members who were unable to attend such a session but would like to participate, then they should contact Scott Morris, Members Service Officer, or ACO Geraint Thomas, Director of Corporate Services, who would be pleased to provide the necessary details.

- **IDRP TRAINING**

The Chair informed Members that Ms Kim Jeal, HR Manager, would be facilitating a training session for Members on the Service's Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures (IDRP) for Firefighter Pensions disputes, as there would be occasions when Members would be required to sit on an IDRP panel. A date for the training would be arranged once sufficient names had been received, and the Chair urged Members to attend if possible.

- **GRENFELL TOWER FIRE INCIDENT**

Following a query raised by Councillor Holmes, the Chief Fire Officer provided Members with a brief update on the Grenfell Public Inquiry and the specific timelines for publication of the report.

- **TRAGIC DEATH OF TWO CANADIAN FIREFIGHTERS**

On behalf of Members and Officers, the Chair took the opportunity to pay tribute to the two Firefighters who had tragically lost their lives in Canada as the country battled its worst season of wildfires on record.

## **24. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The following minutes were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings:-

- Annual General Meeting held on 12 June 2023



- Fire & Rescue Authority Meeting held on 27 March 2023
- HR & Equalities Committee held on 27 February, 2023
- Local Pension Board Committee held on 23 January, 2023

## **25. UPDATE ON ACTIONS**

On behalf of the ACO People Services, the CFO provided a brief overview and update on the following outstanding actions:-21/22-17.3.2, 21/22-17.3.3, 21/22-32.3.3.

Following a query raised on the 'Real Living Wage Accreditation', the Monitoring Officer assured Members that the ACO People Services would present a Briefing Note at a later date, which would include additional information on key areas such as branding etc.

## **26. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

### **26.1. REPORT ON STRATEGIC THEMES AND PROPOSED OBJECTIVES 2024/2025**

The Head of Corporate Support presented a report for Members to approve the proposed objectives for 2024/2025 to deliver the Service's long-term Strategic Themes for publication in the Service's Annual Improvement Plan Stage 2 for formal consultation.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

26.1.1 Following lengthy discussion on concerns with electric chargers, and the lack of communication regarding sustainability, Councillor Carr proposed to amend the wording on two of the themes as follows:-

- Involving,
- Protecting and enhancing our environment.

26.1.2 Members agreed to approve the proposed Strategic Themes and Objectives set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, for engagement events and publication in the 'Consultation Document' – Stage 2 of the Annual

Improvement Plan on the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service's internet site by 31 October, 2023.

- 26.1.3 Members agreed to approve delegation to the Director of Corporate Services and Head of Corporate Support to review and refine the proposed Objectives as necessary.

## **26.2 FIRE FALSE ALARM REDUCTION**

Group Manager O'Connell presented a report which provided the Audit Wales review into the reduction of fire false alarms in South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 26.2.1 Members agreed to approve the responses to the recommendations set out within the Audit Wales report, attached at Appendix 2.
- 26.2.2 Members noted that a report on progress made by the Unwanted Fire Signals Working Group would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee within six months.
- 26.2.3 Following a question and answer session, Officers assured Members that they accepted the report and were positively focusing on the recommendations.

The Chair and Officers thanked Group Manager O'Connell and members of the Working Group for their hard work in dealing with the reduction of fire false alarms across South Wales.

## **26.3 TREORCHY FIRE & RESCUE STATION REFURBISHMENT PROCUREMENT**

The ACO Corporate Services informed Members that following a procurement tender process, the award of the contract for construction works required Fire & Rescue Authority approval in line with the Authority's constitution and contract standing orders.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

- 26.3.1 Members agreed that the contract for construction works at Treorchy Fire & Rescue Station be awarded to John Weaver (Contractors) Limited.
- 26.3.2 Following a question and answer session on the contract details and costs, Officers agreed to circulate copies of the drawings and layout plans to Members.
- 26.3.2 With reference to the completion of the project, Officers agreed to arrange for Members to visit the new Treorchy and Pontycymmer Fire Stations, as well as the Ogmere Vale Station Community Garden.

## **27. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **27.1 EMERGENCY USE OF DELEGATED POWERS**

The ACO Corporate Services advised Members of the emergency use of delegated powers since the last Fire & Rescue Authority meeting in March 2023.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note that the emergency use of delegated powers for the award of contracts to Trio Construction Limited for works at Pontycymmer, and Risk Management Partners Limited (RMP) for provision of insurance cover.

### **27.2 REPORT ON MANCHESTER ARENA INQUIRY VOLUME 2, SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE GAP ANALYSIS**

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that following the publication of Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) volume 2, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service was swift to review its current position against the Inquiry's recommendations and initiated a Gap Analysis. The South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Gap Analysis had considered the evidence heard by the Chair during the oral

hearings on the preparedness of each Emergency Service to respond to a marauding terrorist attack (MTA) and the events on 22 May 2017, after the explosion, in particular the emergency response and the experience of each person, victim, and the families of the deceased.

The purpose of the analysis would be to measure the findings within Volume 2 against the capabilities, training and equipment within South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, and the response to an MTA/Major incident.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

- 27.2.1 Members agreed to note that the report raised the awareness and offered assurance to the Fire Authority of the proactive training, awareness, and review of the Service's major incident and Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) procedures.
- 27.2.2 Members also agreed to note that the application and amendments being proposed within the MAIV2 and South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Gap Analysis would ensure that personnel and Service procedures were adequately prepared to meet the demands of such incidents.
- 27.2.3 Members agreed to note that the Service's Gap Analysis had identified 25 key areas specific to the organisation. The Gap Analysis had been drafted in a red, amber, and green status. The Gap Analysis had identified 13 areas which were green, 10 areas which were amber and 2 areas which were red. The Service had established a Task & Finish board who would address and resolve the areas of focus and development from the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Gap Analysis.

## **27.3 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REPORT 2022/2023 Q4**

The Head of Corporate Support provided Members with an update on the Strategic Risk Register Report 2022/2023 Quarter 4.

**RESOLVED THAT**

- 27.3.1 Members agreed to note the update on the Strategic Risk Register Report 2022/2023 Quarter 4.
- 27.3.2 Following discussion on Risk No. 222 Fire Safety Bill, Officers agreed to amend the terminology within the report.

**27.4 BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS REPORT 2022/2023 Q4**

The ACO Corporate Services and DCFO, provided Members with an update on the Business Plan Actions Report 2022/2023 Q4.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Following lengthy discussion on possible fire risks for elderly and vulnerable people within local areas, and referring them for Home Safety Checks, Members agreed to note the update on the Business Plan Actions Report 2022/2023 Quarter 4.

With reference to an ongoing mountain fire incident within the Cwmbach area, the Chair wished to record his thanks to the pilot of the Natural Resources Wales helicopter who had recently worked tirelessly to fetch and carry water to try and douse the fire.

**27.5 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS UPDATE**

On behalf of the ACO People Services, the Chief Fire Officer presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the current position with regards to meeting the legal requirements contained within the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Fire & Rescue Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30 September 2016.

**RESOLVED THAT**

- 27.5.1 Members agreed to note the information contained within the report.
- 27.5.2 Following discussion on the extremely positive report, Officers agreed to put a formal request out to all

Members to appoint a Members Champion for the Welsh Language.

## **28. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024**

The Monitoring Officer provided a brief overview of the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

## **29. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OF 2)**

There were no items of business that the Chair deemed urgent.

- **FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS LIST FOR EACH FIRE STATION**

Following a request by the Chair, Officers agreed to ensure that an up to date list of Fire Authority & Rescue Members was circulated to each Fire & Rescue Station across the Service.

- **APPRECIATION AND THANKS FROM MEGAN GAITS**

The Chair and Chief Fire Officer took the opportunity to inform Members of a heart-warming story involving an elderly lady named Megan Gaits, who had been involved in a serious traffic incident in Aberaman during 2022, which had left her with life changing injuries.

As the incident had occurred during the ambulance strike, crews had managed to release her from the vehicle and had transported her to the hospital in a Service appliance.

To show her wholehearted appreciation and gratitude, Megan Gait had presented a large hamper to the whole crew and had met up with the Firefighter who had stayed with her at the scene for over one and a half hours whilst she was trapped in her vehicle.

The Chair and Chief Fire Officer advised that the presentation at the Fire Station was extremely emotional and heart-warming. Mrs Gait's had also donated a sum of money to the Firefighters Charity as a recognition of thanks, and they had subsequently been in touch to discuss publishing Mrs Gait's story in their magazine.

The Chair closed the meeting by wishing Members and Officers an enjoyable summer break.

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2023 AT  
IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA STARLEAF**

**26. PRESENT:**

**Councillor**

**Left**

S Evans (Chair)

J Morgan (Deputy Chair)

I Buckley

M Hughes

D Isaac

M Al Nuaimi

D Parkin

C Wright

Torfaen

Blaenau Gwent

Vale of Glamorgan

Bridgend

Merthyr Tydfil

Newport

Rhondda Cynon Taff

Caerphilly

**APOLOGIES:**

M Powell

B Proctor

Mrs L Mullan

Monmouthshire

Cardiff

T/Head of Finance

**ABSENT:**

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Director of Corporate Services, Mrs S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer & Head of Corporate Support, , Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Ms J Sambell – Temp Senior Accountant, Mr C Williams – Head of ICT, Mr S Gourlay – TIAA Internal Auditor, AM C Hadfield – Temp Head of Risk Reduction, Mr C Rigby – Audit Wales Officer, Mr N Selwyn – Audit Wales Officer, Mr T Gilberts – ICT Manager, Mr R Alexander – Chair of Standards Committee (Observer), Ms L Townsend – Accountancy Technician (Observer), GM J Treherne – Group Manager, Operations Management Team (One item only)

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Ms Louise Townsend and Mr R Alexander, Chair of the Standards Committee, who were attending the meeting as observers.

## **27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

The Chair declared a personal interest in any item which related to New Inn Fire Station.

The Chair and Deputy Chair both declared a personal interest as Members of the Gwent Public Service Board.

Councillor Isaac declared a personal interest as a Member of the Cwm Taf Public Service Board.

## **28. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair had no announcements to make.

## **29. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Finance, Audit & Performance Management meeting held on 5 December 2022, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

## **30. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

### **30.1 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023/2024**

The Treasurer presented a report to recommend that Members approve the Authority's Annual Treasury Management Strategy.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the following and recommended that the Fire Authority formally approve the itemised recommendations:-

- Regulatory changes and reporting impacts
- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS)

- Capital Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy
- Borrowing Policy and Treasury Indicators/limits
- Annual Investment Strategy (AIS)
- The Treasurer to update strategies/policies as necessary.

### **30.2 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME**

The TIAA Internal Auditor presented a report which detailed the proposed Internal Audit Annual Plan 2023/2024 for Members approval.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following discussion about the ability to amend the plan during the year, Members agreed to approve the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2023/2024.

### **30.3 INTERNAL AUDITORS ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023**

The TIAA Internal Auditor presented a report which summarised the Internal Audit work that has been undertaken this year.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the work and overall opinion of the Internal Auditors for the financial year 2022/2023.

### **30.4 REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2022/23**

The Temp Senior Accountant informed Members that the Revenue Monitoring Report provided details of the annual revenue budget and associated information for the year ending 31 March, 2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following several questions relating to pay awards and income received, Members agreed to note the report and approved the content.

### **30.5 CAPITAL MONITROING REPORT 2022/23**

The Temp Senior Accountant informed Members that the Capital Monitoring Report provided details of the capital budget, transactions to date and the forecast year end position for the year ending 31 March, 2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 30.5.1 Members agreed to note the budget and progress of capital schemes, approved alterations identified in Appendix 1 attached to the report, and associated movements in funding.
- 30.5.2 Following a lengthy question and answer session, Officers agreed to provide Members with further background information on the cost of 'RTC Cutting/Rescue Tender Equipment', and to confirm how many Fire Stations required refurbishing due to the Equality Assessment that had been undertaken across all stations.

### **30.6 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented Members with the draft annual report on the work of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following consideration, Members agreed the content of the report prior to reporting to the Fire & Rescue Authority the summary of the workload carried out by the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee during the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

### **31. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

GM Treherne joined the meeting at 10:50 hrs to address any questions relating to the next item on the agenda.

### **31.1 HEALTH CHECK OF PRIORITY ACTIONS AND QUARTER 3 PROGRESS AGAINST THE STATUTORY PI'S**

The ACO Corporate Services provided Members with a brief overview of the Priority Actions and Quarter 3 progress against the statutory PIs.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following a question and answer session on concerns relating to the increase in false fire alarm calls, and crews attending Special Service Calls during periods of Industrial Action to assist other Emergency Services, Members agreed to note the presented report and its content.

GM Treherne withdrew from the meeting at 11:00 hrs.

### **31.2 PREPARATION, CERTIFICATION AND PUBLICATION OF THE ANNUAL STATUTORY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23**

The Treasurer and Audit Wales Officers informed Members that the presented report outlined changes to the 2022/23 Annual Statutory Statement of Account (the accounts) certification timelines and process, as advised by Audit Wales.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 31.2.1 Following a question and answer session, Members agreed to note the delay of the certification and publication process of the 2022/23 Accounts.
- 31.2.2 Members agreed to note the statutory duty arising as a result of non-compliance.
- 31.2.3 Members agreed to note the changed Audit Wales approach to the 2022/23 audit due to International Auditing Standards..
- 31.2.4 Members agreed to note the increased cost of external audit service.

- 31.2.5 Members noted that a one-off meeting may be called to formally sign off and approve the Audited Accounts.

### **31.3 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT & AUDIT ACTION UPDATE**

The TIAA Internal Auditor presented a report which updated Members upon the progress being made against the Internal Audit Plan 2022/2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the internal audit recommendations and work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/2023.

### **31.4 DEPARTMENTAL RISK REGISTER REPORT**

The Head of Corporate Support presented Members with an update report on the Departmental Risk Register.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the update report on the Departmental Risk Register.

### **31.5 REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY 2022**

The Head of Corporate Support presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the gifts and hospitality recorded on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality for 2022.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note the contents of the Register of Gifts and Hospitality in line with Internal Audit recommendations.

## **32. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023 was now complete, and he wished to thank Members and Officers for their contribution throughout the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023 which was now complete.

The Chair also took the opportunity to thank Members and Officers for all their hard work and commitment throughout the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

### **33. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)**

There were no further items of business to consider that the Chair deemed urgent.

### **34. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPHS 12 & 13 OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED)**

A resolution to exclude the press and public by virtue of Paragraphs 12 and 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) was passed.

#### **34.1 ICT CYBER SECURITY RESPONSE**

The Head of ICT and ICT Manager delivered an electronic presentation to Members on 'ICT Cyber Security Response'.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

Members thanked Officers for the informative overview and agreed to note the electronic presentation on 'ICT Cyber Security Response'.

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## SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

### MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY GROUP MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17 APRIL 2023 AT 1000 HRS IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

#### 37. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
M Hughes (Chair)		Bridgend
K Carr		Cardiff
A Hussey		Caerphilly
D Naughton		Cardiff
T Watkins		Newport

#### APOLOGIES:

A Best	Torfaen
C Elsbury	Caerphilly
H Jakeway	Chief Fire Officer

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Director of Corporate Services, Mrs S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer & Head of Corporate Support, ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, ACFO D Rose – Director of Service Delivery, Temp ACFO G Davies – Director of Technical Services, AM D Loader – Head of Operations, Temp AM C Hadfield – Head of Risk Reduction, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Ms Lisa Mullan - Temp Head of Finance, Mr W Thomas – Head of Service Performance & Communications, Dr Mark Kerbey – Member of Standards Committee (Observer)

The Chair extended a special warm welcome to Dr M Kerbey, Member of the Standards Committee, who was in attendance as an observer.

#### 38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

### **39. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chair's announcements to record.

### **40. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Group meeting held on 6 March, 2023, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

### **41. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

#### **41.1. ANNUAL REPORT OF DIRECTORS**

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that the presented inaugural report provided an overview from each Director on specific outcomes, issues, and areas of focus from their respective Directorate.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 41.1.1 Following a lengthy question and answer session, Members agreed to note the contents of the Annual Directors Reports and the key areas summarised by the individual Directors.
- 41.1.2 Following a request by Members, Officers agreed to consider facilitating a visit to the Occupational Health Unit and JPSC.
- 41.1.3 Following discussion on the style and layout of the individual reports, following a request by Members, Officers agreed to shorten the reports to 2 to 3 pages long and to consider including pen pictures, etc.

Each Director also took the opportunity to record their thanks to all their individual team members for their help and support throughout the last year.

Members thanked Officers for their comprehensive reports.

## **41.2. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that the presented inaugural annual report provided an overview of the activity and involvement of appointed Member Champions, as elected at the Annual General Meeting in June 2022.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 41.2.1 Members agreed to note the contents of the Members Champion reports presented by individual Officers, which included updates on departmental priorities and workstreams.
- 41.2.2 Following a request by Members, Officers agreed to invite each of the Member Champions to personally present their reports to the Scrutiny Group at the end of each Municipal Year.

Officers took the opportunity to thank the individual Member Champions for their valuable help and support throughout the year.

The ACFO Service Delivery withdrew from the meeting at 11:25 hrs.

## **41.3 INITIAL DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23**

The Head of Corporate Support presented a report which brought Members attention to the initial draft of the Annual Governance Statement to be included with the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following consideration of the draft Annual Governance Statement, Members confirmed that they did not wish to make any amendments and agreed its content.

#### **41.4 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT ON DISCHARGE OF TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY GROUP**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer informed Members that the presented paper was the draft annual report on the work of the Scrutiny Group for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

##### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 41.4.1 Following consideration of the report, Members approved its content as a summary of the workload carried out by the Scrutiny Group, prior to presenting to the Fire & Rescue Authority.
- 41.4.2 Following an update from Officers, Members agreed to note that the Scrutiny Group would be formalised into a more robust structure from a Working Group into a Scrutiny Committee in the new Municipal Year.

#### **42. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

##### **42.1 FUTURE TRENDS**

The Head of Service Performance & Communications presented a report which provided Members with an assessment of the future of Wales, specifically the administrative area of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service where possible, as a means to identify some of the challenges and opportunities the Service was likely to face.

##### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 42.1.1 Following lengthy discussion on the Wellbeing Future Generation (Wales) Act and the 5 Ways of Working, as well as drawing on expertise from other areas and challenges, Members agreed to note the Future Trends information which would assist in future planning and resource decision making.
- 42.1.2 Members agreed to note that reporting on Future Trends would continue to be monitored and regularly updated.

The ACO People Services withdrew from the meeting at 12:00 hrs.

## **42.2 FLOOD WATER STRATEGY**

The Head of Risk Reduction provided Members with an electronic presentation and verbal report on the Service's Flood Water Strategy 2021-2026.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members thanked Officers for the informative presentation and agreed to note the verbal update.

## **42.3. CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The Head of Corporate Support provided Members with a brief overview of the Service's current process for responding to Consultations to Welsh Government and other organisations.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following discussion, Members agreed to note that in future they would view the Consultation responses on a regular basis throughout the year and provide feedback before submission.

## **43. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2022/2023**

The Monitoring Officer provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed to note that the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023 was now complete.

The Monitoring Officer took the opportunity to thank Members for their continued support throughout the year.

## **44. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)**

There were no items of business that the Chair deemed urgent.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Members and Officers for their informative reports and invaluable contribution.

## SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

### MINUTES OF THE HR & EQUALITIES MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 10 JULY, 2023

**HELD IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

#### 1. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
A Roberts (Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
K Carr (Deputy Chair)		Cardiff
G Holmes		Rhondda Cynon Taff
M Hughes		Bridgend
A Hussey		Caerphilly
S Melbourne		Cardiff
D Naughton		Cardiff
T Watkins		Newport
L Wright		Monmouthshire

#### APOLOGIES:

D Ali	Cardiff
A Best	Torfaen
C Elsbury	Caerphilly

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Director of Corporate Services, Mrs L Shroll – Head of People Services, Mrs D Doel – HR Manager, Recruitment & Resourcing, Mrs K Davies – HR Manager, Absence Management, Mrs J Wells – HR Manager, Employee Relations, Mrs R Hazell – Occupational Health Nurse

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

### **3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **WELCOME ADDRESS TO THE NEW HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES**

The Chair extended a special warm welcome to Mrs Lisa Shroll, who had recently been appointed the new Head of People Services, and on behalf of Members wished her all the very best in her new role.

### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous HR & Equalities meeting held on 27 February, 2023, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

### **5. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

#### **5.1. RECRUITMENT & ATTRACTION 2022-2023**

The HR Manager, Recruitment & Resourcing, presented a report which provided Members with an update in relation to ongoing Recruitment Attraction & Engagement Strategies.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 5.1.1 Following a lengthy question and answer session on recruitment challenges within deprived areas, and capturing under-represented groups, Members agreed to note the contents of the report.
- 5.1.2 With reference to capturing the 16 to 18 year old age group following the Fire Cadets process, Officers agreed to consider an Apprenticeship Programme, and to provide Members with a report in due course.

#### **5.2 ANNUAL REPORT ON SICKNESS DATA 2022-2023**

The HR Manager, Absence Management, provided Members with an update on the sickness absence data for 2022/2023, which



provided an overview of musculoskeletal and mental health absences, rehabilitation roles, and ill-health retirements.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

5.2.1 Following a question and answer session on the sickness statistics, Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

5.2.2 With reference to the increase in Mental Health Sickness cases and the number of related issues, Members agreed to note that further analysis would be carried out, and they would receive a report in due course.

## **5.3 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT ACTIVITY REPORT – 1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023**

The Occupational Health Nurse informed Members that the Occupational Health Unit Activity Report covered the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report provided data on services and expenditure, updates on Occupational Health initiatives, as well as an outline of strategic development.

## **RESOLVED THAT**

Following discussion on the Occupational Health Unit and service delivery, it was noted that the Unit procures some of its services from the Private Sector in order to avoid delays in staff returning to the workplace, and the subsequent costs, Members agreed to note the content of the report.

## **5.4 FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEMES – WALES GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS 2023-2024**

The ACO People Services informed Members that under the terms of the Public Services Pension Act 2013, the Fire & Rescue Authority was the recognised Scheme Manager for Firefighters Pension Schemes.

Welsh Government issued regular communications to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs, and Clerks of Fire & Rescue Authorities, electronically in a standard circular template. These emails and

circulars could cover a variety of areas, including all aspects of Firefighters Pension Schemes, and had to be noted or actioned as appropriate.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

5.4.1 Members agreed to accept the Welsh Government Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and emails that had been received in the year 2023/2024.

5.4.2 Members agreed to note the actions that had been implemented for each of the circulars.

### **5.5 ANNUAL REPORT ON GRIEVANCE & DISCIPLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023**

The HR Manager, Employee Relations, provided Members with a summary of grievance and discipline matters investigated by the Resolution Unit during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

5.5.1 Following lengthy discussion, Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

5.5.2 With reference to concerns relating to the 13 grievances received from Corporate staff, Members highlighted the benefits of introducing a Hybrid Working policy for certain staff members,

### **5.6 FRS SPEAK UP**

The ACO People Services presented a report which informed Members of the introduction of 'FRS Speak Up', which was a new confidential reporting service that was available to all staff should they wish to report a concern in relation to inappropriate behaviours or practices in the workplace.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

5.6.1 Members agreed to note the launch of the new FRS Speak Up service that was launched on 6 April 2023.

- 5.6.2 Members confirmed that they were aware of the process for employees to raise a concern through the new service.
- 5.6.3 Members agreed to note the number of concerns raised since the service was launched.
- 5.6.4 Following a discussion on costs, Members agreed to note that they would receive a further report at the end of the year, which would include a breakdown on specific themes.

## **5.7 ANNUAL REPORT OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS RECEIVED 2023**

The ACO Corporate Services presented to Members the inaugural report of complaints and compliments received by the Service.

Members were informed that the report would be presented to the HR & Equalities Committee on an annual basis and would identify the complaints and compliments received by the Service for the relevant financial year. This report focussed on the year 2022/2023.

The Head of Corporate Support advised Members that due to the sensitive nature and GDPR considerations, the complaints and compliments had been anonymised.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 5.7.1 Members agreed to note the content of the report.
- 5.7.2 Following a question and answer on a breakdown of the 'Behaviours' category, Officers assured Members that all complaints were taken seriously, and a further report would be provided at the end of the year.

## **6. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024**

The ACO People Services provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024.

**RESOLVED THAT**

- 6.1 Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.
- 6.2 Due to the increase in presenting several additional key reports, Members agreed that consideration would be given to a further HR & Equalities meeting would take place on 11 September, 2023
7. **TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 or 2)**

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 24 JULY 2023 AT  
IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

**1. PRESENT:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Left</b>
S Evans (Chair)	Torfaen
I Buckley	Vale of Glamorgan
D Isaac	Merthyr Tydfil
C Wright	Caerphilly
M Powell	Monmouthshire
P Ford	Bridgend

**APOLOGIES:**

J Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
G Williams	Rhondda Cynon Taff

**ABSENT:**

M Al Nuaimi	Newport
B Proctor	Cardiff

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Director of Corporate Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, AM Dean Loader – Head of Service Delivery, Mrs L Mullan – Temp Head of Finance, Procurement & Property, Mr S Gourlay – TIAA Internal Auditor, Mr N Selwyn – Audit Wales Officer, Ms G Gillett – Audit Wales Officer, Mr C Rigby – Audit Wales Officer, Mr C Rees – Audit Wales Officer

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair declared a personal interest in items which related to planning applications for New Inn Fire Station.

**3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**3.1 Audit Wales**

The Chairman welcomed Ms Gillian Gillet, Mr Nick Selwyn, Mr Charles Rigby and Mr Carwyn Rees from Audit Wales who will be presenting their reports on the agenda. It is Mr Selwyn's last meeting as he is due to retire

at the end of the month, thanks were recorded to Mr Selwyn for the work he has done with the Service and Members wished him all the very best for a happy retirement.

### **3.2 New Inn Station**

The Chairman along with Councillors Best, Councillor Holmes and Councillor Isaac visited New Inn station with Officers on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> June. It was an informative visit where they toured the existing station and witnessed the pressing need for investment. New Inn Fire Station was officially opened in June 1954 and has had various property work undertaken since, although it is at the end of its useful life and a new fire station is required. Despite best efforts, the Service have been unable to find a suitable new site and have instead approved capital budget to demolish and construct on the existing site. They received an excellent presentation on the proposed design for the new net zero station which will be constructed in the next two years. They also had the opportunity to visit the temporary site where the station and personnel will be relocated to whilst construction takes place. Members look forward to seeing the progress of this site and we will receive regular updates at this committee through the capital monitoring reports. A link to the redevelopment plans website will be shared with Members shortly after this meeting.

## **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Finance, Audit & Performance Management meeting held on Monday 13 March 2023, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

## **5. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

### **5.1 REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT 2022/2023**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement & Property informed Members that subject to the external audit process the report outlined the revenue outturn position for the financial year end 2022/2023 and the resultant impact on reserves.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following a question and answer session on issues relating to a vacant post, Members agreed the outturn position and consequent transfer to usable reserves of the revenue surplus.

## **5.2 CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT 2022/2023**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement and Property informed Members that the presented report provided the capital outturn position for the year ended 31 March 2023, the financing arrangements and the budget slippage required to complete capital schemes in 2023/2024.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

The Service has spent £12,000 on concept of designs for Monmouth station, as this will be a co-location site once the final account is drawn up the other two partners Agencies will be charged appropriately. Structural engineers have looked at the viability for solar panels on the roofs at Barry and Headquarters. HQ may require a new roof within the next two years so this has been paused for now to look at costings. Members agreed to note the report and approved the budget slippage as detailed in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

## **6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **6.1 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT & AUDIT ACTION UPDATE**

The TIAA Internal Auditor presented a report which updated Members upon the progress being made against the Internal Audit Plan 2022/2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Following a question and answer session, Members agreed to note the internal audit recommendations and work completed to date on the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/2023.

### **6.2 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT**

The T/Head of Finance, Procurement and Property presented the report providing an update on the Authority's Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for the quarter ending June 2023.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the content of the report.

### **6.3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – 1 APRIL 2022 – 31 MARCH 2023**

The Head of Service Delivery presented a report informing Members of the Business Plan Actions report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4 which was also presented at last weeks Fire Authority meeting.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

It was asked whether there was a link between the vacancy of the Anti-Social Behaviour post and the rise in false alarms, it was advised the higher numbers were due to deliberate grass fires and that Operational Crews continue to deliver education on this and there was no link. Members agreed to note the Business Plan Actions Report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4.

### **6.4 AUDIT WALES AUDIT PLAN 2023**

The Audit Wales Officer provided an update and overview to Members on the Audit plan for 2023.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the update.

### **6.5 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/2023**

The Temporary Head of Finance, Procurement and Property gave an update to the group on the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 which had been circulated to Members.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 and requested that their thanks be passed onto the team for all their work.

### **6.6 AUDIT WALES – FIRE FALSE ALARM REDUCTION**

Mr Nick Selwyn and Mr Charles Rigby presented the Audit Wales Report on Fire False Alarm Reduction that had been undertaken across all 3 FRS's in Wales for a consistent approach.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

This report was presented at Fire Authority last week and Members accepted all the recommendations and responses made. A further



update will be provided by the Unwanted Fire Signal Working Group in 6 months to the Scrutiny Committee.

## **7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Monitoring Officer provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024.

## **8. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)**

There were no further items of business to consider that the Chair deemed urgent.

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## AGENDA ITEM NO 5

## UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES ARISING FROM PREVIOUS FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETINGS

Huw Jakeway – CFO  
Dewi Rose – T/DCFO SD  
Geraint Thomas – ACO CS  
Alison Reed – ACO PS

Chris Barton – Treasurer  
Garry Davies – T/ACFO TS

Minute No	Item	Action	Leading Officer	Current Status:
21/22 – 17.3.2	Firefighter Pensions – Remediating Age Discrimination : Pension Benefit Options	Provide pension benefit options to the individuals considered to be in scope for Immediate Detriment (ID)	ACO PS	We have continued to provide pension benefit options for category 1 cases. These are cases where the individual who is in scope of ID, submits their notice of intention to retire. It is anticipated that the regulations relating to remediating age discrimination will be implemented from 1 October 2023.
21/22 – 17.3.3	Firefighter Pensions – Remediating Age Discrimination : McCloud Exercise	Progress exercise to implement the wider remedy work as described in the outcome of the HMT consultation on public service pensions for implementation by October 2023 at the latest.	ACO PS	Work continues on processing Immediate Detriment (category 1) cases. The groundwork continues on the category 2 cases (those individuals who have retired).

Minute No	Item	Action	Leading Officer	Current Status:
				<p>As above, it is anticipated that the regulations relating to remedying age discrimination will be implemented from 1 October 2023.</p> <p>We are in the process of increasing resources, on a temporary basis, to support the work on remedying age discrimination which is likely to continue into 2025.</p>
21/22 – 32.3.3	Living Wage Foundation Accreditation	Gain accreditation of the Living Wage Foundation to enable the Service to become a Real Living Wage employer	ACO PS	<p>All paperwork has been submitted to the Real Living Wage Foundation. We have received formal confirmation that our accreditation has now been approved.</p> <p>Completed</p>
23/24 – 25	Real Living Wage Accreditation	Members to receive a briefing note in due course to include key areas such as branding.	ACO PS	<p>A briefing note is being prepared and it is anticipated will be circulated ahead of the September Fire Authority meeting.</p>
23/24 – 26.1.2	Strategic Themes and Proposed Objectives 2024/25	Publish the approved Strategic Themes and Objectives in the consultation document – Stage 2 of the Improvement Plan – on the Service’s website by 31 October 2023.	ACO CS	<p>Strategic themes have been updated with amendments suggested by FRA and included in the plan for publication by 31 October</p>

<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Leading Officer</b>	<b>Current Status:</b>
23/24 – 26.2	Fire False Alarm Reduction	Progress report on Unwanted Fire Signals to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee.	ACO CS	Included on the Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 5 February 2024. Completed
23/24 – 26.3	Refurbishment of Treorchy Fire Station	Provide Members with a copy of the drawings and layout plans of the refurbishment. On completion of works, arrangements to be made for Members to visit the new Treorchy and Pontycymmer Fire Stations, as well as the Community Garden at Ogmere Vale Station.	ACO CS ACO CS	Completed Dates for visits will be co-ordinated by Member Services
23/24 – 27.5	Welsh Language Standards Update	Members to be requested to appoint a Members Champion for Welsh Language	ACO PS	Request for Member nominations has been circulated.

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AGENDA ITEM NO 6

**Reports for Decision**

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 6.i  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE REPORT****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**REPORT APPROVED BY TREASURER  
PRESENTING OFFICER TREASURER**SUMMARY**

This report presents the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27 for approval. It includes budget projections based on the Authority's plans and strategies informed by the general financial and operational environment in which services are provided.

The Strategy indicates that the Authority's cost base will continue to increase over the currently approved budget in response to the general inflationary pressures in the UK economy. These cost pressures are compounded by unforeseen under-provision in the current financial year. This will present a challenge to the Fire Authority and potentially to our funding councils next year.

The Strategy is drawn up in the light of rapidly changing economic projections and few firm resource commitments beyond the current year. This background introduces significant financial risks to the Strategy. Whilst it is tempting to consider the information in this report a worst-case scenario, this is far from reality given the current volatility in the UK economy and public finances.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Members note the risks and uncertainties within the projections and approve the Strategy as the basis for financial planning over the Strategy period.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Authority operates a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which provides a backdrop to the planning of resource allocation and spending. This report updates the MTFS (Appendix 1) and associated planning assumptions and discusses the immediate challenges facing the Authority

both in terms of its currently approved budget and its budget setting for next financial year.

- 1.2 The Authority follows appropriate Codes of Practice in managing its finances including the maintenance of an MTFs underpinned by its Treasury Management Strategy. The Authority's latest external audit report confirms that its governance, reporting and financial management arrangements are appropriate and functioning well.
- 1.3 The Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee and Scrutiny Committee have considered the MTFs in September and their comments and recommendations are included in this report. Further work is planned to refine the detail of next year's budget proposals.
- 1.4 The uncertainty arising from the recent Covid19 pandemic and other factors such as Brexit have presented significant challenges to the Fire Authority and the wider public sector. These challenges have been successfully negotiated by the Service.
- 1.5 More recent challenges exist in terms of the current inflationary crisis throughout the UK and World economies. This continues to bear on all public sector organisations through higher costs of goods and services but mainly through higher wage demands. The Bank of England has continued to increase interest rates to stifle demand and thus reduce inflation.
- 1.6 As a public sector body with a substantial workforce, these inflationary cost pressures bear heavily on our budget. One of the key decisions for the Authority will be to accurately estimate pay inflation for next year and beyond.
- 1.7 Few firm forward financial plans have been released by central government whether nationally or regionally in the wake of the current cost of living crisis. Forward planning with any accurate assessment of external factors is therefore very challenging.
- 1.8 Welsh Government released its settlement for local government for 2023/24 earlier this year. Indications from Welsh Government are that the next budget round will be challenging and that no new resources are expected from Westminster.
- 1.9 The MTFs can only plan based on knowns or reasonably informed assessments and accordingly, no attempt has been made to forward project resources beyond simple benchmarks. In the same way, the cost base of the Authority is given context in the risk section of the MTFs.

- 1.10 The MTFs attached at Appendix 1, identifies the operational context in which the financial management of the Authority takes place currently and sets out the challenges, risks and responses which are relevant in the short to medium term where this is possible.
- 1.11 There is an ongoing discussion with Welsh Government regarding the broadening of the role of firefighters but currently, no clear parameters exist to base assumptions on.

## **2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The MTFs has been constructed to provide a framework for financial planning and set the basis for annual budget setting. The MTFs considers resource availability and costs.

### **2.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT**

2.2.1 In recent years, the Welsh Government has started to increase resources within the local government settlement. Last year, Welsh Government gave Councils in South Wales an unprecedented 10% growth in resources and this trend continued with an increased settlement in 2023/24.

2.2.2 Welsh Government indicated in its settlement that resources in Wales could increase by 3.1% for 2024/25. This is generally regarded to be significantly less than the cost pressures faced by local government.

2.2.3 In previous years, the Fire Authority has been informed of the consistent pattern of increases in local taxation which assists in budget setting for Council Services which includes fire and rescue services. Council tax yield has typically increased by an average of between 4% and 5%. Councils continue the long-term trend of increases in Council Tax. Council Tax still accounts for around one quarter of their net revenue to fund services.

### **2.3 WELSH GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

2.3.1 The Authority relies on several streams of Welsh Government funding to support its budget. As in previous years, no forward commitment has been given to support these key income streams. Pension costs, national initiatives such as National Resilience and community safety activities all rely heavily on this cash and this lack of long-term commitment represents a risk. Including pensions and PFI grant, the funding amounts to around £20m per annum.

- 2.3.2 In the current year, Welsh Government terminated its support for FireLink (the Airwave emergency communications system) resulting in a withdrawal of £600k of funding citing the case that such costs were part of the operational service delivery of the Authority. They also transferred pensions (SCAPE) grant into the general local government settlement. There is a wider initiative underway within central government to reduce specific grants to reduce administration costs. Whether this will further impact grant funding for Fire in 2024/25 is not known.
- 2.3.3 In most years, Welsh Government provides a cash flat grant profile. This of course represents real terms cuts as costs increase. Likely pay inflation in 2024/25 will again erode the value of those grants which remain.
- 2.3.4 Recent announcements by the First Minister have indicated that there will be a very challenging financial environment in Wales next year with a quoted £900m shortfall in Welsh public finances.

## 2.4 **BASE BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.4.1 There are two fundamental issues with the base budget going forward. Firstly, there is under-provision within the current year arising from unforeseen inflationary pressures. Secondly, there is continued inflationary pressure in 2024/25 on top of planned expenditure requirements contained within budget submissions for the coming financial year. Each of these factors is outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 2.4.2 The most significant part of the Authority's budget is employee costs representing around 75% of spend. The previous MTFS was drawn up based on long term average pay awards of 1.5% per annum however, this assumption was varied in the short term to reflect the extraordinary levels of inflation being witnessed in the UK economy. The Authority has faced a turbulent period in its budget setting resulting mainly from inflation. In setting the 2023/24 budget it was necessary to estimate pay awards for the 2022/23 year and the 2023/24 as pay negotiations were still ongoing.
- 2.4.3 Recent green book (support staff) pay settlements represented an increase of around 7%. Whilst inflation is now falling, trade unions have been pushing for continued pay awards at or near inflation rates to make up for the impact of the 'cost of living' crisis. The Authority's current year budget will be under significant additional pressure. The 2023/24 budget was based on a 3% provision and currently offers of around 7% are again being discussed. The

difference in likely pay inflation in the current year amounts to around £400k.

- 2.4.4 Grey book (uniformed staff) costs also increased substantially following acceptance of a two year pay award. Whilst this offers certainty for the current year, the 5% eventually paid exceeded the 3% provision resulting in increased costs of up to £900k.
- 2.4.5 On top of the potential under-provision of £1.3m, pay inflation for 2024/25 again must be estimated in this uncertain economic climate. 1.5% already seems too optimistic and a 3% provision has been modelled in the MTFs for the coming year. At full establishment and with no contributions from reserves, this amounts to around £2.8m. Whilst inflation rates have started to fall in the UK, the speed with which they will come down is uncertain and risk remains in these estimates.
- 2.4.6 In total therefore, the base pay budget would increase by some £4.1m or around 6% year on year. Pay inflation is assumed to fall back to 2% and 1.5% in future years.
- 2.4.7 Each year, the employee budget is built up based on the full establishment as approved by the Fire Authority. In approving the budget last year, staff savings were assumed from a combination of vacancy provisions and reserve funding. This will need to be reassessed and could be repeated in 2024/25 as part of a package of budget reductions.
- 2.4.8 Further pressures and complications exist in the employee budget due to a variety of legal actions ongoing regarding the Firefighters' Pension Fund. Successful national legal challenges resulted in firefighters being given the option to return to their legacy pension schemes resulting in potentially higher costs and / or compensation. Due to the complexity of the cases involved and the time taken to frame new legislation, it is difficult to accurately assess any impact on the Fire Authority. New legislation is anticipated in October 2023 which will start to bring clarity to the situation. This is however further compounded by a second buy back exercise for on-call firefighters and an ongoing pension scheme valuation which is attempting to assess the impact of the resolution of these cases.
- 2.4.9 The Premises budget is once again under pressure from inflationary increases mainly in energy costs. When setting the budget for the current year, estimates were made on unit costs for both gas and electricity however, these have been surpassed and have created a significant in year budget pressure of £800k. Contracts linked to RPI are subject to significant increases from the prevailing inflationary

conditions in the economy and the budget for Premises is modelled to increase by £900k or 18% next year.

- 2.4.10 ICT costs are increasing by RPI in licences and support fees (£300k). Essential operational equipment is included in next year's budget (£350k) however, in accordance with the budget plan last year, some of these costs could be funded from Reserves. Other supplies budgets reflect inflationary increases or reductions according to planned activities but where inflation is applied, we anticipate higher increases than normal resulting from current RPI levels. The Authority's insurance cover was re-tendered and costs came in lower than anticipated resulting in savings (£200k). Overall, Supplies costs are expected to increase by around £900k or 14% next year.
- 2.4.11 Transport costs continue to be targeted for reductions by reducing vehicle movements and reducing the use of fossil fuels across the fleet. The introduction of electric vehicles and cleaner diesel vehicles will underpin this trend however, fossil fuel costs are still increasing. There is an in-year budget pressure of £80k for fuel and overall, the budget is expected to increase by £110k or 7% next year.
- 2.4.12 Review of the current contracted services budget shows increases of £337k or 29%. This is a result of both RPI inflation and growth e.g. External Audit Fees.
- 2.4.13 Capital financing costs are historically assumed to increase annually at 4%pa reflecting the approved capital programme (with cost inflation built in). The overall exposure to these costs is monitored through the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy. Recent interest rate rises do not directly impact the Authority's budget as much of its debt is long term however, there is a general upward pressure on interest costs as maturing loans are replaced. There are opportunities to increase returns on invested cash, but this will depend on the Treasury Management policy from year to year. Generally, the avoidance of borrowing is still more cost effective than investing.
- 2.4.14 In setting the final budget, the Authority takes a prudent view of its capital programme completion rate which in the past has shown an aspirational trend. A reassessment of both the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and borrowing costs / income based on the currently approved capital programme would result in an increase year on year of £563k or 11%.

## 2.5 BUDGET PROJECTIONS

2.5.1 The MTFS currently shows an increase in budget next year of 7.82%. This headline figure would prove extremely challenging for our funding partners given the wider pressures on Welsh public finances that have been signalled.

2.5.2 The Authority works with North Wales FRS and Mid & Wales FRS to arrive at broadly consistent planning assumptions. All three FRSs are also working with the WLGA to communicate to Welsh Government the scale of cost pressures across Wales for this and next year. Initial information shows a similar pattern of in year inflationary pressures and continued unavoidable growth in 2024/25.

2.5.3 This report is not asking for approval of next year's budget at this point. The December meeting of the Fire Authority will consider recommendations from the FAPM Committee and will consult with constituent councils prior to a probable decision in February 2024.

### Comments of the September FAPM and Scrutiny Committees

2.5.4 The Scrutiny Committee considered the content of the MTFS on 4<sup>th</sup> September. Members were keen to understand the nature of the revenue reserves held by the Authority in the context of the financial challenges within the MTFS. Accordingly, the following table is reproduced from the MTFS with narrative regarding each reserve.

Reserve	Balance at 31/03/23 £000	Purpose, background & commitments
General Reserves	3,000	General financial resilience – This reserve is established to guard against unforeseen financial challenges within the Service. It currently constitutes around 3.4% of the revenue budget and was set by reference to previous financial challenges such as prolonged periods of industrial action. <b>This reserve is uncommitted but depleting it would risk the short to medium-term sustainability of the Service and run contrary to the Service's compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.</b>
Change Management Reserve	3,094	To fund projects aimed at efficiency, Service improvement and change – This reserve has previously been used to invest in initiatives aimed at reducing the ongoing cost of the Service e.g. Shaping our Future. The reserve has been funded from budget underspends but also has to support budget overspends. <b>The reserve is currently committed to meet some staffing costs in 23/24 (£0.3m) although</b>

Reserve	Balance at 31/03/23 £000	Purpose, background & commitments
		the wider pressure on the 23/24 revenue budget as reported to FAPM (£1.5m - £2m) may significantly deplete this reserve.
Cultural Review	340	To meet the costs of the ongoing culture review – This reserve was created to meet the costs of the Culture Review process due to be completed by the end of this year. <b>The reserve is fully committed based on the estimated cost of the Review.</b>
Carbon Reduction	3,000	To meet project costs – These funds were set aside to meet projects supporting the Service’s Carbon Reduction Plan. <b>Specific projects have not yet been costed although from the initial work done on the replacement New Inn station and other station refurbishments, it is clear that significant investment will be required to meet this Plan.</b>
Equality Diversity & Inclusion	2,000	To meet project costs – At present, station refurbishment work is being undertaken from within the capital programme which address some of the physical requirements of the Service’s estate. <b>This reserve is currently uncommitted, but it is not known yet what work may emerge from the Culture Review. The Service may well need to invest in additional initiatives such as training to fully embrace the Service-wide changes required.</b>
Equipment Renewals	2,000	To meet equipment renewal costs – When approving the 23/24 budget, the Fire Authority approved the use of this reserve funding to smooth out larger equipment replacement initiatives which would otherwise need to be funded from annual constituent council contributions. <b>Using this reserve would result in large equipment renewals having to be met from constituent council contributions removing this flexibility. In this sense, it is committed.</b>
PFI Equalisation Reserve	3,192	To balance out timing difference in grants and costs of the PFI Training Centre project at Cardiff Gate – The funding mechanism for PFI projects results in an increasing cost profile and reducing grant income profile over the life of the project. The resulting deficit increases year by year creating a burden on the revenue budget. <b>This reserve is committed to fund this burden which would otherwise need to be</b>



Reserve	Balance at 31/03/23 £000	Purpose, background & commitments
		<b>funded by constituent council contributions. In that sense, it is fully committed.</b>
Managed Under Spend Reserve	141	To meet costs of ongoing projects falling into the next financial year – <b>This reserve includes specific projects which are committed but not financially completed by the year end.</b>
Joint Control Lease Reserve	200	To finance the contribution to the Joint Control Facility in Bridgend – The joint control lease included a requirement to contribute £100k per annum to fund the facility. <b>The reserve is fully committed and will be fully depleted when the payments cease.</b>
<b>Total Revenue Reserves</b>	<b>16,967</b>	

2.5.5 The FAPM Committee will meet on the 18<sup>th</sup> September and feedback from that meeting will be reported orally at the Fire Authority meeting.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	Yes
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 The MTFS includes assumptions of savings derived from Carbon Reduction initiatives.

3.1.2 The MTFS includes budget projections that will form the basis of consultation with the ten constituent authorities.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No
Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	No
National Policy	No

3.2.1 The MTFs includes detailed plans of the Authorities finances and is prepared in compliance with several regulatory Codes of Practice.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

3.3.1 The MTFs forms the basis of the revenue and capital budget planning for the coming financial year.

## 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The MTFs attached at Appendix 1 includes projections that result in annual increases in budget as follows. Members should note the significant health warnings regarding the projections in the MTFs at this time.

Financial Year	Increase in Budget
24/25	7.8%
25/26	1.8%
26/27	1.4%

4.2 The MTFs will be revisited annually and updated as more information becomes available. Further reports on the detail of next year's budget will be presented to the Fire Authority at future meetings.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Members note the risks and uncertainties within the projections and approve the Strategy as the basis for financial planning over the Strategy period.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>		Chris Barton Treasurer	
<b>Background Papers</b>		<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
None			
<b>Appendices</b>			
Appendix 1	Medium Term Financial Strategy 22/23 – 26/27		

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## Appendix 1

### MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY, RESERVE STRATEGY AND REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE REPORT

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27

September 2023

### About SWFRS

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is one of three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales and is one of the largest fire and rescue service areas within the UK.

### Service and Incident Profile

The Service is coterminous with the ten unitary authorities in South and South East Wales, covering an area of 2,800 square kilometres of rural, coastal and urban areas. The Service serves a population of over 1.5 million.

The Service operates out of an HQ, Training Centre, joint control facility and 47 Fire Stations some of which are permanently crewed and others crewed by on-call firefighters. The Service has over 300 operational vehicles including fire appliances, off road vehicles, light vehicles and boats. The service takes around 35,000 emergency calls per year, responding to around 17,000 incidents of which a third are fires. Of these fires, around 70% are deliberate. Besides fires, the Service also responds to road traffic collisions, flooding and water rescues, animal rescues, medical emergencies and environmental incidents.

The Service proactively seeks to reduce risk mainly by prevention through annual early intervention, education and engagement activities. Approximately 20,000 home fire safety checks are undertaken and 50,000 children and young people are met face to face as part of educational and engagement events. As a result of this activity, the Service has been successful in significantly reducing the number of fires over recent years.

### Strategic Plan

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's vision is set out in our strategic plan for 2020-30. This Medium-Term Financial Strategy underpins that vision.

The plan outlines the strategic direction and explains how the Service intends to meet its challenges to continue to deliver a high quality service that meets the needs of our communities. The long-term strategic Themes and shorter term Priority Actions within the Plan will enable South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to not only deliver a sustainable service but also support our partners in the wider public sector.

The Service's vision remains the key focus; "making South Wales safer by reducing risk." The Service recognises that safer communities can only be achieved by

challenging and improving the way it works, through a safe and competent workforce and by effectively managing its resources.

At times of austerity, there is a temptation to concentrate on costs and reduced budgets with no regard to the quality of services delivered. However, the Service has made the decision to concentrate on how improvements can be made with the strongly held belief that efficiencies and savings will result. The key strategic themes are

<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<b>Proposed Objectives</b>
Keeping you Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the impact of false alarms on our resources</li> <li>• Reducing the number of fires in the home and understanding the behaviours and causes of them</li> <li>• Reducing the number of road traffic collisions</li> <li>• Reducing the number of deliberate fires</li> <li>• Improving safety in and around water</li> <li>• Improving fire safety in buildings in our communities</li> </ul>
Responding to your Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding effectively when you need us</li> <li>• Doing all we can to make sure that our on-call crews are available</li> <li>• Training our personnel to respond to current and future risks in our communities</li> </ul>
Valuing our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting a workforce that reflects and represents our communities.</li> <li>• Developing our people by identifying training and development opportunities</li> <li>• Supporting our people to feel well, healthy and happy at work</li> <li>• Delivering on the recommendations of the Investors in People report</li> <li>• Encouraging and supporting a bilingual culture across the Service</li> </ul>
Using Technology Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the most suitable technology and equipment to improve our services</li> <li>• Reviewing the standard and use of technology and equipment across the Service</li> </ul>
Working with our Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Public Service Boards to support our communities</li> <li>• Working with our partners to deliver our services where they are needed</li> <li>• Reviewing and evaluating our existing partnerships</li> </ul>
Involving and Communicating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving our communities and making sure they have their say in what we do</li> <li>• Helping keep our communities safe through safety education and attending community events</li> </ul>
Protecting and Enhancing our Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the usage of single use materials</li> <li>• Expanding the use of electric vehicles</li> <li>• Reducing our energy use and our carbon footprint</li> <li>• Considering how our activities impact on the environment</li> <li>• Reducing the amount of waste we produce</li> </ul>
Continuing to Work Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being clear and publicly accountable</li> <li>• Maximising value for money while improving our Service</li> <li>• Developing new ways of working</li> </ul>

This financial strategy sets out the approach and identifies how the Service intends to plan and manage its resources in the light of the Government's approach to public sector spending. It also focuses on how the Service will remain viable and respond to the various risks and pressures which it will face.

In the past two years, the nature of public services and public sector finance has undergone a paradigm shift resulting from the Covid19 pandemic. Whilst it is clear the Government has sought to utilise public sector spending and borrowing, to deal with the crisis and to ease the economic impact of it, there is no clear picture yet emerging of how this situation will translate into future spending and resourcing plans. The impact of global conflict has caused a significant change to the cost base of public

sector organisations in the same manner it has for members of the communities we serve.

The emergent threat of climate change not only shapes the way in which the Service conducts its business but also the responses and challenges which the Service is likely to have to meet to protect the population of South Wales. Against this background of urgent change, the MTFS can at best only estimate the likely costs and resources available to fund services in Wales over the coming years. The MTFS will be revisited as and when significant Government announcements are made.

### Key Achievements

The Service has been successful in significantly reducing the number of fires and fire related deaths and injuries over recent years. For example, between 2011/2012 and 2016/2017, fires reduced by 33.82%. This has been achieved against a background of reducing resources whilst at the same time, maintaining fire cover and continuing the standards of service expected by the public of South Wales.

### Financial Context

Fire and Rescue is a devolved function and Welsh Government therefore have national oversight of the service. The South Wales Fire & Rescue Service is one of three Fire and Rescue Services operating in Wales. That said, both the national UK environment and devolved Welsh Government impact on the finances and operations of the Service.

### The UK Context

The Service's financial position is impacted by the wider global economy and environment and this strategic plan is written in this context. However, the Service cannot accurately predict or influence the factors at play at any precise time and therefore plans based on the best information available to it.

The International Monetary Fund had judged that the outlook for growth was improved in advanced economies however, uncertainty around the global outlook is heightened at present, associated with the ongoing war in Ukraine and political tensions in the rest of the world. UK Government policy on spending has been the key determinant which has set the scene for resources in the UK public sector.

The latest spending review of the UK Government set out parameters for public spending over the medium term, but these have all been surpassed by the response to the Covid pandemic and the inflationary pressures that followed the war in Ukraine. Whilst there have been some signals that austerity is easing, there is little optimism to believe that this is a move away from the overall downward pressure on spending especially given the massive increase in government borrowing in the last two years.

Significant uncertainty remains about the short and long-term financial effects of "Brexit" even though apparent deals have now been secured for the short to medium term.

The recent cost of living crisis has introduced another level of uncertainty over government finances with no clear picture yet about its resolution.

## Wales

Overall spending limits set in Westminster determine the Barnett Formula consequential for resources in Wales each year.

With no Comprehensive Spending Review having taken place in the last two years, there are no forward indicators for spending. Announcements of additional spending pre Covid19 resulted in a largely positive financial settlement for Wales but these increases are now being eroded by inflation. The budget agreed by Welsh Government impacts the funding of unitary authorities (which in turn meet the costs of Fire and Rescue Services) together with community safety and other sector specific initiatives which are directly funded through specific grants and contributions.

Welsh Government has now obtained the powers to vary income tax. This MTFS does not assume that these powers will be used to increase revenue and therefore funding. Announcements by Welsh Government in 2023 have signalled a significant shortfall in resources at an all Wales level.

## Unitary Authority Funding

Unitary authorities contribute to the Fire & Rescue Service budget and in consequence, their funding settlement is relevant to the Service. In recent years, the trend in reducing public expenditure has resulted in downward pressure in the un-hypothecated grant resources distributed to unitary authorities. This trend was reversed somewhat in the last few years and 2022/23 saw an unprecedented double digit increase in funding. Announcements regarding the overall Welsh budget were included in the current year settlement together with a return to some indicative budgets but with no guarantees.

## Current Cost & Budget Structure

The starting point for any Financial Strategy is to understand the cost base of the Service.

## Revenue Budget

The Service's net annual revenue budget in 2023/24 is around £89.4m, the equivalent of £58 for each resident of South Wales. It equates to around 0.5% of the total public service spending in Wales each year.

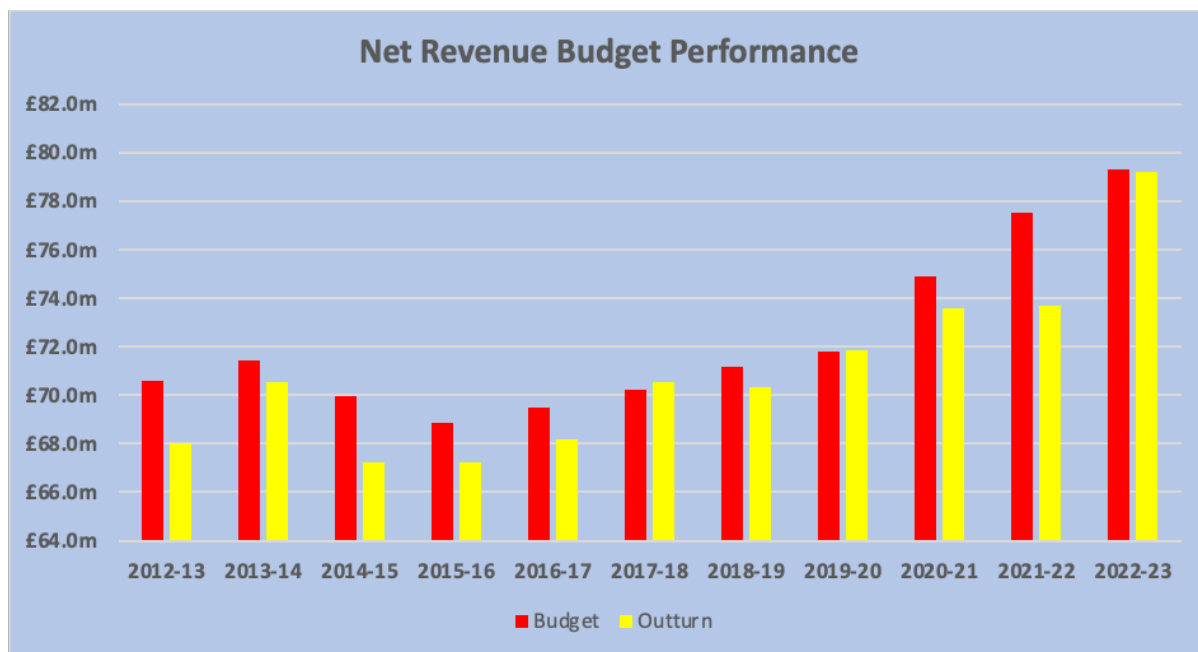
The table below shows the breakdown of the annual budget in 2023/24

	<b>£000</b>
Employees	55,927
Indirect Employee costs	12,777
Premises	6,337
Training	1,776
Supplies & Services	5,755
Transport	1,619
Contracted Services	1,152
Capital Financing	5.069



<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>90,412</b>
Income	-1,037
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>89,375</b>

The following chart shows the movement in the net revenue budget since 2008/09 together with the actual spend for each year.

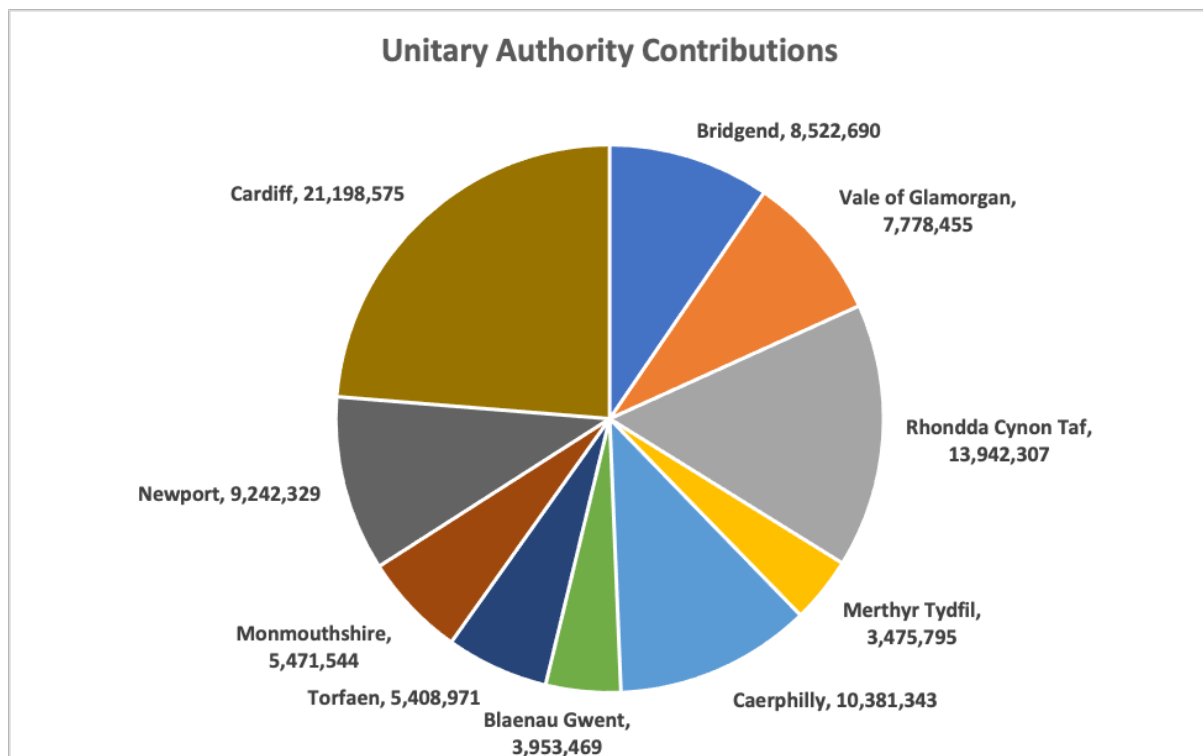


The Service has proactively managed to stay within its budgets and has a history of good financial management despite numerous challenges to its operations including a sustained period of industrial action. Surpluses generated from the revenue budget are utilised to invest in Service Improvement, asset renewal and efficiency projects which in turn keeps the requirement for annual funding at a lower level than would otherwise be the case.

An analysis of the outturn consistently reveals that staffing budgets are well managed with underspending particularly in the on-call firefighter category. This partly stems from an ongoing struggle to recruit, train and retain enough staff whilst at the same time losing experienced firefighters to retirement and other full-time employment.

### SWFRS Revenue funding

By virtue of the 1995 Fire Combination Orders, Fire and Rescue Services in Wales are funded from contributions made by constituent councils within their area. The Fire and Rescue Service determines its budget requirement and notifies each constituent council of its contribution which are proportionately split based on population. The current distribution of funding in South Wales is show below.



The Welsh Government recently undertook a review into the governance and funding of fire authorities in Wales. To date this review has not resulted in any significant proposals to change the structure, composition or funding of fire authorities. Should any legislative change be forthcoming, it could significantly impact this MTFS as drafted.

During 2019, HM Treasury amended the SCAPE rate used to underpin public sector Pension Fund Valuations. As a result of this exercise, a significant increase in employer's pension contributions occurred. In Wales, specific grant funding of over £3m was provided to the Authority to meet these costs. With the current shift in UK economic activity, there is a further prospect of rate changes with similar consequential financial impacts. The Scape Grant funding was transferred to the local government settlement in 2023/24 which has cut the direct link between the incidence of costs and the grant. It is assumed that any further Scape funding would now follow a similar path via the constituent councils' Revenue Support Grant.

The Fire Fighter' Pension Fund (FFPS) continues to be a national issue with several recent court cases lost by the Government likely to increase costs in the medium to long term. The resolution to these cases and the future shape of the FFPS is an ongoing process.

## Forecast Cost Changes

There are several known factors which impact the cost base of the Authority. The main categories are outlined below.

### Inflation

The financial strategy includes inflation where this is a contractual obligation but assumes that other spending is cash limited. The exceptions include items where

prices are generally more volatile than CPI such as vehicle fuel, energy costs and insurance premiums where specific allowances are made. Total non-pay inflation of around £0.5m per annum is assumed in a 'normal' year however, the current RPI rate on specific items such as energy, fuel and external supplier contracts will continue to remain volatile. This said, the MTFs assumes falls from the highs currently being experienced.

## Pay

The Authority is part of the collective bargaining arrangements for 'grey book' (fire fighters) and 'green book' (non-uniformed) employees and therefore implements respective national pay awards as part of its pay policy arrangements. The Authority abides by the statutory Minimum and Living Wage legislation. The cost of pay inflation (including related pension overheads) is usually assumed to be around £1.2m per annum. This is currently assessed with reference to long term pay settlements of around 1.5% per annum.

As a result of significant increases in RPI, the annual increase in budgeted employee costs has been larger in recent years. Inflationary pressure could be as high as £4.1m in 24/25 resulting from under-provision in the current year. The MTFs Assumes that pay inflation will return to normal levels in the medium term. The wider role of firefighters is still subject to ongoing discussion with representative bodies and the outcome of this activity could impact pay levels. The MTFs assumes that such costs agreed on a national basis would be accompanied with funding from Welsh Government. This situation will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

## Pensions

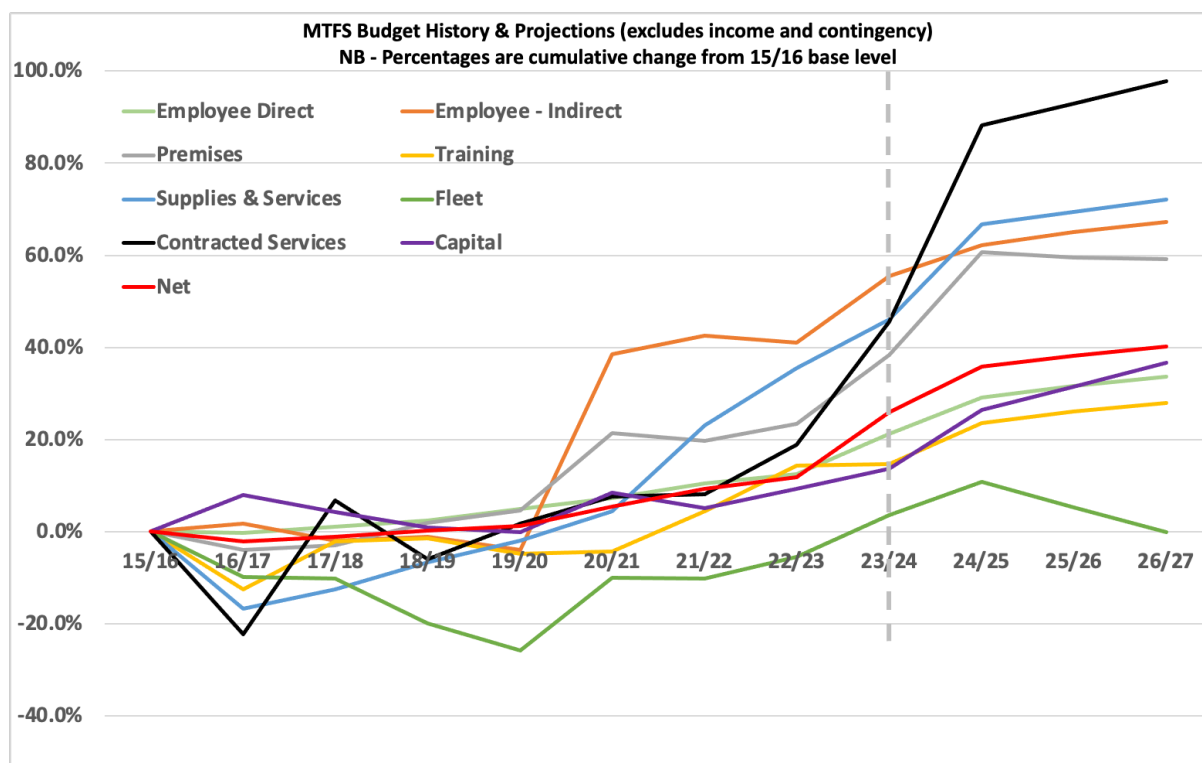
The Authority operates two pension schemes for the benefit of its employees and makes employer contributions to each. Uniformed staff are eligible to join the national Fire Fighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS) and non-uniformed employees are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The schemes are administered by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on behalf of the Authority. Employees are automatically enrolled in the relevant scheme unless they opt out.

Regular actuarial valuations are carried out to determine employer contribution rates to the Schemes. The LGPS is a funded scheme unlike the FFPS which is unfunded and underwritten by Welsh Government.

- The LGPS employers' pension contribution rate is currently 15.2% of gross pensionable pay.
- The FFPS employers' pension contribution rates vary as there are three schemes in operation. Rates are currently between 26.6% and 29.3% of gross pensionable pay. The strategy assumes that Welsh Government will continue to fund any scheme deficit over and above the employee and employer contributions and that it will continue to fund SCAPE costs arising from national Government changes.

The cost of the FFPS is in a state of flux currently with the government having lost legal cases around the tapering transitions from the 1992 to the 2015 scheme. A solution is now emerging following Government proposals, but it is unclear what the impact on the Service's base budget will be into the future.

The MTFs demonstrates the volatility of different elements of the budget in response to inflation and Service changes.



## Service Demand

The strategy recognises that there is an increasing population trend in South Wales particularly within the urban areas of Cardiff and Newport. Pressures on the Authority's services will increase because of this and other factors.

According to Welsh Government statistical modelling, the population of South Wales has grown by around 6.5% in 10 years and growth forecasts are assumed to continue at a steady rate. This rate includes disproportionate increases in certain at-risk groups such as the elderly. As demographics change, the need for fire cover and other rescue services change.

An average growth in population of around 0.66% per annum is not reflected in an annual need to increase expenditure. However, the Authority's cost base may eventually need a step change in response to overall demand. Such changes are traditionally dealt with through ongoing reviews of fire cover and other necessary service provision.

Demographic trends towards and ageing population with more people living alone and with life limiting health conditions are likely to increase demand on services. Environmental and legislative changes also drive the demand for services in areas such as flooding, wild fires, road traffic collisions and bariatric rescue. The Authority's partnership arrangements also result in an increased number of service calls such as co-responding to medical emergencies. The current climate of terror related incidents also demands a significant training and response capability in the fire service. These specific areas are considered in terms of budget provision as and when spending

pressures crystallise. The recent heightened concerns around climate change are likely to accelerate the need for investment in specific service areas.

### Capital Financing Costs (Debt repayments and interest)

The strategy includes an increase in the Authority's estimated capital financing costs of around £1m reflecting the approved capital programme. The capital financing budget remains around 6% of the net revenue budget representing a 'normal' range for a Service of this type. This programme together with the Treasury Management Strategy of the Authority determines the principal debt repayments and interest costs which will fall on the revenue budget. The programme includes a range of investments aimed at maintaining, renewing and supplementing the Authority's assets to achieve its strategic objectives. Affordability is a key component of the capital programme.

The Authority does not receive separate funding for capital borrowing costs and as such, all borrowing costs must be met from its core revenue budget.

### Specific Projects

The nature of the Fire & Rescue Service entails participation in collaborative regional and national initiatives, some of which are sponsored by central government.

Changes to the costs and funding within these projects can impact the budget of the Authority. One project is currently being monitored in this regard.

- Emergency Services Mobile Communications Platform (ESMCP) is a project aimed at rolling out a new Emergency Service Network (ESN) across the UK. Last year Welsh Government cut all funding related to the cost of the existing network in Wales. This equated to around £0.6m per annum in South Wales. The project aims to not only modernise and improve the network but also to reduce ongoing costs. Until the future cost of the ESN is known for certain, the financial impact of the project is uncertain. Further delays in the delivery of this project will be monitored in terms of their financial impact. The MTFs correctly projected the removal of the grant aid albeit not as quickly as it happened. Delays in this project are resulting in increased costs of the existing FireLink solution and accordingly, provision is included to meet these costs.

### Forecast Funding Changes

Both national and local changes to funding can affect the Service's income streams.

#### National Funding Changes

The Government's policy direction pre-Covid has shown a long-term trend of reduction in public spending but there was a reverse in this trend in the last three budget years.

That said, the scale of the recent increase is small in the context of the major economic challenge arising from Covid19.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has resulted in a further level of uncertainty and the resulting cost of living crisis will impact government spending plans.

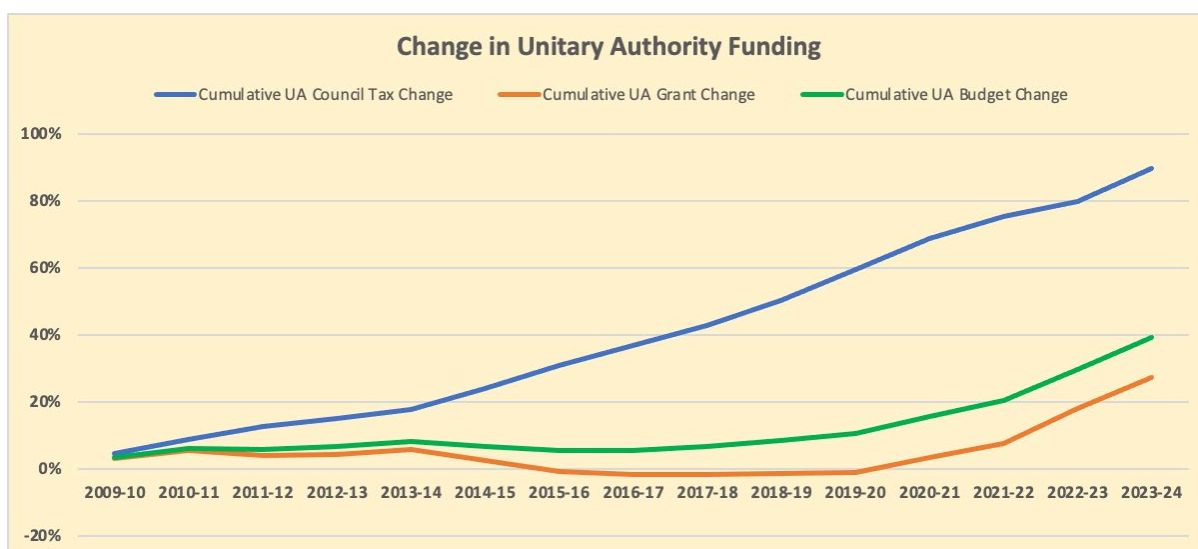
It is almost impossible to make meaningful assumptions beyond the steady state position given the unprecedented level of change in the country's financial position. In one scenario, continued reinvestment to drive economic development and to meet public service demands could be forecast, in another, an even more prolonged period

of public sector austerity to reduce the hitherto unseen levels of government borrowing.

### Welsh Local Authority Settlement Funding Assessment

The outcome of the budget decisions of Welsh Government in terms of health, social care and education will be major determining factors given the relative size of those budgets. In the last two years, Welsh Government was able to divert resources to local authorities for the first time in a decade.

Aside from external funding from Welsh Government, Unitary authorities also have revenue raising powers through council tax which they can use to fund local services. The Office of Budget Responsibility forecasts 4% increase in council tax revenues which mirrors the increases seen over the austerity period in South Wales. The chart below shows the historical changes in unitary authority funding within South Wales. This increase was lower in 22/23 mainly due to the unprecedented increase in levels of council grant announced by Welsh Government. Increases are likely to return to their previous stable level.



Beyond 2023/24 projections are solely based on indicative Welsh Government budget announcements.

### Grants and other Funding Streams

As Welsh Government departments have seen their own budgets cut, there has been a regular trend of reductions or withdrawals of specific grant funding streams. The Service has seen these cuts already in the Community Safety initiatives it operates.

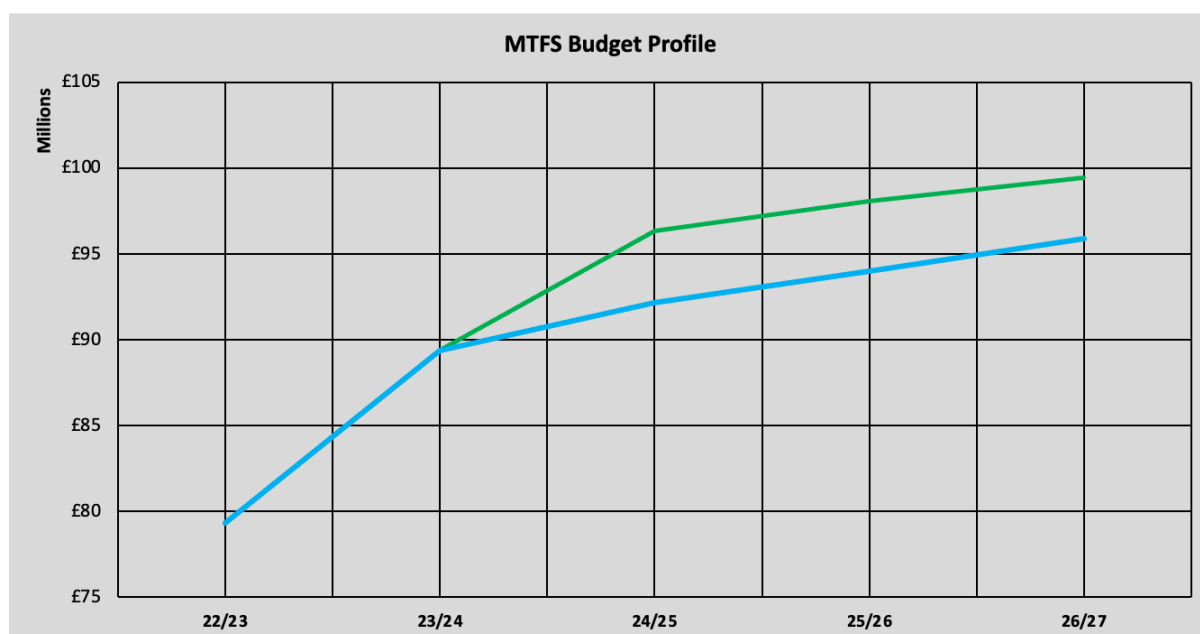
Given the trend and commentary to date on grant funding, it is reasonable to assume that these funding sources may be further withdrawn over the medium to longer term however, in advance of any announcements, it would be wrong to assume such reductions yet. The table below outlines the revenue grants and contributions currently in payment together with the basis of forecasts.

Grants are currently received as follows:

Grant	2023/24 £'000	Received from	Forecast Basis
COMMUNITY SAFETY	324	Various	Continue - cash flat profile
NATIONAL RESILIENCE/USAR/MTA	1,353	WG	Continue - cash flat profile
PENSION TOP UP GRANT	17,165	WG	Continue – excess funding required met in full by WG
PFI	926	WG	Pre-defined grant profile
<b>TOTAL FUNDING 23/24</b>	<b>19,768</b>		

## Projected Spend v Resources Assumptions

The graph below sets out the Service's estimated budget profile. It includes for illustration purposes, projections of resource availability at the Welsh Government indicative levels or +2% where there are none.



If local government resources were restricted to the levels of the Welsh Government announcement, the worst-case position would be a shortfall in funding of around £3.6m per annum by the end of the plan term. The most obvious factor in this projection is the necessity for central government to solve the funding problem arising from the 'cost of living' crisis now driving local authority spending. This assumes of course that the Service would only request funding in accordance with the assessed worst case local authority settlement. In practice, the Service must request the resources it requires to fund its operations regardless of settlements. That said, the Service has always striven to take account of the climate of public sector budgets in which it operates and to reduce the burden on its constituent councils wherever possible.



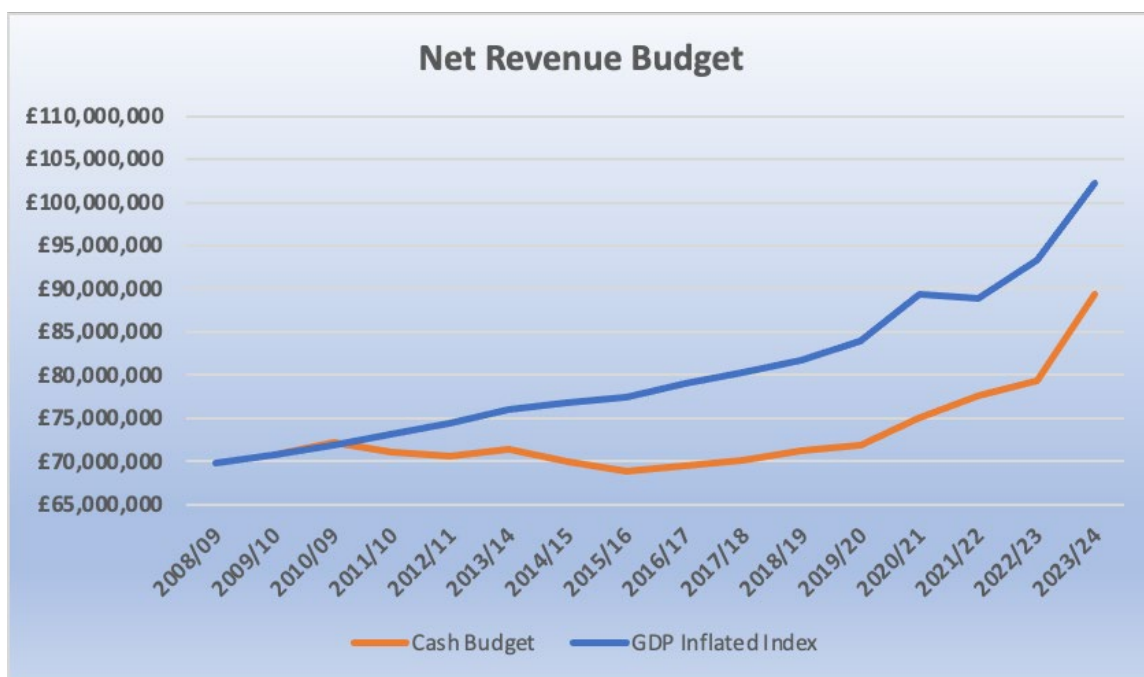
Welsh Government funding of the ongoing costs of firefighter pensions and the currently grant funded initiatives is critical to financial position of the Fire Authority.

## Medium Term Financial Plan

To address the budget gap identified, the Service intends to manage down risk, unnecessary response, inflationary and other budget pressures whilst maximising income and making business processes as efficient as possible. Some of this work is part of an ongoing business delivery model whilst some of it depends on specific project work targeted at efficiency and savings.

### Finance and Efficiencies

Since the commencement of the current economic downturn in 2008/09, the Authority has delivered approximately £13m real terms budget reduction. The chart below shows the trend in the revenue budget. It represents an estimated real terms reduction of around 14% in 15 years.



The Authority has taken several approaches in relation to savings and efficiency over this period including reviews of fire cover, the Shaping Our Future Programme and various efficiency projects focussed on reducing expenditure and increasing income. If there is a continued downward pressure on expenditure, it will become increasingly difficult to identify further financial savings without significant changes in what services the Authority provides and how it delivers them.

This could have implications for the public, businesses, operational partners and employees. To deliver the Authority's plan to reduce risk, services that are no longer affordable or less impactful may be delivered differently or, in some cases, stopped. Such changes would not be considered or implemented without Fire Authority approval following consultation and engagement.



## Fire Cover Reviews

The Service continues to review fire cover across the whole South Wales Area. The most recent whole authority review resulted in the closure of several retained stations and a reduction in crewing at other sites. As part of that review, several identified station amalgamations and moves are still being held in abeyance. Availability of potential sites has created a delivery problem, but these options remain open. The next planned move is to relocate and replace the New Inn station in Torfaen.

## Shaping our Future Programme

The Authority devoted resources to reviewing parts of the organisation to identify improvements and efficiencies. Whilst not formally operating under this name in future, the programme continues to look at operational and back-office business processes. As part of this coming budget cycle, consideration of areas for investment and savings within the structure of the Authority's staffing is being undertaken. These will be the subject of reports to the Fire Authority for consideration once developed.

## Sustainability & Carbon Reduction

The Authority has recognised the need to respond to Climate Change both in service provision but also to minimise its own impact on the environment and climate. The formalisation of a strategy to address these issues has been completed and action plans and projects are now being developed and implemented. The aim is to reduce the Service's carbon footprint whilst at the same time delivering economic benefits through cost savings. The MTFs includes assumptions of financial savings generated by this activity particularly in energy costs, transport and supplies.

## Accounting Measures

The Authority, through its Finance, Asset & Performance Management Committee, has reviewed its budget for opportunities to create savings / budget reductions. This has included contingencies, inflation allowances, vacancy provisions, method of manpower budgeting and treasury management practice. The Authority will continue to monitor these aspects of the budget to identify further opportunities to drive down the underlying resource requirement where this is prudent and sustainable.

## Reserves Policy

Under the 2003 Local Government Act, the Treasurer is required to make a statement to the Authority on the adequacy of reserves as part of the annual budget setting process. It is good practice for the Authority to have a reserves policy which is reviewed regularly. The Authority follows this practice, ensuring that liabilities and risks are adequately managed from a financial perspective.

## General Reserves

General reserves are maintained to ensure financial stability in the longer term thus allowing the Authority time to plan, mitigate and deal with future financial challenges. The reserve policy includes an assessment of financial risks and a quantification of those risks where this is possible. The overall value of general reserves held reflects the value of assessed risks, the overall quantum of the budget and previous experience of variations resulting from volatility in specific areas.

Due to the ongoing austerity measures facing the public sector in the UK, the financial risks in the overall budget remain high and the Authority is maintaining general reserves at a healthy level to reflect this. Fire Services in the UK remain under threat of industrial action which represents a further risk to continued service provision.

The financial strategy is predicated on no planned use of general reserves to fund ongoing revenue spending. The Authority regards this as an unsustainable financial planning parameter and is in accordance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

### Earmarked Reserves

The Authority creates, maintains and utilises earmarked reserves to fund specific projects and liabilities as they are developed or identified. An overall change management reserve is maintained to fund projects aimed at increasing efficiency and improving or changing services. The Authority has little recourse to capital funds aside from borrowing and as such these earmarked reserves are also used to assist in meeting the financial demands arising from larger projects.

The use of reserves to balance the budget is only sustainable in the short term and the MTFs should not rely on continued use of reserves as a funding solution.

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Balance at 31/03/23 £000</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
General Reserves	3,000	General financial resilience
Change Management Reserve	3,094	To fund projects aimed at efficiency, service improvement and change
Cultural Review	340	To meet the costs of the ongoing culture review
Carbon Reduction	3,000	To meet project costs
Equality Diversity & Inclusion	2,000	To meet project costs
Equipment Renewals	2,000	To meet equipment renewal costs
PFI Equalisation Reserve	3,192	To balance out timing difference in grants and costs of the PFI Training Centre project at Cardiff Gate
Managed Under Spend Reserve	141	To meet costs of ongoing projects falling into the next financial year
Joint Control Lease Reserve	200	To finance the contribution to the Joint Control Facility in Bridgend
<b>Total Revenue Reserves</b>	<b>16,967</b>	

### Treasury Management Strategy

The objective of the Authority's treasury management is to ensure that the Authority's cash, borrowing and investments are appropriately and efficiently managed within agreed financial and legislative parameters.

The Authority is required to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Codes covering such activities. In accordance with the Code, the Authority procures and retains the services of an external Treasury Management Advisor.

Reports on the Authority's Strategy and agreed parameters are approved prior to the commencement of each financial year. A half year progress report is made during the year and an annual report is received at the completion of each year end outlining performance and compliance.

Temporary borrowing is undertaken to fund short term cash flow deficits with long term borrowing being used to fund the Authority's capital requirements. Given the recent history of low interest rates, the Authority continues to pursue a policy of utilising internal cash balances (Internal borrowing) to minimise external interest costs. Forecasts for the UK and World economy are kept under review to determine if this strategy should change in response to potential interest rate rises.

The Authority's Capital Financing Requirement is the measure of its need to borrow to fund its capital requirements. This is forecast at £46.5m at March 2023 with external borrowing being estimated at £30.4. The difference of £16m represents internal borrowing and the exposure of the Authority to increasing interest rates should it need to borrow externally. This exposure is forecast to remain constant to March 2025.

Exposure to increasing interest rates is mitigated by having a portfolio of external loans at fixed rates maturing over a range of short, medium and long dates. The profile of the Authority's debt maturity provides certainty over borrowing costs with around 38% maturing after 10 years or more.

Investment activity is minimised by the current borrowing strategy. However, when cash flow dictates, short term cash investments are made to approved counterparties to generate income.

Further detail on the relevant forecasts can be found in the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

## Asset Management Plan

The Authority operates within fire and rescue stations, offices, workshops, training facilities and control room accommodation. At these sites, to assist us in delivering our service to the public, we also hold many assets, ranging from our fleet of emergency response and support vehicles, operational plant and equipment, ICT equipment and other minor assets (such as office and station furniture, specialist clothing etc.).

For us to properly manage these assets it is necessary for the Service to have an Asset Management Strategy. This ensures that our assets are still fit for purpose and relevant for evolving service needs and changing legislative requirements. In addition, as a large public sector owner of assets there is an overarching requirement for us to ensure value for money in the management and maintenance of these assets. To this end, our Asset Management Strategy determines the high-level priorities where financial resources are to be targeted to meet service requirements.

Our Asset Management Strategy is supported by several management plans which provide the detail upon how our assets will be managed. These include:

- Land & Buildings
- Fleet
- Plant & Equipment
- ICT
- Minor Assets
- Procurement

These Operational Equipment Plans are an essential tool in how we manage our operational equipment assets. Regular reviews of our equipment are essential to ensure that it is still fit for purpose and suitable for our evolving service needs and changing legislative requirements.

As part of the public sector there is a responsibility for us to ensure value for money is obtained when we procure and maintain operational equipment. We also have a duty to ensure the health and safety of operational personnel using the equipment and that the equipment we provide is fit for purpose.

## Capital Programme

Capital investment in assets is required to maintain an effective operational response and accordingly a planned capital programme exists. The Fire Authority has little recourse to capital funding other than from self-financed borrowing and capital receipts from the disposal of surplus assets and accordingly, the financing costs of the programme fall on the revenue budget. Affordability is therefore key in making decisions about the level of investment that can be undertaken.

The programme contains elements to fund new or replacement assets as well as repairs and preventative maintenance for existing assets. The programme broadly covers the following categories of investment:

Property	Site acquisitions, new build, refurbishment and planned maintenance
Vehicles	Operational appliances and light vehicles
Equipment	Operational equipment including PPE
ICT	Hardware and software

## Collaboration

Collaborative working with partner agencies is seen as a priority. This includes other emergency services, local authorities and the third sector in Wales but also other service providers on a national level. This collaboration delivers efficiency but also resilience which is especially important in a world subject to emerging global threats such as climate change and terrorism.

The service continues to seek other collaborative opportunities to improve outcomes for the population of South Wales but also to make efficiency savings.

### National Issues Committee and Welsh Government (NIC)

All three Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales have one common objective which is a safer Wales. The NIC was formed to actively promote and enable collaboration between the Services but also across the wider Welsh public sector. It also aims to achieve objectives detailed in Welsh Government strategic policies and programmes.

The aim of the NIC is to deliver measurable improvements, including greater efficiency and a more citizen focused service. There are currently eleven work streams:

- Business continuity
- Control
- Community risk reduction
- Common & specialist services
- Fleet & transport
- Health & safety
- Human resources
- ICT (shared services)
- Operations
- Procurement
- Training & development

### Partnership with other 'blue light' services

There are obvious synergies between the work of the Service and that of other 'blue light' services across South Wales. Emergency services are often attending the same incidents in the same localities and can in certain circumstances provide resources to assist one another. These resources include employees, property and other assets.

Co-location of services within properties has begun to achieve cost efficiencies. A good operational example is Abertillery Fire Station which is now a tripartite facility housing police, fire and ambulance personnel.

The service is currently engaged with Mid and West Wales in delivering a joint control facility within the South Wales Police HQ. This facility was developed with a business plan to save around £1m per annum in running costs.

Recently the Service has been trialling an emergency medical response service. Fire service personnel and assets are now responding to certain categories of medical emergencies alongside paramedics and ambulances.

### Partnership with local authorities and the third sector

The Service often comes face to face with the same service users of local authorities and the active third sector operating in the area. This provides opportunities to join up service provision when interfacing with service users and members of the public in many communities.

Prevention activities are key in reducing risks for everybody within the Service Area and activities are now focussed on providing information and advice and sharing information across a wide range of operational front-line services.

## Workforce Strategy

The Authority employs around 1,800 staff as both operational firefighters and a range of professional and supporting roles. The nature of the Service means that 75% of expenditure is on staff or staff related budgets and there is a high expenditure on training and related matters.

The Service is part of collective bargaining agreements with both uniformed (grey book) and non-uniformed (green book) Trade Unions. Staff communication and engagement is high on the priorities of the Service to ensure staff fully understand the plans, rationale and motives of the Service.

Given the high percentage of staff costs, efficiencies or budget cuts inevitably impact on staffing levels. The Service tries to avoid redundancies wherever possible by using retirement and natural staff turnover to reduce numbers if required.

The Service has recently implemented its new Job Evaluation Scheme for Green Book staff which provides a sound basis for future assessments of salary levels.

The Service has obtained Investors in People (IIP) accreditation and has also achieved a new award focusing on staff wellbeing. The Service has received a Gold People Award and a Silver Wellbeing Award for its supportive culture, passion to improve and develop, focus on wellbeing and a commitment to protecting the communities of South Wales.

## Risk Management

The Fire & Rescue Service National Framework for Wales and the Wales Programme for Improvement Framework requires the Service to consider risk management whilst discharging its statutory duties and consider the risks facing the organisation when making strategic decisions.

### Risk Management Framework

A risk is an event that has the potential to help or hinder the achievement of a strategic objective or the delivery of core business. All risks are rated as manageable (low), material (medium) or significant (high).

Directors, department heads and team leaders are responsible for identifying risks during the business planning process and taking the appropriate actions to manage or mitigate risk within their areas. Only risks that impact upon the achievement of a strategic objective or delivery of core business are monitored via the Corporate Risk Register. The Senior Management Team formally reviews the Corporate Risk Register on a regular basis and endorses the inclusion of any new or emerging risks identified.

## Financial Risks

The Service's current and future financial position and adequacy of resources are subject to regular review.

Budget monitoring is regularly undertaken with resources prioritised on key risk areas. Monitoring operates on a devolved and centralised model with budget holders across the Service at various levels of the organisation. The Service's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations set out procedures, roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability.

Key specific financial risks within the Strategy and Plan include:

- The national economy and public finances
- The level of interest rates and the cost of borrowing
- Variations in Inflation assumptions - 1% of pay equals £0.6m and 1% of price equals £0.2m
- Failure to deliver or late delivery of budget savings
- Project delays
- Withdrawal of key funding streams by Government
- The cost of pensions

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 6.ii  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**PRINCIPAL OFFICER VACANCY – APPOINTMENT AUTHORISATION OF ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER - TECHNICAL SERVICES****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**REPORT APPROVED BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER  
PRESENTING OFFICER – CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**SUMMARY**

The Fire Authority Constitution determines that a request to fill a post at Principal Officer level on a permanent basis has to be brought before the Fire & Rescue Authority for approval.

This report seeks approval to recruit, on a permanent basis, an Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Technical Services. Subject to Fire Authority approval it is proposed to commence the recruitment process at the earliest opportunity with the aim of making a permanent appointment before the end of December 2023.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Members approve the filling of the post of the role of ACFO - Technical Services on a permanent basis.

That Members approve the recruitment and selection process and timetable as laid out in the report.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Fire Authority Constitution determines that a request to fill a post at Principal Officer level on a permanent basis must be brought before the Fire & Rescue Authority for approval.
- 1.2 Subject to Fire Authority approval it is proposed to commence the recruitment process at the earliest opportunity with the aim of making an appointment by the end of December 2023.

## 2. ISSUES

- 2.1 The responsibilities of each Director are determined by the Chief Fire Officer and are reviewed periodically to ensure that both operational and strategic functions are discharged effectively.
- 2.2 The South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Executive Leadership Team substantive structure currently comprises of five Principal Officers/ Director posts, namely: the Chief Fire Officer (CFO and Head of Paid Services), two Assistant Chief Fire Officers (ACFOs) - Technical Services and Service Delivery, and two Assistant Chief Officers (ACOs) - Corporate Services and People Services. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reference is currently added to the Director of Service Delivery on a temporary basis.
- 2.3 To ensure service delivery has remained at the highest level, both operationally and strategically, a temporary structure has been in place for several months to support the challenges that we, and most other Fire & Rescue Services in the UK, are currently facing and will continue to do so over the coming months and years. The overall number of Director posts has not changed.
- 2.4 Following the retirement of the previous postholder, it is proposed that the ACFO - Technical Services role is filled on a permanent basis through a process of open and fair competition. Vacancies at this level have previously been advertised nationally on appropriate terms and conditions in order to attract the best possible field of applicants. The pay structure is set out in the Service's 2023/2024 Pay Policy Statement.
- 2.5 The proposed timetable for the appointment process following approval of this report is as follows:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Provisional Date(s)</b>
Advertisement	September/October 2023
Shortlist (ACFO Service Delivery and ACO People Services)	October 2023
Strategic Assessment & Development Centre	November 2023
Professional Interview with Executive Leadership Team	November 2023
Appointment Panel with Fire Authority	December 2023

- 2.6 It is proposed that the Fire Authority Appointment Panel comprises of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the HR & Equalities Committee, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee, and the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny Committee. The Chair of the Fire Authority to be the Chairperson of the Appointment Panel. It is also proposed that the Chief Fire Officer will provide Principal Officer advice to the Panel.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	Yes

- 3.1.1 An integrated Impact Assessment has been prepared and incorporates the Service's Equal Opportunities and Fairness protocols which will form a central part of the recruitment process to ensure that the process is transparent, open and fair for all applicants.

#### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	Yes
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	No
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

- 3.2.1 The Fire & Rescue Authority's Constitution determines that a request to fill a post at Principal Officer level on a permanent basis has to be brought before the Fire & Rescue Authority for approval.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

3.3.1 Funding for the ACFO - Technical Services post is contained within the salary revenue budget as an established post. The salary for the post is a single point salary, currently £86,693 pa.

## 4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Approval to recruit the ACFO - Technical Services will provide stability in terms of the Executive Leadership Team structure, and it will ensure service delivery is unaffected.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Members approve the filling of the post of ACFO - Technical Services on a permanent basis.

5.2 That Members approve the recruitment and selection process and timetable as laid out in the report.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chief Fire Officer Huw Jakeway
<b>Background Papers</b>	None

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 6.iii  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES' REPORT – VALUES AND CULTURE IN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (SPOTLIGHT REPORT)****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**REPORT APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES  
REPORT PRESENTED BY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**SUMMARY**

On Thursday, 30 March 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFS) for England published Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services. The report has nine themes supported by 35 recommendations, all English Fire and Rescue Services alongside the government and national fire bodies are urged to implement them as a matter of urgency.

The report covers English Fire and Rescue Services, however, the Welsh Government has communicated its expectation for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales to fully comply with all the recommendations appertaining to the Service and Chief Fire Officers. Welsh Government have requested progress reports back to the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and South Wales Fire & Rescue Service welcome the report and the recommendations within it.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Fire and Rescue Authority should accept the recommendations allocated to the Chief Fire Officer.

The South Wales Fire and Rescue Service fully engage and support the delivery of the remaining recommendations.

That the actions and progress against the HMICFS recommendations are presented to the November Scrutiny Committee.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 On Thursday, 30 March 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFS) published Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services.
- 1.2 The Inspectorate reports that while some progress has been made, it is clear much more needs to be done to improve values and culture in Services and that they continue to find that:
  - Some Services need to get better at promoting positive professional cultures;
  - Most Services need to do more to improve equality, diversity, and inclusion;
  - Progression opportunities for staff are not equal, which is hindering the potential for greater diversity of thought in Services' leadership teams
- 1.3 South Wales Fire & Rescue Service has always taken the culture of the Service extremely seriously. The current Core Values have been in place since 2013 and the Service wants to make sure all our staff and the public we serve are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.
- 1.4 Members will be aware that the Chief Fire Officer commissioned an Independent Culture Review of the Service's culture, historic discipline cases and the Service's discipline processes.

## **2. ISSUE**

- 2.1 The spotlight report cites examples of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour by some fire service staff and highlights that staff survey results provided examples of bullying, harassment and discrimination in all Services.
- 2.2 HMICFRS reports a culture where staff, including some managers, did not always feel comfortable to challenge poor behaviour and that some people chose not to speak out at fear of it being detrimental to their career. It is highlighted, however, that some Services handle concerns appropriately and have taken steps to addressing cultural issues.
- 2.3 The recommendations are shown in appendix 1 and of the 35 recommendations contained with the Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services report, 19 are owned by the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.4 The recommendations are broken down into the areas of:
  - Raising concerns
  - Background checks
  - Misconduct handling

- Leadership
- Management and leadership training and development
- Diversity data
- Improving Diversity
- The Core Code of Ethics
- The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England

2.5 Each recommendation has a timeframe allocated to it by which HMICFRS state that they expect to see implementation.

2.6 Work has already started on a number of these recommendations and will be progressed alongside any recommendations coming from the ongoing Independent Culture Review. Following feedback regarding the various streams and work and plans, these recommendations will also feed into a larger plan driven by the Authority's People Plan.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	Yes
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group meet regularly to discuss concerns with stakeholders from across the Service. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for each recommendation as appropriate.

3.1.2 There will be continued engagement with staff and the public regarding the Culture they experience whilst working for or engaging with South Wales Fire & Rescue Service. The People Strategy will continue to be reviewed annually with the output shared with Members.

3.1.3 A significant change in legislation has been made to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which the Service is currently reviewing.

3.1.4 All Representative Bodies have a duty to work in social partnership with the Service to ensure it is a safe and trusted place to work. The workplace has to be free from any forms of discrimination and embrace diversity in everything that we do.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	Yes
Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	Yes
Information Management	Yes
Data Protection / Privacy	Yes
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Yes
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	Yes
National Policy	Yes

3.2.1 Any costs associated with this will come from established budgets, or where this is not possible, growth bids will be submitted for work that is not covered. Any training required will be taken through the Learning and development team who review any training needs identified and prioritise these within the allocated budget.

3.2.2 If the Service does not review the measures in place, employee wellbeing is impacted affecting recruitment, employee morale, retention and future improvements to working practices.

3.2.3 Legal inputs are sought and provided as and when required in respect of all the stands within the recommendations.

3.2.4 Neither individual cases or employees will be identified through the actions set to comply with the recommendations. Freedom of Information requests are processed adhering to confidentiality and data protection guidelines.

3.2.5 Employee Health & Wellbeing is a key area of the People Strategy. The People Services Department supports managers and employees across the Service, eg Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme, Mental Wellbeing/Welfare Support; a range of procedures on absence management, code of conduct, whistleblowing, grievances, conduct and capability.



### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	Yes
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Fire Authority should accept the recommendations allocated to the Chief Fire Officer.
- 4.2 The South Wales Fire & Rescue Service fully engage and support the delivery of the remaining recommendations.
- 4.3 That the actions and progress against the HMICFS recommendations are presented to the November Scrutiny Committee.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	DCFO Dewi Rose Director of Service Delivery
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<b>Background Papers:</b>
HMICFRS Values and Culture in FRSs <a href="https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services/">https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services/</a>

<b>Appendices:</b>
Appendix 1   Values and Culture in the FRS Recommendations

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## HMICFRS recommendations

## Appendix 1

Recommendation	Responsibility
1. By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes	CFOs
2. By 1 October 2023, National Employers, the Local Government Association and the National Fire Chiefs Council should review any current independent arrangements whereby staff can raise concerns outside their FRS. They should then ensure that all FRS staff have access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a confidential way to raise concerns outside their own FRS.	LGA/NFCC
3. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable	CFOs
4. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved	CFOs
5. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.	CFOs
6. By 1 January 2024, the Home Office, working with the Ministry of Justice, should make sure that the Government incorporates fire and rescue authority employees within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks.	HO/MOJ
7. By 1 May 2024, the Home Office, working with the fire and rescue sector, should make sure that the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002, or a similar appropriate legislatively enabled solution, makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.	HO
8. By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services;</li> <li>• clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public;</li> <li>• define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and</li> <li>• be subject to review following any legislative change</li> </ul>	FSB/NFCC

9. By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard their staff and</li> </ul>	CFOs
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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<p>communities they serve; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board</li> </ul>	
10. By 1 September 2023, chief constables should make sure they are appropriately using their Common Law Police Disclosure powers in circumstances involving employees of fire and rescue services.	Police
11. By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances	FSB/NFCC
12. By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling	CFOs
13. By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes. These should include requirements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct and complete investigations, whether or not the staff member under investigation leaves;</li> <li>• consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal;</li> <li>• provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and</li> <li>• ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person.</li> </ul>	FSB/NFCC
14. By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.	CFOs
15. By 1 October 2023, the Home Office should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue service employers to make sure there is a process to handle misconduct allegations against chief fire officers. The Home Office should immediately notify HMICFRS of any allegations and outcomes that it is aware of.	HO/NFCC
16. By 1 October 2023, the National Fire Chiefs Council should develop and manage a national barred list that holds details of staff who have been dismissed for gross misconduct (including staff who have already left services). It should ensure that this list is referred to in all appointment processes to prevent those who are barred from rejoining another service. After the College of Fire and Rescue has been established (see recommendation 25), it should take responsibility for managing the list	NFCC
17. With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs;</li> <li>• are of a serious nature; or</li> <li>• relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.</li> </ul>	CFOs

18. By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.	CFOs
19. By 1 July 2023, the Home Office should examine whether any appeal processes for fire and rescue misconduct cases are appropriate.	HO
20. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard and its leading and developing people standard.	CFOs

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
21. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.	CFOs
22. By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports	CFOs
23. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard. They should show how they act on this feedback.	CFOs
24. By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, watch and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.	CFOs
25. By 1 January 2025, the Government should establish a College of Fire and Rescue, as proposed by the White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service. There should be no further delay to its implementation.	HO
26. By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the National Fire Chiefs Council should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.	CFOs/NFCC/ HO
27. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit	CFOs
28. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit.	CFOs
29. By 1 December 2023, the Home Office should publish greater detail on the protected characteristic data it collects about FRS staff, including joiners and leavers, by rank and role.	HO

30. By 30 December 2024, the Home Office should align the data it collects on protected characteristics with the Office for National Statistics harmonised standard and publish this data.	HO
31. By 1 December 2024, the Home Office should collect and publish experimental statistics on public complaints and conduct matters in relation to FRS staff, similar to that which it currently publishes on police forces in England and Wales.	HO
32. By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct entry opportunities.	CFOs
33. By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity	CFOs
34. With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.	CFOs

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
35. By the end of this Parliament, the Government should consider the findings and recommendations in this report when refreshing the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England	HO

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

AGENDA ITEM NO 6.iv  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES

**INDEPENDENT PAY REVIEW - PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' REMUNERATION**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER, PEOPLE SERVICES  
REPORT PRESENTED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER, A.REED

**SUMMARY**

In September 2022 the Fire and Rescue Authority received a report from external consultants The Resource Partners Ltd (TRP) on a review of Brigade Manager/Principal Officers' remuneration that had been requested by Fire Authority Members following the completion of the Job Evaluation exercise for Green Book employees. An uplift of 4.5% was agreed and It was also resolved that a further piece of work would be commissioned immediately on Principal Officer pay and that a review on Principal Officers' pay would be carried out on a yearly basis by an external consultant for a period of two years, followed by a review thereafter.

It is noted that the South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) Pay Policy document states that Principal Officers' remuneration shall be reviewed annually by the local Fire & Rescue Authority and that the HR & Equalities Committee is assigned to consider PO remuneration and report findings to the Fire & Rescue Authority. The National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services, Constitution and scheme of conditions of service states there is a two-track approach to determining PO remuneration, as outlined above, one of these is a local review undertaken by the FRA.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Members review the report attached at Appendix 1 which has been prepared and presented by an independent pay consultant.
2. Members consider the report and the Chair of HR&E make a recommendation to the Fire & Rescue Authority at the meeting scheduled for 25 September 2023.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's vision and priorities for the three Fire and

Rescue Authorities in Wales and confirms the statutory duties placed upon the Fire and Rescue Authorities and the wider role they have to play in ensuring continuous improvement of public services.

- 1.2 The National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire & Rescue Service Constitution and Scheme of Condition of Service (The Gold Book) outlines a two-track approach for determining levels of pay for Brigade Manager (BM) roles. The two track approach comprises, at national level, the NJC will undertake an annual review of the level of pay increase applicable to all those covered by the agreement. All other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration are to be undertaken by the local Fire & Rescue Authority.
- 1.3 Paragraph 4.3 of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Pay Policy Statement states that “the Fire & Rescue Authority has assigned to the HR & Equalities Committee the review of Principal Officers’ remuneration and to report its findings to the full Fire & Rescue Authority for final determination”.
- 1.4 When determining the appropriate level of salaries for all Brigade Managers/Principal Officers, the Fire & Rescue Authority should refer to the relevant minimum salary of the Chief Fire Officer and the most relevant benchmark data. Normally the Fire & Rescue Authority will wish to begin by determining appropriate salary for their most senior manager.
- 1.5 When deciding how these posts should be remunerated the following factors are to be considered:
  - The Chief Fire Officer’s salary and that of any senior staff not covered by the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book);
  - The relationship of current salary to an appropriate illustrative national benchmark;
  - Any special market considerations;
  - Any substantial local factors not common to fire and rescue authorities of similar type and size e.g. London weighting; complex local, regional or national responsibilities which bring added value;
  - Comparative information to be supplied on request by the Joint Secretaries on salaries in other similar authorities;
  - Senior management structures and size of management team compared to those of other fire and rescue authorities of similar type and size;



- The relative job size of each post, as objectively assessed through an appropriate job evaluation process or otherwise; and
- Strategic Incident command responsibility and the requirement to provide operational cover within the employing authority and beyond on a continuous duty system.

## 2. ISSUES

- 2.1 In September 2022 the Fire and Rescue Authority received a report from external consultants TRP (appendix 2) and approved an uplift to the CFO and linked posts of 4.5% for 2022. It was also resolved that a further piece of work would be commissioned immediately on Principal Officer pay and that a review on Principal Officers' pay would be carried out on a yearly basis by an external consultant for a period of two years, followed by a review thereafter.
- 2.2 The external consultants report with recommendations is attached at appendix 1 in accordance with the two-year review outlined above.
- 2.3 In determining senior officer remuneration, as outlined above, recruitment and retention issues should also be factored into considerations.

**Retention** - The Service has in recent years lost one of its senior managers to a Service where levels of remuneration are significantly higher than those currently offered in South Wales.

**Recruitment** – It is impossible to accurately predict the success or otherwise of future recruitment campaigns however, the Authority should be mindful that there is a risk of failure to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff if remuneration packages within South Wales are not comparable with other similar organisations.

- 2.4 It is not appropriate for any senior officer who could be affected by this report to play any part in its presentation or consideration. All such officers will therefore declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting until Members have completed their consideration and reached a decision.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No

Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	Yes

3.1.1 Issues relating to pay and terms and conditions require consultation with the relevant representative bodies.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	Yes	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	No
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	Yes
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

3.2.1 The Localism Act includes the provision of general powers for stand-alone Fire and Rescue Authorities with a requirement to publish a Pay Policy Statement each year.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

3.3.1 There is no specific budget provision for salary increases outside the normal NJC arrangements in the current year. Should the Fire and Rescue Authority be minded to approve any changes to the remuneration package for the officers concerned, this would have to be accommodated within existing budget for 2023/23 and would be an additional requirement for 2024/25 onwards.

3.3.2 The total budget implications associated with the recommendations outlined in appendix 1 are as follows:

CFO and linked Principal Officers uplift at 7.81%	£46,587
Corporate Heads of Service aligned to Area Manager base pay (4 posts)	£28,916
Increase to remuneration of the Treasurer (contracted hours)	£4,843
<b>*Total</b>	<b>£80,346</b>

\*the above costs do not include on-costs

#### 4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

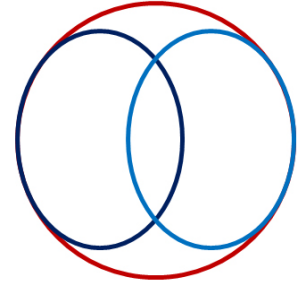
- 4.1 The Pay Policy Statement sets out the key principles that must be adhered to in establishing pay levels and in approving pay related allowances. It also sets the requirement for HR & Equalities Committee to review Brigade Manager/Principal Officer pay and report their recommendation to the Fire & Rescue Authority.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to review the report at Appendix 1 which has been compiled by Total Reward Projects (TRP) Limited, who are independent experts on pay benchmarking.
- 4.3 There is no longer a requirement to consult with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales on conclusions reached in relation to Brigade Manager/Principal Officers' pay, however at the request of the Fire and Rescue Authority they would be informed of any decisions.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Members review the report attached at Appendix 1 which has been prepared and presented by an independent pay consultant.
- 5.2 Members consider the report and the Chair of HR&E make a recommendation to the Fire & Rescue Authority at the meeting scheduled for 25 September 2023.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Assistant Chief Officer, Alison Reed
<b>Background Papers</b>	Appendix 1 – Report – Principal Officers Remuneration  Appendix 2 – Principal Officers Remuneration

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**Total Reward  
Projects Ltd**

**APPENDIX 1**

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' REMUNERATION**  
**SOUTH WALES**  
**FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

**September 2023**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (SWFRA) has once again commissioned Total Reward Projects Ltd (TRP) to provide independent advice and support as it seeks to carry out an annual review of pay for the principal officers of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS). The permanent structure of SWFRS comprises Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, one Assistant Chief Fire Officer and two Assistant Chief Officers.
- 1.2 TRP is a remuneration consultancy that works extensively across the public and not-for-profit sectors and has for the last 12 years carried out many comprehensive pay reviews for customers such as local authorities, fire and rescue services, housing associations and charities. Current long-standing customers include the London Legacy Development Corporation, Portsmouth City Council, Imperial Health Charity, Dover District Council, Inspire North, the Scout Association and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

## 2. Requirement

- 2.1 The full requirement for this year's annual pay review is for TRP to:
- Benchmark salary levels and make recommendations for principal officers (CFO, DCFO, ACFO, ACO) covered by the Gold Book terms and conditions;
  - Review the pay matrix set out in the SWFRA's pay policy statement as per section 4.4 of the statement;
  - Review and make recommendations on a sustainable approach to pay for Corporate Heads of Service to achieve parity between all Heads of Service (corporate and uniformed). Pay for non-uniformed Corporate Heads of Service are currently agreed locally and link to principal officer pay, whereas pay for uniformed heads of service is set by the Grey Book terms and conditions;
  - Review, benchmark and make recommendations on pay for the role of Treasurer; and
  - Consider the pay differentials between area managers and principal officers to ensure the role of Principal Officer is seen as a positive step up and salaries levels are not perceived by uniformed Area Managers as a financial disincentive to advance their careers as non-uniformed principal officers.

## 3. Principal Officers - Pay Benchmarking

- 3.1 For the purpose of reviewing and benchmarking pay for the SWFRS principal officers it was first necessary to benchmark and establish pay for the Chief Fire Officer. This is because of its crucial role in setting pay for the other principal officers, which are determined by an agreed pay matrix.
- 3.2 For this purpose we drew on the pay data for chief fire officers contained in the National Joint Council Brigade Managers pay survey report 2021 – 2022 published by the Local Government Association in July 2023. We looked specifically at the pay data captured for all fire and rescue services placed in the survey's Population Band 4. SWFRS sits within this band, which represents the 11 largest fire and rescue services throughout the UK except of London, which sits alone in the highest band. Pay data drawn from the survey shows that average pay for chief fire officers of fire and rescue services in Population Band 4 is £163,840 per annum. Taking this figure we then applied the NJC annual pay award of 3.5% for principal officers in January 2023, which brings total pay

to an average of £169,574.(see **Table 1** below)

**TABLE 1**

Job Title	Current Base Pay (FTE) (£)	Proposed Base Pay (£)	Increase in Base Pay (£)	% Increase in Base Pay
<b>CFO</b>	157,287	169,574	12,287	7.81
<b>DCFO</b>	125,830	135,656	9,826	7.81
<b>DCO</b>	119,778	129,131	9,353	7.81
<b>ACFO</b>	118,201	127,435	9,234	7.81
<b>ACO</b>	97,516	105,136	7,620	7.81

#### 4. Principal Officers - Pay Matrix

- 4.1 We next turn to a review of the locally agreed pay matrix and note that the current matrix, whilst being very useful in setting pay for principal officers, is perhaps a little convoluted and could be simplified, which would aid transparency. We set out below in Table 2 the current pay matrix alongside our proposal for a revised matrix that links pay for all principal officer roles directly to the pay of the Chief Fire Officer. This proposed change is essentially cost neutral but would entail some minor adjustments to the current arrangement, e.g. the current matrix link of the ACFOs is 75.15% of the CFO's pay whereas under the proposed revised pay matrix this has been rounded to 75% of CFO pay (**see Table 2**).



**TABLE 2**

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Current Pay Matrix (£)</b>	<b>Proposed Pay Matrix</b>
<b>CFO</b>	100%	100%
<b>DCFO</b>	80% of CFO	80% of CFO
<b>DCO</b>	95.19% of DCFO	76% of CFO
<b>ACFO</b>	75.15% of CFO	75% of CFO
<b>ACO</b>	82.5% of ACFO	62% of CFO

## **5. Area Managers and Corporate Heads of Service - Pay Parity**

- 5.1** SWFRA is keen to explore the current relationship and apparent imbalance between base pay for its 4 Area Managers compared with its 4 Corporate Heads of Service. Base pay and allowances for Area Managers are determined by the national terms and conditions contained in the Grey Book, whereas pay for the Corporate Heads of Service is determined by the FRA under a local agreement whereby base pay for the Corporate Heads of Service is set at 64% of the pay of ACOs.
- 5.2** TRP looked at and evaluated the job descriptions of provided by SWFRS and found that the level of individual responsibility for serving SWFRS by supporting the principal officers and leading their own work areas was broadly equal between the uniformed Area Managers and the non-uniformed Corporate Heads of Service such that the current difference in base pay is hard to justify. No account of the differences in service operational responsibilities and substantial allowances payable to the uniformed Area Managers was taken into account.
- 5.3** We propose that SWFRA equalises base pay between Area Managers and the Corporate Heads of Service. This would strengthen the organisation's defence against any future equal pay claim pursued by an individual Corporate Head of Service or group action. The pay equalisation is most readily achieved by changing the local agreement to remove the current link between ACO pay and that of the Corporate Heads of Service

and instead creating a new link that links the pay of Corporate Heads of Service to 100% of the base pay of the Area Managers. The effect of implementing the change is shown in **Table 3**.

**TABLE 3**

Job Title	Current Base Pay (FTE) (£)	Proposed Base pay (£)	Pay Increase (£)	% Increase
Area Manager	69,283	69,283	N/A	N/A
Corporate Head of Service	62,054	69,283 (100% of Area Manager)	7,229	11.65

## 6. Treasurer – Pay Assessment

6.1 The Treasurer is employed directly by SWFRA on a part-time basis and currently has pay set by linking it by local agreement to that of ACO (70.88%). This produces full-time equivalent pay of £69,118 per annum. Using the revised pay matrix set out in **Table 2** this would be linked at 43.95% of the Chief Fire Officer's pay, thus producing annual pay of £74,528 per annum on a full-time equivalent basis.

6.2 As the role of Treasurer is, however, for a senior finance professional independent of SWFRS we sought to benchmark pay for a suitably qualified accountant against the wider public sector in South Wales. Using Croner's pay database which provides pay data in real time, median pay for a senior accountant able to fulfil the role of Treasurer for SWFRA is **£79,788** per annum on a full-time equivalent basis.

## 7. Area Managers and Principal Officers - Pay Differentials

7.1 The final element of this year's annual pay review for SWFRS looks at the current pay differential between Area Managers and Principal Officers, more specifically the narrow gap between total pay for Area Manager and the more senior non-uniformed rank of Assistant Chief Officer, which is at director level. As noted above, pay and allowances for Area Managers are set nationally and contained in the Grey Book.

7.2 SWFRS has grown concerned that by virtue of the high level of allowances for being on-call and continuous duty paid to Area Managers, the differential in pay between the two ranks is now insufficient. The issue has been exacerbated in recent years by annual Grey Book pay awards, which have typically been more generous than those awarded

to principal officers. The objective is therefore to increase the pay differential between the two ranks, which currently sits at just **£2,736** per annum, whilst at the same time retaining a fair and reasonable differential between the rank of ACO the next higher rank of ACFO.

- 7.3 Table 4 below sets out the effect of increasing the pay of ACO and ACFO in line with the recommendations in paragraph 3.2 **Table 1**. This would create a pay differential between the rank of ACO and Area Manager of £10,357 per annum ( 9.86%), (currently £2,736, 2.89%).

**TABLE 4**

Job Title	Current Total Pay (FTE) (£)	Proposed Total pay (£)	Proposed Pay Differentials Between ACFO, ACO and AM (£)	% Differentials between ACFO, ACO and AM
ACFO	118,201	127,435	22,299	21.21
ACO	97,515	105,136	10,357	9.86
Area Manager	94,779	94,779		

## 8. Recommendations to SWFRA

- 8.1 On the basis of the evidence drawn from the work we have carried out for the annual pay review at SWFRS, subject to affordability and with effect from 1 July 2023 we make the following for recommendations to SWFRA:

- a) Increase pay of the Chief Fire Officer to **£169,574** per annum (see **Table 1**);
- b) Adopt the new and simplified pay matrix (see **Table 2**);
- c) Align and link base pay of Corporate Heads of Service to base pay of Area Managers (see **Table 3**);.
- d) Increase pay of the Treasurer to **£79,788** (FTE) – (see **para 6**); and
- e) Consider the impact on pay differential between the Area Managers and the Principal

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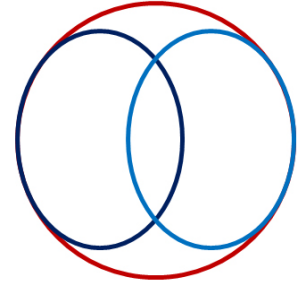
Officers if recommendation a) above is not adopted in full (see **Table 4**).

## 9. Summary

- 9.1 We believe that SWFRA would be best served by adopting the 5 recommendations set out in paragraph 8 of this report. We do, however, acknowledge that full implementation of the recommendations would result in a substantial additional costs to the SWFRS pay bill. It is therefore for the Fire Authority to decide what action, if any, to take on the recommendations..

Mark Fry and John Kirkwood

For and on behalf of Total Reward Projects Ltd



**Total Reward  
Projects Ltd**

**APPENDIX 2**

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' REMUNERATION**  
**SOUTH WALES**  
**FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

**January 2022**

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**Appendix A: Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Chief Fire Officer Pay**

**Appendix B: Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Employees (FTE)**

**Appendix C: Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Population Served**

**Appendix D: Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Size of Annual Revenue Budget**

**Appendix E: CFO pay level if ranked at point 7**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority (The Employer) has commissioned Total Reward Projects Ltd (TRP) to provide independent advice and support as it seeks to carry out a review of the current salaries of its principal officers: the permanent structure comprises Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Officer, two Assistant Chief Fire Officers and one Assistant Chief Officer. We were also asked to include the salary of the Treasurer, a statutory post that reports directly to the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority. The Employer particularly wants to know where current pay levels of the principal officers at SWFRS sit relative to a raft of comparator fire and rescue services across the UK.
- 1.2 TRP is a remuneration consultancy that works extensively across the public and not-for-profit sectors and has for the last 11 years carried out many comprehensive pay reviews for customers such as local authorities, fire and rescue services, housing associations and charities. Current long-standing customers include the London Legacy Development Corporation, Portsmouth City Council, Thurrock Council, Dover District Council, Southway Housing Trust, the Scout Association and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 TRP has reviewed comparator data that comprised a range of reward and work demand data for 25 fire and rescue services across the UK, including SWFRS. The pay data related exclusively to the current base pay of Chief Fire Officers in each of the 25 fire and rescue services, and work demand data in each organisation covering: the number of full-time equivalent employees; the size of population served; the number of fire stations and the size of the annual revenue budget.
- 2.2 We have looked at and analysed the data set and, in our view, they are sufficiently extensive, representative and reliable for us to use as soundly based evidence upon which to determine and comment on the pay levels of the principal officers at SWFRS.

## 3. Methodology

- 3.1 We first looked at the current pay of the 25 Chief Fire Officers and put them into a descending rank order according to pay value (see **Appendix A**) to establish the relative positions on what we see as the reward side of the equation. Here it can be seen that with current base pay of £139,831 per annum, the Chief Fire Officer of SWFRS is paid less well than 20 of his peers from the other 24 fire and rescue services captured in the data set.
- 3.2 The next step was to look at in turn the data captured for each of the 3 factors comprising the work demand elements for each fire service, viz: number of full-time equivalent employees; size of population served; and size of annual revenue budget. Starting with the size of workforce as measured by the number of full-time equivalent employees, we find that in respect of a descending rank order SWFRS has the fifth largest out of the 25 fire and rescue services (see **Appendix B**). We next looked at the size of population served by each fire and rescue service and found SWFRS to serve 1.55 million people, the ninth largest population served of the 25 (see **Appendix C**). Finally, we looked at the size of each annual revenue budget, and with a revenue budget of £74.88 million SWFRS stands as eighth largest of the 25 (see **Appendix D**).
- 3.3 We next took the outcomes of each of the 3 work demand factors and combined them to produce an aggregated rank order position for SWFRS and found that it was seventh highest overall. From this finding we were then able to read across into the rank order of pay values to align the overall work demand outcome with the reward rank order. We therefore determined that pay for the Chief Fire Officer at SWFRS should be placed in seventh place in the pay value rank order. To achieve this objective we set pay the Chief Fire Officer of

SWFRS at the midpoint value between the Chief Fire Officer of Cleveland FRS with current pay of £162,088 per annum, which sits in sixth place in the pay rank order, and the Chief Fire Officer of Hampshire FRS with pay of £161,521 per annum, which sits in eighth place (see **Appendix E**). This produces an assessed pay value of £161,805 per annum if ranked at point 7.

- 3.4 Having determined the annual salary of the Chief Fire Officer drawn from the pay data available to us, we were then able to calculate the pay of the other principal officers. This was made possible because of the formulaic pay matrix adopted by South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority as set out in its Annual Pay Policy Statement. Set out below in **Table 1** are the current base pay levels of each principal officer rank and in column 3 the base pay derived from the comparator data used in this report.

**TABLE 1**

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>SWFRS Current Base Pay (FTE)  (£)</b>	<b>SWFRS Based on Comparator Pay Data  (£)</b>
<b>CFO</b>	139,831	161,805
<b>DCFO</b>	111,865 (80% of CFO)	129,444
<b>DCO</b>	106,484 (95.19% of DCFO)	123,218
<b>ACFO</b>	105,082 (75.15% of CFO)	121,596
<b>ACO</b>	86,693 (82.5% of ACFO)	100,308
<b>Treasurer</b>	61,453 (70.88% of ACO)	71,098



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#### 4. Summary

- 4.1 On the basis of the evidence drawn from the reward and work demand data used in this report, we conclude that the current pay levels of the principal officers at SWFRS are significantly out of kilter when compared with other fire and rescue services across the UK.
- 4.2 We believe that South Wales Fire Authority would therefore be best served by reviewing the pay levels of all principal officer ranks, though we realise and acknowledge that the outcome of any such review is likely to result in a substantial revalorisation of current base pay. It is therefore for the Fire Authority to decide what action, if any, to take in light of the findings set out in this report.

Mark Fry and John Kirkwood

For and on behalf of Total Reward Projects Ltd

### Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Chief Fire Officer Pay

Fire & Rescue Service	CFO Pay
London	£223,366.00
West Midlands	£178,654.00
Scotland	£170,000.00
West Yorkshire	£169,579.00
Greater Manchester	£164,020.63
Cleveland	£162,088.00
Hampshire	£161,521.00
Nottinghamshire	£160,323.00
Kent	£157,904.00
South Yorkshire	£157,000.00
Bedfordshire	£154,079.00
Cheshire	£153,860.00
Derbyshire	£152,493.00
Mid & West Wales	£152,371.00
East Sussex	£150,150.00
Humberside	£149,548.00
Lancashire	£149,297.00
Avon	£146,047.00
North Wales	£141,060.00
Leicestershire	£139,999.00
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>£139,831.00</b>
Hertfordshire	£135,252.00
N Ireland	£135,000.00
Hereford & Worcester	£133,668.00
Surrey	£126,299.00

## Appendix B

### Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Employees (Full Time Equivalent)

<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Service</b>	<b>Employees FTE)</b>
Scotland	7831
London	5708
N Ireland	1990
West Midlands	1832
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>1714</b>
Greater Manchester	1608
Kent	1,591
Hampshire	1386
Mid & West Wales	1350
West Yorkshire	1309
Lancashire	1106
Humberside	994
North Wales	857
South Yorkshire	852
Hertfordshire	832
Avon	825
Derbyshire	782
East Sussex	777
Cheshire	723
Nottinghamshire	720
Surrey	644
Leicestershire	601
Hereford & Worcester	583
Bedfordshire	566
Cleveland	517

### Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Size of Population Served

Fire & Rescue Service	Population Served
London	9.00m
Scotland	5.46m
West Midlands	2.93m
Greater Manchester	2.84m
West Yorkshire	2.34m
N Ireland	1.89m
Hampshire	1.85m
Kent	1.85m
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>1.55m</b>
Lancashire	1.51m
South Yorkshire	1.41m
Hertfordshire	1.19m
Surrey	1.19m
Nottinghamshire	1.17m
Avon	1.16m
Leicestershire	1.10m
Cheshire	1.06m
Derbyshire	1.06m
Humberside	0.93m
Mid & West Wales	0.91m
East Sussex	0.85m
Hereford & Worcester	0.79m
Bedfordshire	0.68m
North Wales	0.67m
Cleveland	0.57m

## Appendix D

## Fire and Rescue Services in Rank Order by Size of Annual Revenue Budget

Service	Revenue Budget
London	£ 401.50m
Scotland	£ 276.00m
West Midlands	£ 101.75m
Greater Manchester	£ 94.50m
West Yorkshire	£ 87.62m
Hampshire	£ 81.07m
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>£ 74.88m</b>
Kent	£ 71.57m
Lancashire	£ 58.20m
South Yorkshire	£ 54.85m
Mid & West Wales	£ 52.68m
Avon	£ 51.06m
Cheshire	£ 46.21m
Nottinghamshire	£ 45.30m
Hertfordshire	£ 43.03m (1)
Humberside	£ 45.16m
East Sussex	£ 40.70m
Leicestershire	£ 40.21m
Derbyshire	£ 39.50m
North Wales	£ 35.94m
Hereford & Worcester	£ 35.80m
Surrey	£ 33.80m (1)
Bedfordshire	£ 31.06m
Cleveland	£ 26.99m

### CFO pay level if ranked at 7

Service	CFO Salary
London	£223,366.00
West Midlands	£178,654.00
Scotland	£170,000.00
West Yorkshire	£169,579.00
Greater Manchester	£164, 020.63
Cleveland	£162,088.00
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>£161, 805.00</b>
Hampshire	£161, 521.00
Nottinghamshire	£160,323.00
Kent	£157,904.00
South Yorkshire	£157,000.00
Bedfordshire	£154,079.00
Cheshire	£153,860.00
Derbyshire	£152,493.00
Mid & West Wales	£152,371.00
East Sussex	£150,150.00
Humberside	£149,548.00
Lancashire	£149,297.00
Avon	£146,047.00
North Wales	£141,060.00
Leicestershire	£139,999.00
Hertfordshire	£135,252.00
N Ireland	£135,000.00
Hereford & Worcester	£133,668.00
Surrey	£126,299.00

AGENDA ITEM NO 7

**Reports for Information**

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

AGENDA ITEM NO 7.i  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE T/HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY

**2022/23 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE TREASURER  
PRESENTING OFFICER LISA MULLAN, T/HEAD OF FINANCE,  
PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY

**SUMMARY**

To review the treasury management activities for the year ending 31 March 2022, in accordance with the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Fire & Rescue Authority;

- note the annual treasury management review data for 2022/23, and
- approve the actual prudential and treasury indicators set therein

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 There is a statutory and regulatory obligation for the Authority to comply with the reporting requirements detailed in Appendix 1. An 'Annual Treasury Management Review Report' is required to be presented to full Authority as soon after the close of the financial year as is practicable or by the 30 September at the latest. The purpose of this is to compare the actual position to the treasury management strategy (TMSS) set in advance of the year to confirm or otherwise, compliance and assess performance.

**2. ISSUE**

- 2.1 Effective treasury management can be measured by its budget impact i.e financing costs and investment income, organisational solvency and cash flow.
- 2.2 The Authority can receive bank deposits in excess of £90 million any one financial year and monthly bank payments can total as much as 8 million and is dependant on a number of factors. The timing of these cash flows can be uncertain and as such, it is imperative that the flow of cash in and out of Authority bank accounts is managed to support budget strategies and minimise risk.

- 2.3 Appendix 1 provides Members with detail on the capital investment activity for the year, financing and the impact on the Authority's indebtedness, i.e. Capital Financing Requirement. Also detailed is year end treasury position and prudential / treasury indicators.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Borrowing Outturn

The Authority maintains a competitive, average debt book rate of approx 3.80% which is marginally lower than 2021/22 3.83%. Interest on borrowing is £1.1 and £1 million for 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively. The current borrowing strategy is to utilise the Authority's cash reserves in the first instance and to undertake external borrowing for long term investment.

#### 3.2 Investment Outturn

There were no investments made during the year as cash surpluses were used to fund capital spending. Returns were significantly better 2022/23 at £260k in comparison with £10k the previous year and links with steadily increasing bank rate throughout the financial period.

### 4. EQUALITY RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 There are no equality implications resulting directly from this report.

### 5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That the Fire & Rescue Authority note the annual treasury management review for 2022/23 and approve the actual prudential and treasury indicators set therein.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Background papers:</b>
Lisa Mullan T/Head of Finance, Procurement & Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CIPFA Code Treasury Management</li> <li>- CIPFA Prudential Code</li> <li>- Treasury Management Strategy</li> <li>- Capital Outturn Report</li> <li>- Annual statement of Account</li> <li>- Treasury Management Practices (TMP's)</li> </ul>

# Annual Treasury Management Review

## 2022/23

### Purpose

This Authority is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2022/23. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, (the Code), and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, (the Prudential Code).

During 2022/23 the full Authority received the following reports:

- an annual treasury management strategy in advance of the year reported to Fire Authority 28 March 2022
- a mid-year treasury update report reported to Fire Authority 19 December 2022
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy, (this report)

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is, therefore, important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Authority's policies previously approved by members.

This Authority confirms that it has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to all of the above treasury management reports by the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Scrutiny / Committee before they were reported to the full Authority.

### Executive Summary

During 2022/23, the Authority complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The Treasurer also confirms that no new borrowing was undertaken in the year and the statutory borrowing limit, (the authorised limit), was not breached.

The financial year 2022/23 saw an increase in bank rates from 0.75% at the start to 4.25% at the end of the financial year. Investment rates however were slow to catch up and consequently returns remained relatively low. The treasury strategy of utilising internal borrowing in the short term was maintained to avoid the cost of carry on borrowing.

## Introduction and Background

This report summarises the following:-

- Summary position
- Capital activity during the year;
- Impact of this activity on the Authority's underlying indebtedness, (the Capital Financing Requirement);
- The actual prudential and treasury indicators;
- Overall treasury position identifying how the Authority has borrowed in relation to this indebtedness, and the impact on investment balances;

## Summary Position

<b>Capital, Financing &amp; Prudential Indicators</b>	<b>2021/22 Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Budget</b>
Opening CFR	41,630	40,226	41,541
			0
<b>Capital Spending</b>	<b>2,443</b>	<b>7,857</b>	<b>10,338</b>
			0
CERA	-200	-200	-250
Capital Receipts	-189	-24	0
Capital Grant	-392	-1,424	-1,143
Revenue Reserves	0	0	0
<b>Borrowing requirement for the year</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>6,209</b>	<b>8,945</b>
			0
<b>Repayment of Debt</b>			0
MRP	-2,701	-3,212	-3,497
MRP on PFI	-365	-419	-419
			0
<b>Closing CFR</b>	<b>40,226</b>	<b>42,805</b>	<b>46,571</b>
			0
Movement in closing CFR	-1,404	2,578	5,030
			0
Gross borrowing at start of year	29,062	28,147	28,147
New borrowing	0	0	5,000
Loan repayments	-916	-1,409	-1,409
Gross borrowing at end of year	28,147	26,738	31,738
			0
Other long term liabilities i.e. pfi and leases	4,097	3,679	3,679
			0
Gross Debt	32,244	30,416	35,416
			0
<b>Under/Over borrowed (Gross debt vs CFR)</b>	<b>7,983</b>	<b>12,388</b>	<b>11,154</b>
			0
Movement in OLTL from year to year	-365	-419	-419

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## The Authority's Capital Expenditure and Financing

The Authority undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- Financed immediately through the application of revenue resources i.e. capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc., which have no impact on the Authority's borrowing need; or
- If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources immediately, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

Capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table above shows the actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

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## The Authority's Overall Borrowing Need

The Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and is a gauge of the Authority's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Authority and resources used to pay for the capital spending. It represents the 2022/23 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Part of the Authority's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the Finance team organises the Authority's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies such as the Public Works Loan Board [PWLb], or as in 2022/23, utilising temporary cash resources from within the Authority.

The Authority's CFR is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Authority is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), to reduce the CFR and is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need.

The CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, i.e. capital receipts; or
- charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

The Authority's 2022/23 MRP Policy, as required by Welsh Government Guidance, was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2022/23.

The Authority's CFR for the year is shown in the table above, and represents a key prudential indicator. It includes PFI on the balance sheet, which increases the Authority's borrowing need although no borrowing is required as a borrowing facility is included in the contract.

Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

In order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent and are only for a capital purpose, the Authority should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total CFR in the preceding year (2021/22) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2022/23) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Authority is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. The table above highlights the Authority's gross borrowing position against the CFR and that the Authority has complied with this prudential indicator.

The authorised limit is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Authority does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2022/23 the Authority has maintained gross borrowing within its authorised limit.

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The operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Authority during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream - this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, i.e. borrowing and other long term obligations net of investment income, against the net revenue stream. The below table shows the financing costs are less than anticipated as a result of no new borrowing being taken in the year.

	2022/23 £000's
Authorised limit	48,000
Maximum gross borrowing position during the year	28,146
Operational boundary	46,000
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream estimate	6.85%
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream actual	6.10%

## Treasury Position as of 31st March 2022

The Authority's treasury management debt and investment position is organised by the finance team to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through member reporting detailed in the summary, and through officer activity detailed in the Authority's Treasury Management Practices. At the end of 2022/23 the Authority's treasury, (excluding borrowing by PFI and finance leases), position was as follows:

<b>Borrowing</b>	<b>22/23</b>
<u>PWLB</u>	
Opening Principal	28,138,845
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	-401,899
Maturity Principal Repaid	-1,000,000
Closing Principal	26,736,946
<u>Salix</u>	
Opening Principal	6,917
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	0
Maturity Principal Repaid	-6,917
Closing Principal	0
<b>Total</b>	
Opening Principal	<b>28,145,762</b>
New Borrowing	0
EIP Principal Repaid	-401,899
Maturity Principal Repaid	-1,006,917
Closing Principal	<b>26,736,946</b>
<b>Total Principal paid</b>	<b>-1,408,816</b>

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The maturity structure of the debt portfolio as of 31 March 2022, was as follows:

<b>Maturing Within</b>	<b>PWLB Principal £</b>	<b>Average Rate</b>	<b>Non-PWLB</b>	<b>Total</b>
Less than 1 year	1,382,819	4.44	0	1,382,819
over 1 not over 2 years	1,394,739	4.45	0	1,394,739
over 2 not over 5 years	4,525,218	4.55	0	4,525,218
over 5 not over 10 years	9,334,169	3.58	0	9,334,169
over 10 not over 15 years	10,100,000	3.50	0	10,100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,736,946</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26,736,946</b>

The Authority held a balance of £2,163,212 of instant cash with our contracted bankers as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

There have been no changes to the Authority's risk appetite and no debt re-scheduling during the year as the average debt rate remains low at 3.80%.

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

AGENDA ITEM NO 7.ii  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER -  
TECHNICAL SERVICES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

**HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE  
OFFICER – TECHNICAL SERVICES  
REPORT PRESENTED BY WATCH MANAGER MIKE NASH

**SUMMARY**

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing report for 22/23 provides a summary of the key activities undertaken and the performance of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service in the areas of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members accept the report on the performance of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service in the areas of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

Members note the overall success achieved during 2022/2023 in the delivery of an environment that is supportive of the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff.

Members endorse and support the range of initiatives underway to proactively and reactively support the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of staff employed by South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The annual report offers a common format to review performance of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service over a five year period. It also provides data to assist with the development of safety policies and procedures.
- 1.2 The Health and Safety performance of the Service is monitored by the enforcing authority, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other external agencies.

- 1.3 Although the accident and near miss statistics provide a reactive measure, the data enables Service Managers to identify trends, establish additional control measures and identify opportunities for improvement.

## **2. ISSUE**

- 2.1 The Health and Safety report covers the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report indicates statistical returns on accidents and injuries during this period. Additionally, the report indicates initiatives undertaken to ensure legal compliance and the creation as far as reasonably practicable of a safe working environment for the Service's personnel.
- 2.2 There were 9 Reports of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) during the year.
- 2.3 The total number of reported accidents for 2022/2023 has increased from the previous year by 14 from 44 to 58.
- 2.4 The number of injuries which have resulted in an individual being off work for over 7 days in 2022/2023 has increased from 9 to 14 with a total of 913 days being lost as a consequence. 235 of the 913 days are attributed to one individual.
- 2.5 There were 0 major injuries reported for the period of 2022/2023.
- 2.6 The total number of days lost in 2022/2023 due to accidents was 913. This is an increase on the previous year of 529 days.
- 2.7 The number of near miss reports has increased from 35 in 2021/2022 to 44 in 2022/2023.
- 2.8 All workplace inspections for 2022/2023 were conducted in accordance with Service Policy.
- 2.9 The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) work stream on Health and Safety has enabled us to continue to benchmark performance across Wales.
- 2.10 South Wales Fire and Rescue Service continue to be proactive in supporting a variety of Health and Wellbeing initiatives targeted towards addressing mental health challenges in the workplace.
- 2.11 Positive Representative Body consultation and engagement are undertaken via the Health and Safety Committee which meets quarterly.

Alongside a quarterly meeting of the Operations Health and Safety Reps Meeting.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes
Welsh Language	Yes
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	Yes
Socio Economic Duty	Yes
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	Yes
Consultation and Communications	Yes
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	Yes

#### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	Yes
Financial	Yes
Procurement	Yes
Corporate Risk	Yes
Information Management	Yes
Data Protection / Privacy	Yes
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Yes
Governance & Audit	Yes
Service Policy	Yes
National Policy	Yes

#### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	Yes/No*
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	Yes
Service Delivery	Yes
Procurement	Yes
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes/No*

### 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Members accept the report on the performance of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service in the areas of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

- 7.2 Members note the overall success achieved during 2022/2023 in the delivery of an environment that is supportive of the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff.
- 7.3 Members endorse and support the range of initiatives underway to proactively and reactively support the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of staff employed by South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	T/ACFO Garry Davies Director of Technical Services
<b>Background Papers</b>	Appendix 1 – Annual Report 2022-2023



**Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub**  
De Cymru

South Wales  
**Fire and Rescue Service**

## APPENDIX 1

# Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2022-23



Summary Statement from Director

The annual report involves the years 2022 to 2023 and includes evidence to support the services commitments towards Wellbeing, Health and Safety.

The continued support of the Fire Authority members has enabled us to invest in appliances, equipment and training that underpin our Safe Service delivery.

The HSW Team will strive to identify opportunities to evolve, ensuring we reach our end users and continue the work we have completed in recent years looking at change around Health Safety and Wellbeing to move in a positive direction.

In relation to accidents and investigation, we are committed to investigating all Injuries and Near Misses, with a view to delivering timely recommendations, to mitigate any future issues. We have adapted our accident reporting procedures to streamline the process to achieve outcomes within reduced timelines.

I would like to thank all who have participated in the Health and Safety Committee, we have worked closely with Representative Bodies to ensure the safety of all staff. The Service is fully committed to the Fire Brigades Union campaign around contaminants and continues to seek ways to reduce risk to our firefighters, through innovation and improvement.

Our risk assessments across our fifty-one buildings that form South Wales Fire & Rescue Service ensure that we provide a safe place to work for all our employees. Additionally, with continued support we provide the right equipment to train physically and against scenarios that maybe faced by our crews which ensures that we are prepared to protect the communities we serve when called upon.

I am extremely proud of the performance of the Service in continuing to improve our Health, Safety and wellbeing arrangements and the continuous drive to serve our communities in the safest way.



Temporary Assistant Chief  
Fire Officer Garry Davies –  
Director of Technical  
Services

**Your Health Safety and Wellbeing Team**



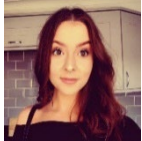
Martin Hole  
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager



Hannah Owen  
Assistant Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager



Joanna Wilcox  
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Officer



Jessica Davies  
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Officer



Loraine Dowsett  
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Administrator



Mike Nash  
T/Watch Manager

## Executive Summary

The South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Team, submit to the Fire Authority on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing from across the organisation. This report is a summary of Health and Safety activities and performance measures from across the Service for the period of April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023.

The Health and Safety performance of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service continues to be of a high standard and the number of accidents remains at a low level.

In addition to the provision of statistical information, the report contains reference to other work streams within the Health and Safety discipline. Equally to historic years, challenges have been placed upon the HSW Team, which has determined the path taken to ensure a consistent and robust approach to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of everyone from across the Service. The HSW Team have continued to progress and

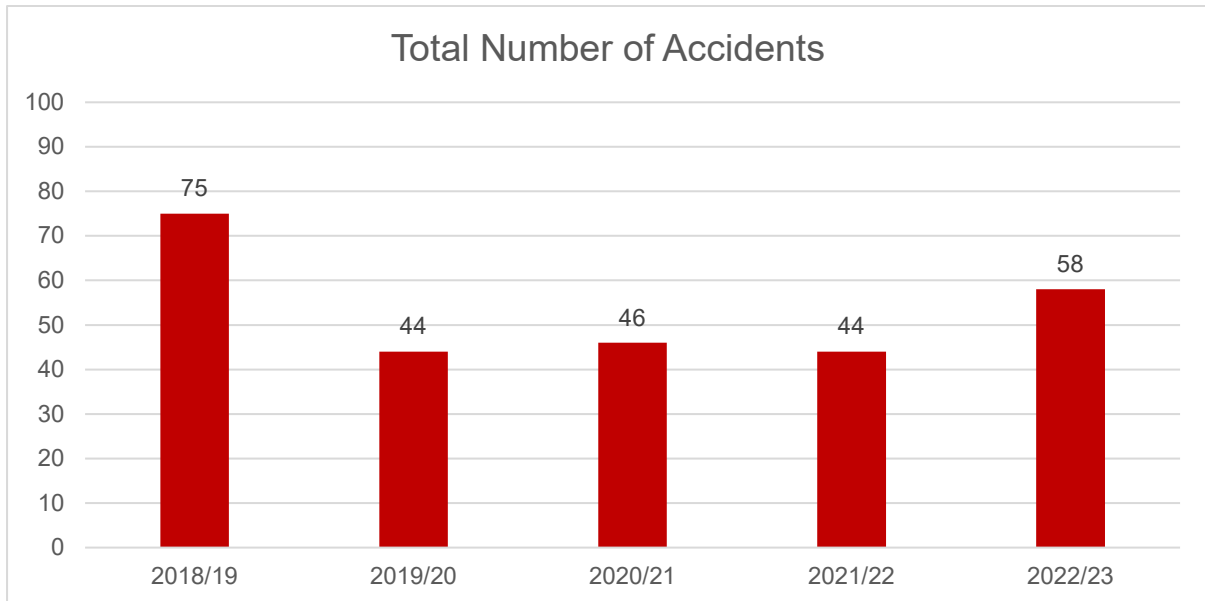
adapt work streams to accommodate new challenges and build stronger and more resilient working relations with other internal departments.

Continuous improvement and upskilling in specialist areas is at the forefront of what the HSW Team continues to deliver, the team has provided internal training on procedures and processes which effect the wider organisation. Confirming a streamlined approach to new ways of working, collaborating with stakeholders for best practice, industry standards and expectations.



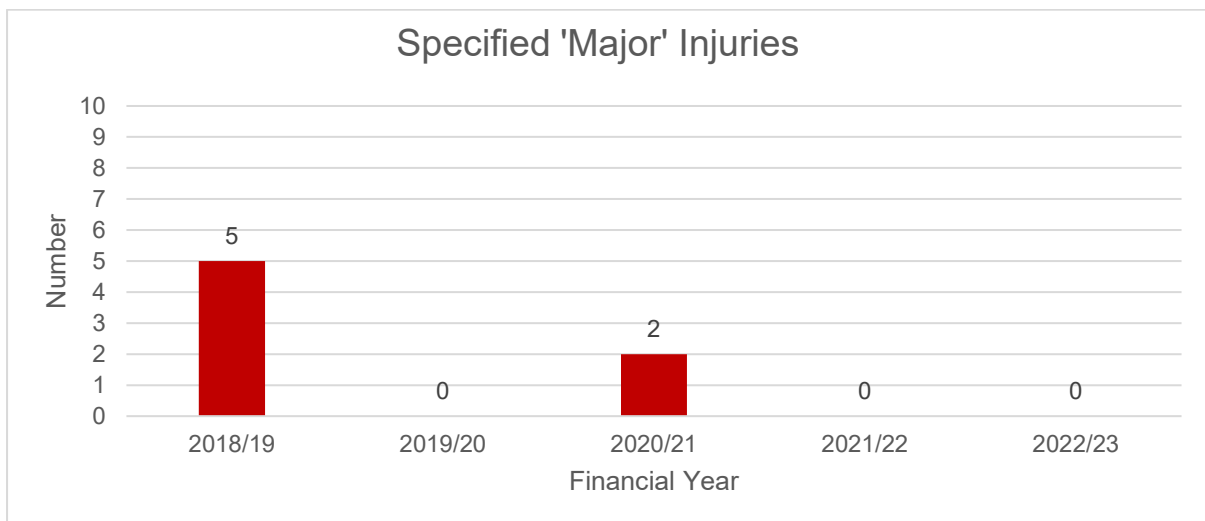


## Accident and Injury Figures

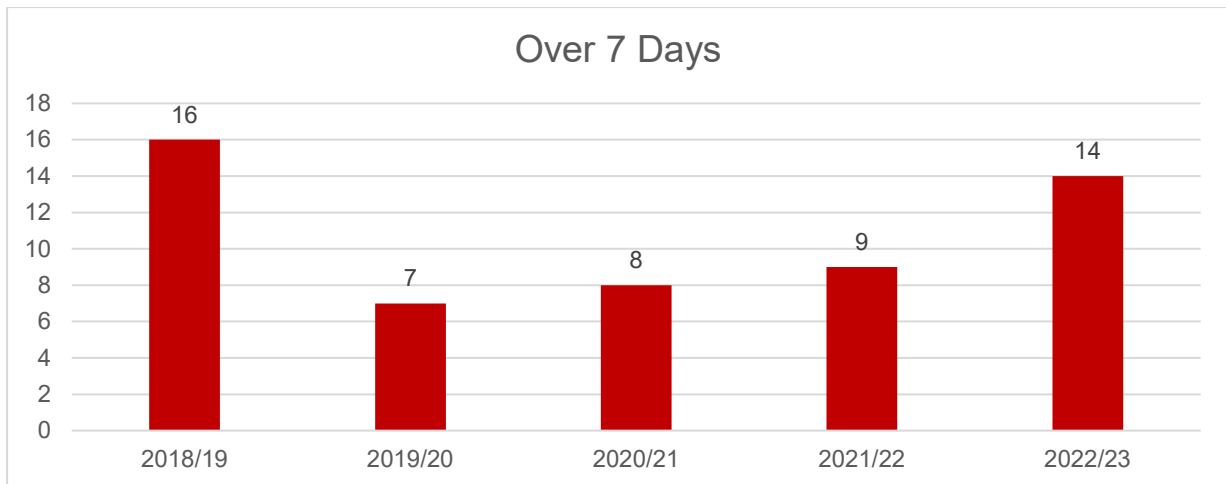


During 2022-23 there have been a total of 58 recorded accidents on duty, this is an increase of 14 reports in comparison with the previous year.

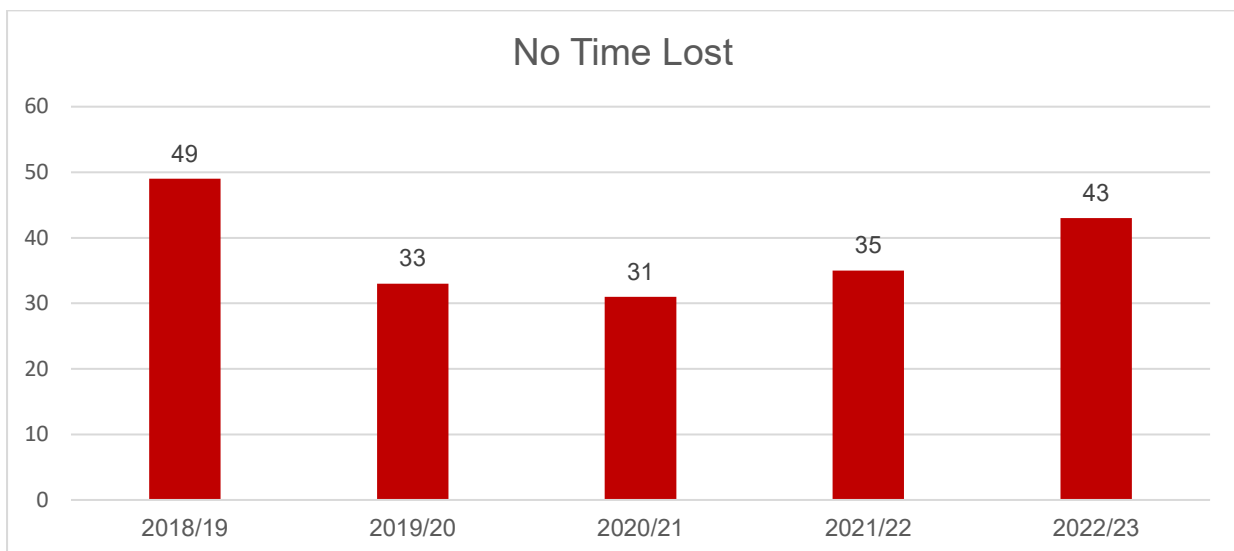
## Time Lost Categories



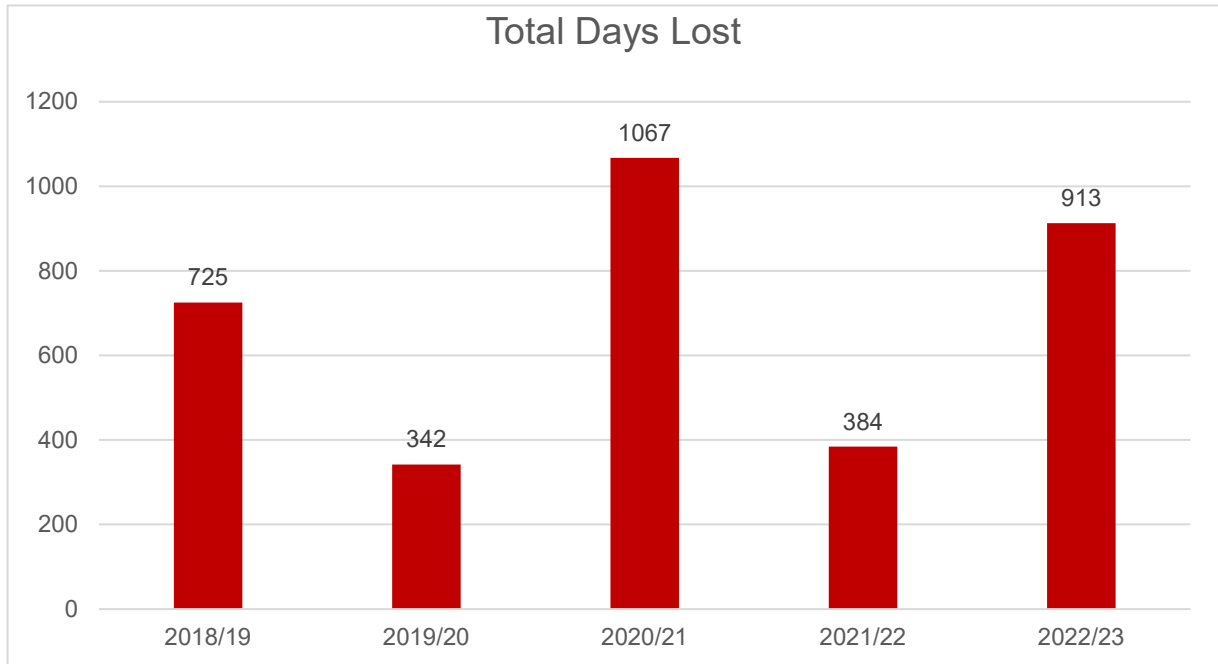
There have been no Specified Injuries (Major) reports for 2022-23.



During 2022-23 there have been 14 'Over 7 Days' injuries which have subsequently been reported to the HSE under RIDDOR. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the largest amount of time lost attributed to one individual was 235 days. This relates to an injury sustained whilst undertaking BA Training. It is important to note that six individuals who sustained an injury during 2022-23, remain on sickness absence following 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.



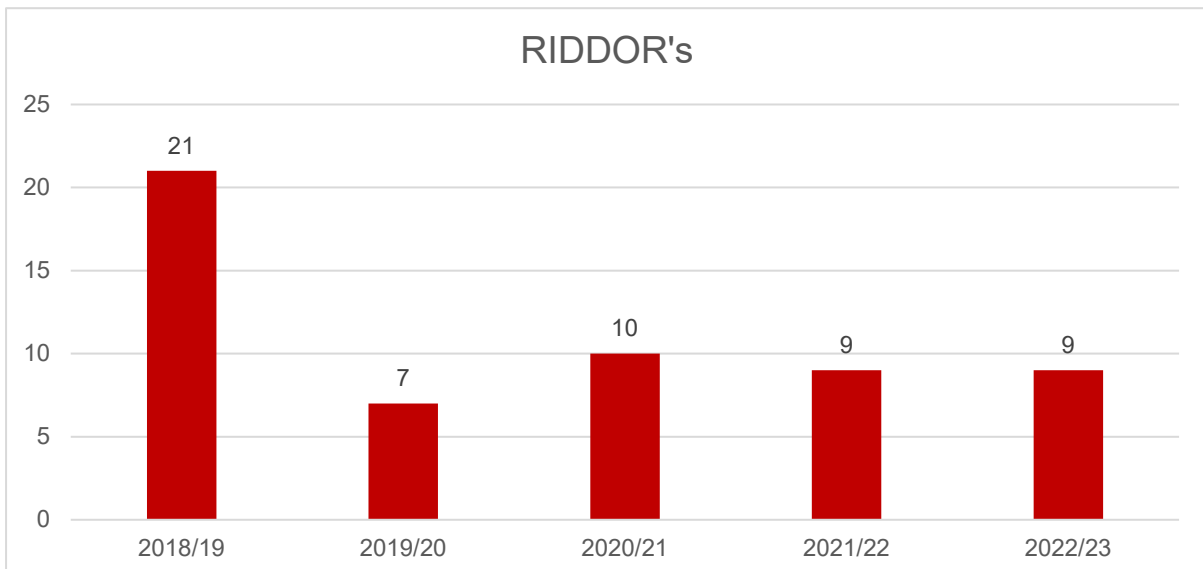
The vast majority of accidents (74%) resulted in no time being lost from work, this suggests that most injuries sustained by staff were minor in nature and did not impact on the individual's ability to carry out their duties as normal.



*\*Between 1st April and 31st March of each financial year for reporting and comparative purposes.*

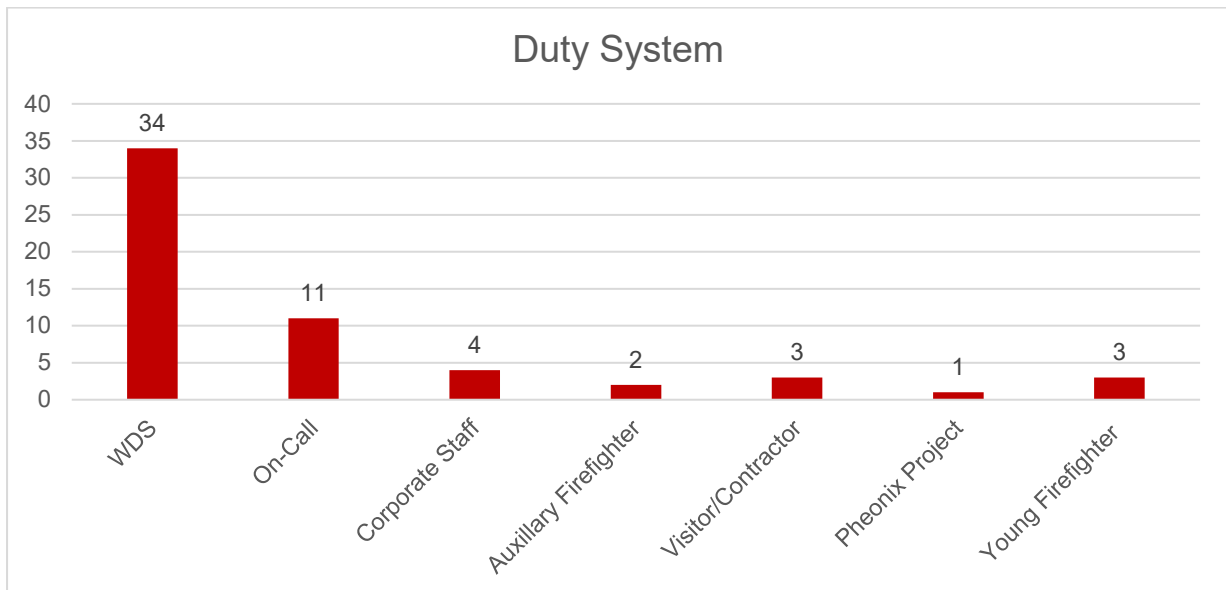
The total days lost in this period stands at 913. This is an increase of 50% in comparison to the previous reporting year. In this period 5 of the reported injuries accounted for individuals being absent from work for more than 100 days with minor injuries such as sprains/strains.

### Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

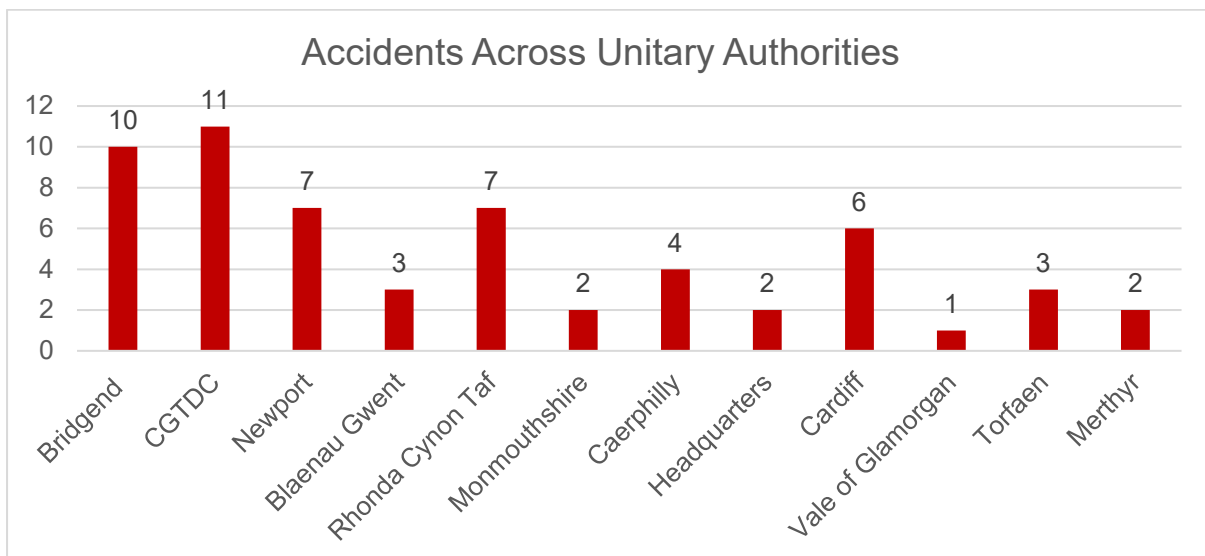


A total of 9 RIDDOR reports have been submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for 2022-23, maintaining our compliance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. It should be noted that even

though there are 14 'over 7 day' sickness absences as a result of injuries sustained at work, 5 of the reports were not reportable under RIDDOR guidelines.

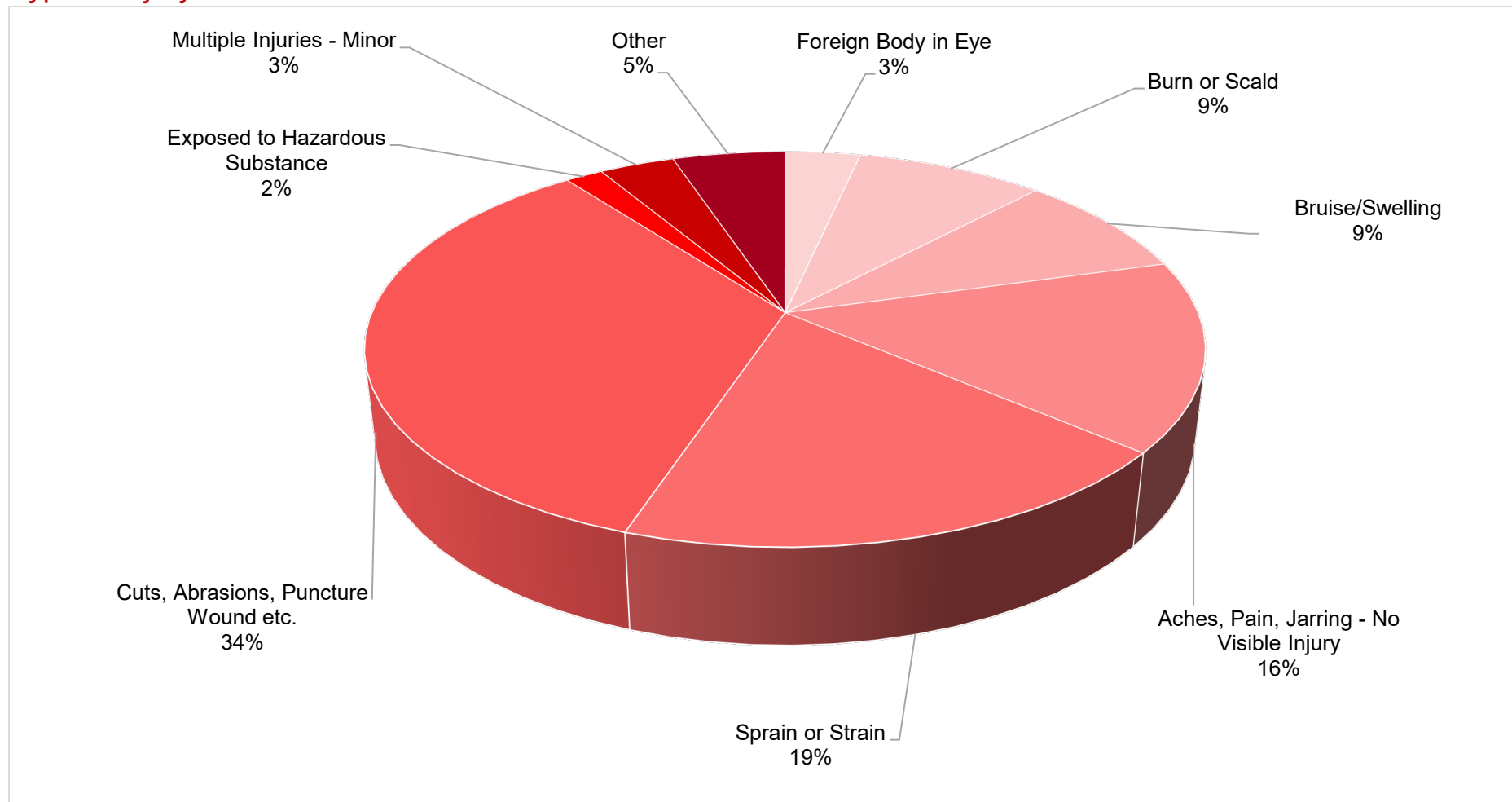


Most accidents involved Wholetime (WDS) personnel, followed by On-Call personnel and Corporate staff.



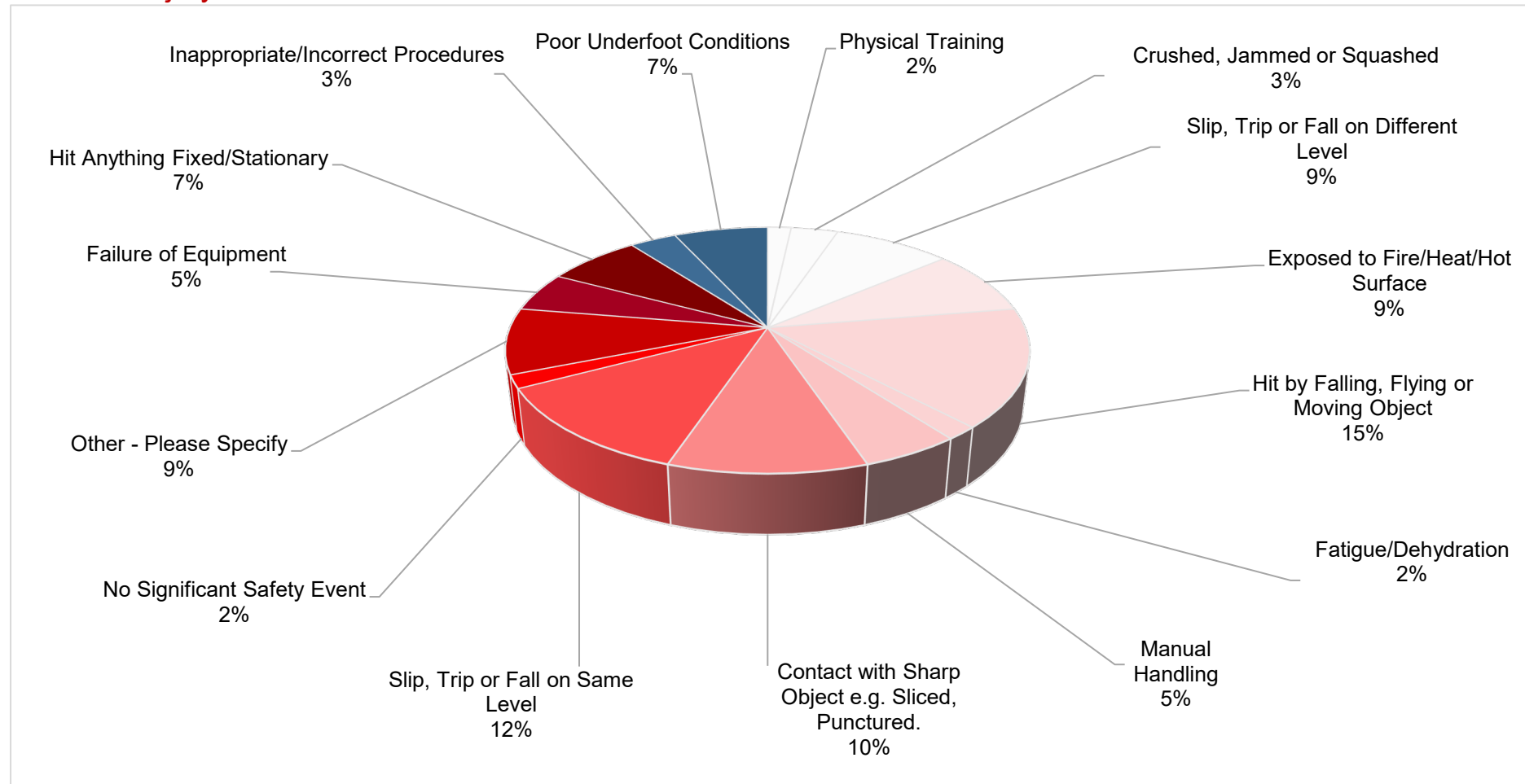
For the purposes of this report chart, CGTDC and Headquarters are categorised separately and are not recorded under their unitary authorities. The area with the highest number of accidents reported is CGTDC, followed closely by Bridgend UA.

## Type of Injury

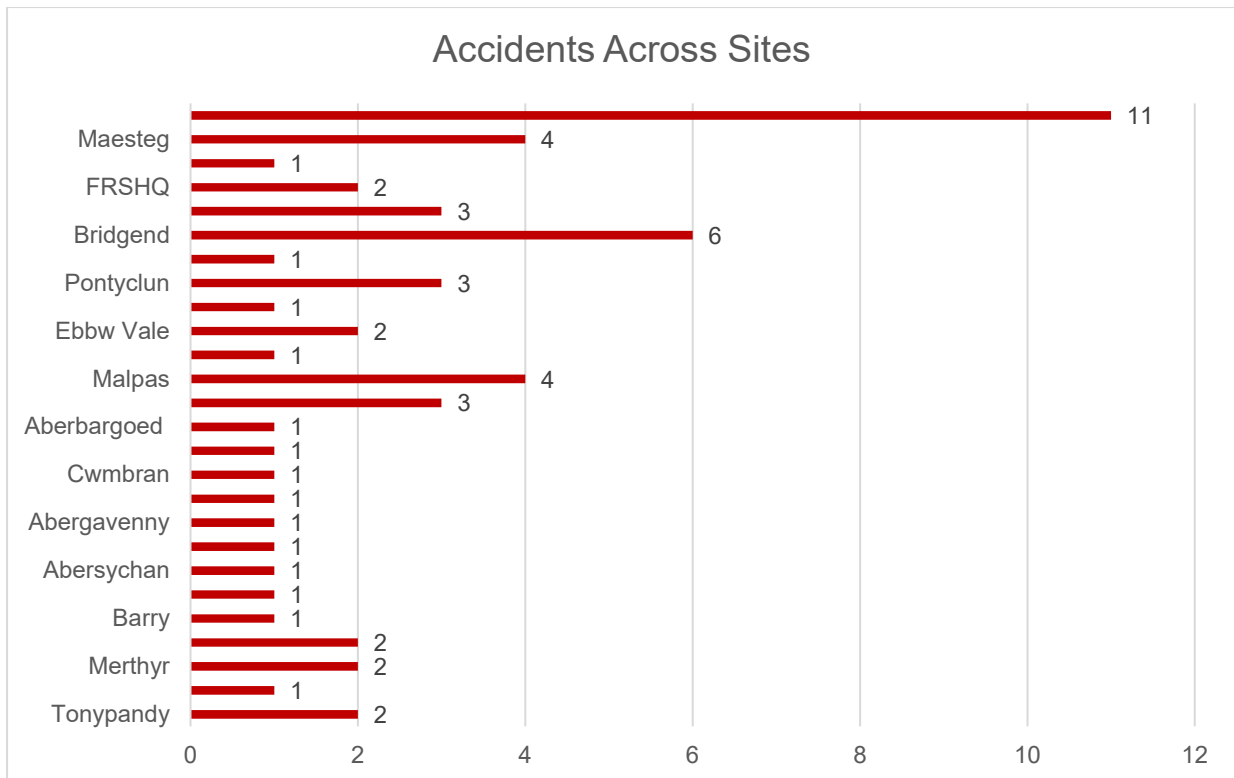


The most common type of injury is 'Cuts, Abrasions, Puncture Wound etc.' with 34% of injuries falling under this category. This is followed by 'Sprain or Strain' with 19% and 'Aches, Pain, Jarring – No Visible Injury' with 16%.

## Cause of Injury

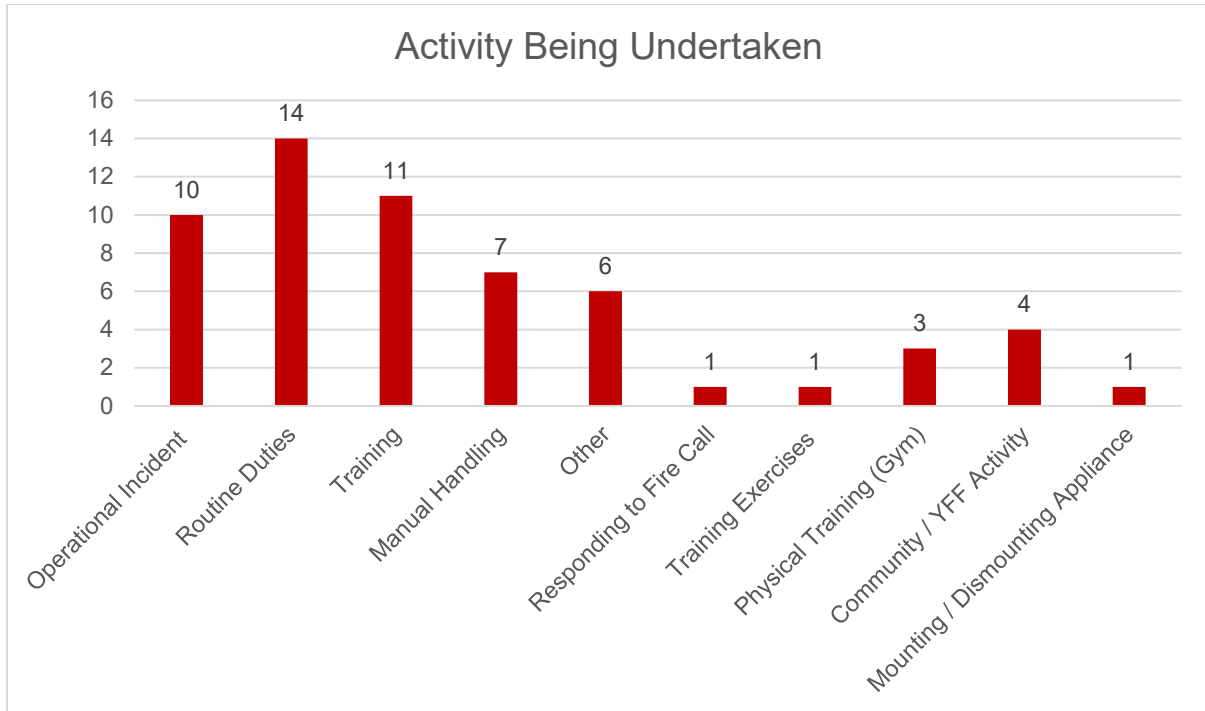


The largest immediate cause of injuries for 2022-23 is 'Hit by Falling, Flying or Moving Object' with 15%, closely followed by Slip, Trip or Fall on Same Level with 12%. Statistics from the HSE show slipping and tripping to be the single most common cause of major injury in UK workplaces and was the most common cause of injuries for SWFRS for 2021-22.

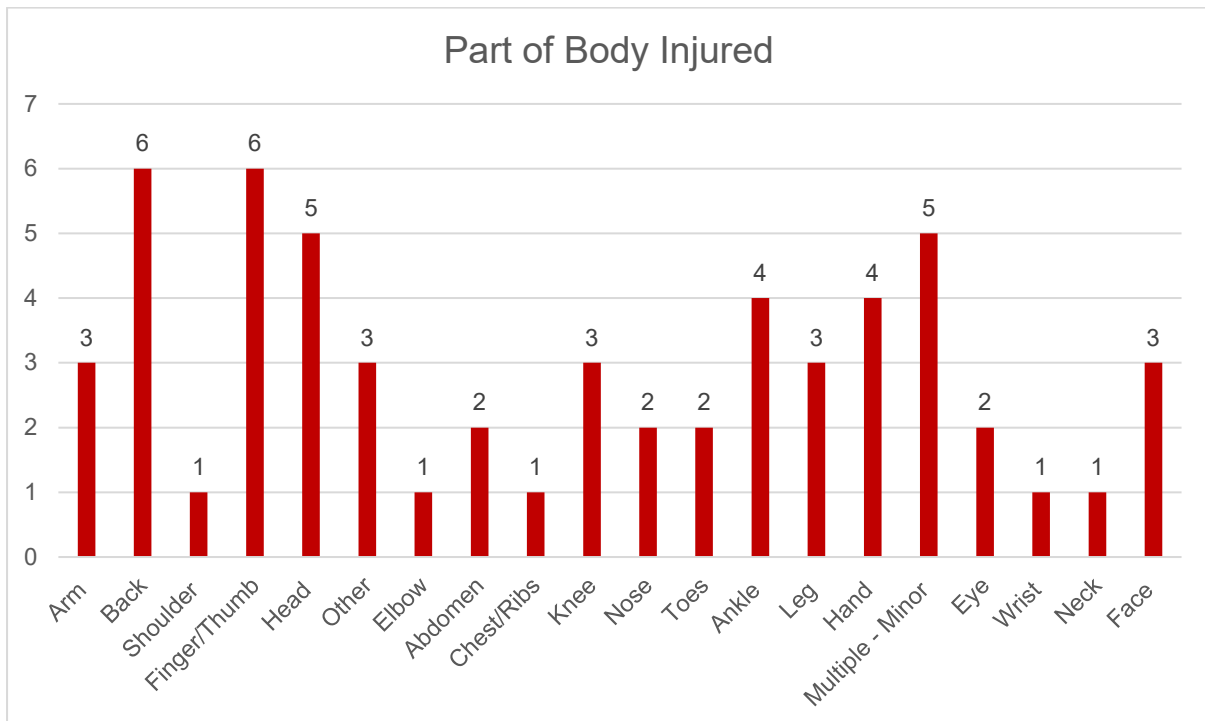


The largest number of accidents took place in Cardiff Gate Training and Development centre. Two of these accidents involved Auxiliary Firefighters, three involved Wholetime personnel, five involved RDS recruits, and the remaining incident involved a member of the BA Department who was servicing BA equipment on site at the time.

The remaining locations, except for FSHQ, are not necessarily the exact location of where the accident took place. They show which station the injured person is based at.



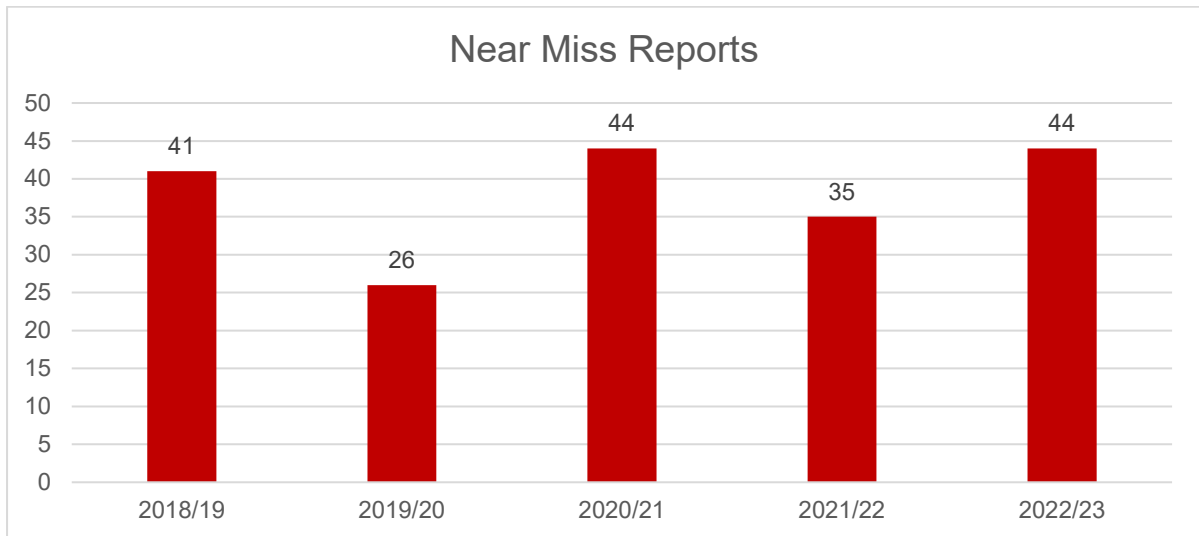
Similarly, to previous reporting years, most accidents do not take place at the incident ground but rather during other activities i.e., routine duties on station, training etc.



For 2022/23 the most affected area of the body was the upper body i.e., ‘Back / Head / Arm / Hands’ with injuries such as muscular sprains, aches and pains and minor burns/Reddening of the skin.

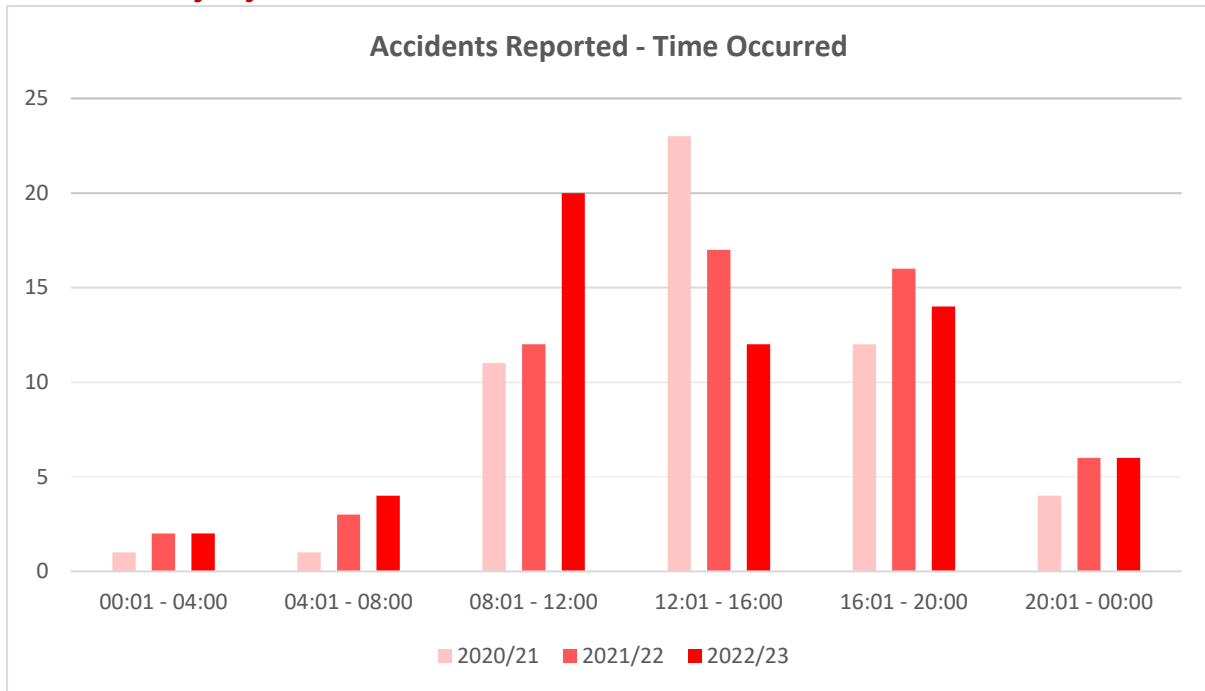


## Near Misses

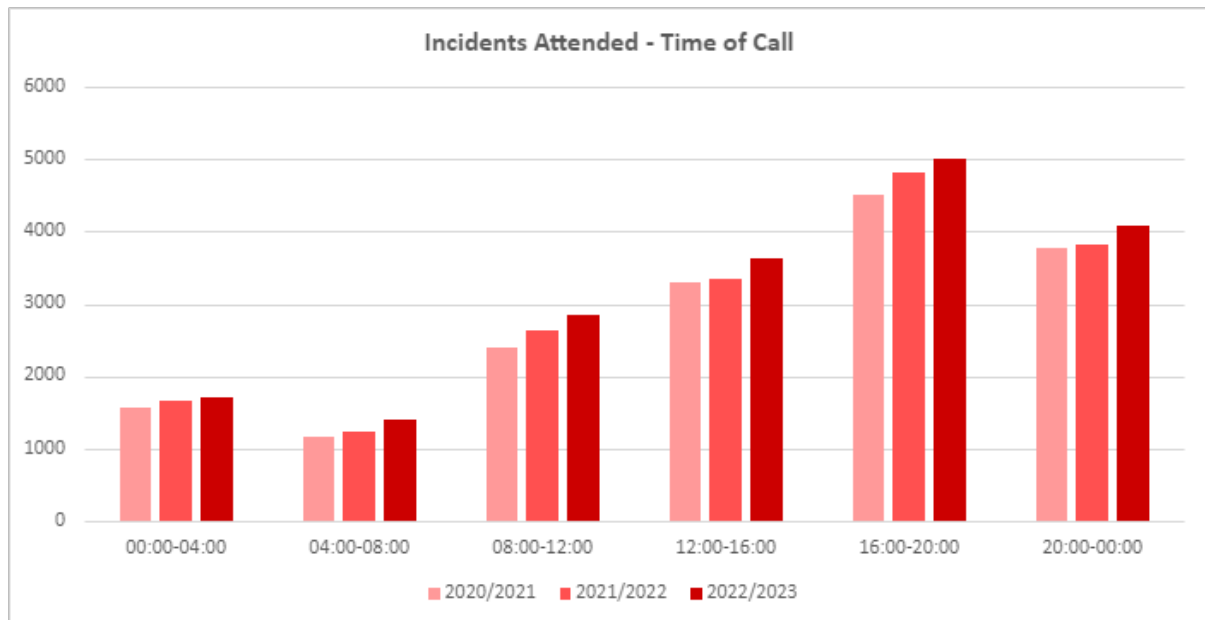


We received a total of 44 near miss reports during this period, the majority of near misses were reported online via our 24/7 support desk which has proved to be an efficient reporting tool. We will continue to promote near miss reporting across the Service as it remains an effective mechanism for improving safety and reducing the likelihood of accident and injury.

## Time of Injury



The above chart identifies the time of day in which we are most likely to receive an injury report. The below chart offers a comparison looking at the time of day we receive calls to allow identification between increased calls and increased accidents. The three-year comparison figures for both charts shows an increase in injuries and incidents between the hours of 08:00 hrs and 00:00 hrs.



## Insurance Update

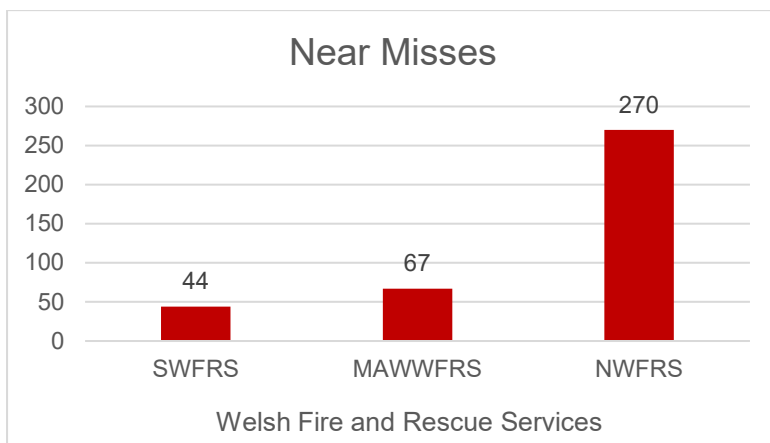
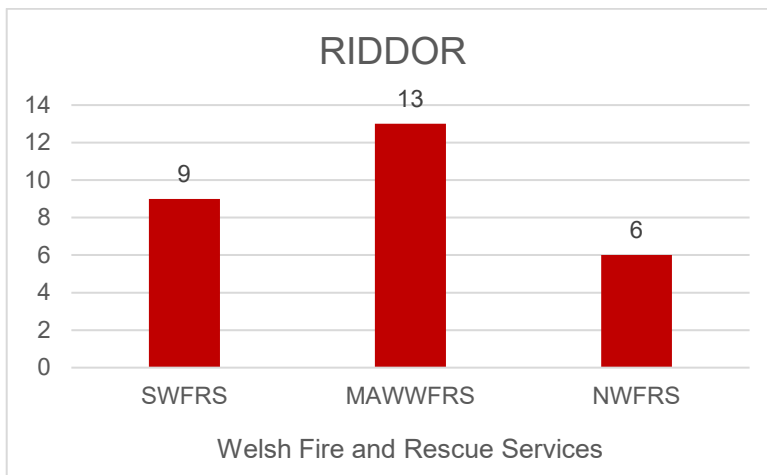
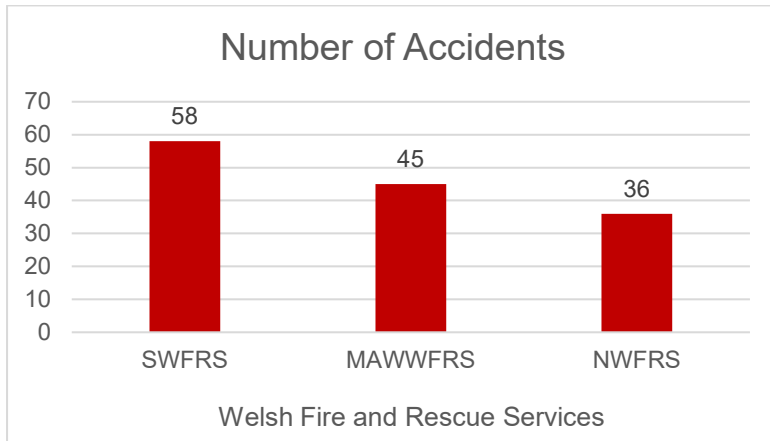
2022/23		
	Employer Liability (EL)	Public Liability (PL)
Total Number	1	1
Total Value (Anticipated)	£61,766 Reserve	£20,086



A well-established reduction in EL claims with a consistent calculation of PL claims from the previous year, both EL and PL claims coming to at a corresponding level. These figures are dynamically revised in accordance with the frequent communication between HSW and our Legal and Insurance Teams as required.

## All Wales Comparison 2022/23

As part of our collaboration with the other two Services in Wales we collect data on Accidents and Near Misses. Below are three graphs which look at comparative figures.



## Programme of Work

### Workplace Inspections

Our inspection programme ran from March to January 2023, as we aligned our inspections with the Operational, Audit and Support Team's (OAST) station audit schedule. During this period, 51 Health and Safety inspections were carried out across our sites. As a team, we carried out 31 of these visits in person and accompanied the respective premises manager. Due to staffing levels within the Health and Safety Team over this period, there were several inspections that required the premises manager to conduct the annual inspection themselves. Collectively, we identified 267 anomalies all of which have been resolved or are in the process of being resolved. We have continued to work closely with the Building Maintenance and Facilities Team, amongst other teams to ensure that all anomalies are rectified where possible within an agreed timescale.

### Risk Assessments

During 2022/23 we have assisted with writing and reviewing 410 risk assessments. A significant number of these have been reviews of current Risk Assessments for off-site Operational Training.

### Inductions and DSE Assessments

The Health and Safety Team developed an online Health and Safety Induction during COVID for Operational personnel, which we continue to utilise and update when necessary, this is delivered via PDR pro, and includes a comprehensive online package followed by a quiz to confirm their understanding of the material. This year the team has continued to provide Health, Safety and Wellbeing Inductions for new members of corporate staff. The previous year we delivered these inductions via one-to-one training to deliver key Health, Safety and Wellbeing information. Due to the unforeseen long-term absences within the Health and Safety Team this year, the Team has developed an online induction for Corporate Staff in line with the Operational Induction which has proved successful and is in process of emigrating to our CoreHR system to ensure all new employees undertake the training within their first week of employment.

## Noise and Vibration Assessments

During the end of 2021/22, the team undertook practical noise and vibration assessments with the assistance of Cirrus Research. This work involved taking a variety of measurements on motorised, hand-held tools that are utilised across the Service, from operational equipment to Fleet and Engineering equipment. This work continued into 2022/23 and report findings have been published into our internal policy and communicated with staff. The team will continue to work closely with Fleet and Engineering, Operations, and the Appliance & Equipment Team to implement the recommendations.

## Consultation and Engagement

Detailed below are some of the main areas of consultation and engagement that we are involved in across the Service.

### Safety Committee

Throughout 2022-23, our quarterly Safety Committee meetings continued to run successfully with representation from all departments. The delivery of these meetings has been a blended approach between in-person attendance and those dialling in remotely via Microsoft Teams.

These meetings were held on the following dates:

- Q1 & Q2 – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- Q3 – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023
- Q4 – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023

All relevant meeting papers are accessible via the Health, Safety and Wellbeing intranet page.

### Accident and Injury Review Group

Throughout 2022/23 this group has continued to meet on a regular basis to discuss recent accidents, near misses and insurance claims. The successful running of this group and continued input from members plays an important role in the management of Health and Safety across the Service.

## Wellbeing Steering Group

Following the successful start-up of this group in 2018/19, we have continued to engage with this forum by attending meetings monthly. The group continue to build on the Service's wellbeing programme following our successful Investors in People Award Wellbeing Assessment; The Service was the first organisation in Wales to achieve the Silver Award.

## Plans and Objectives for 2023/24

Forward planning for 2023/24 we will continue to set new plans and objectives for the HSW Team taking into consideration the long-term goals and succession plans.

These include:

### 1. Maintain a High Standard of Health and Safety Advice and Guidance

The HSW Team members main objective for this coming year is to continue to provide a high standard of Health and Safety advice and support to the Service, this has been and will continue to be a challenge due to changing legislation and our commitments to protecting our staff and the organisation. New and enhanced specialist competencies will drive the HSW Team to steer into a more effective and resourceful specialist team.

### 2. Risk Assessments.

This is a continuation of the previous year objectives where we will be looking to implement an electronic recording/reporting system which will flag when risk assessments are due for review to allow a more efficient control and monitoring process.

### 3. Development of Online Health and Safety Induction / Micro Teach

The HSW Team members will identify new ways of delivering our services to the end user. This will include a range of changes including delivery of a new online induction training session and a range on Health and Safety Micro Teaches on popular health and safety topics such as Lone Working, Manual Handling etc. We will continue to

work closely with the Learning and Development Team to implement these training packages into the CoreHR system.

#### 4. Provide Accident Investigation Training and Implementation of New Investigation Forms

New accident investigation forms have been recently developed and assured by our current insurance providers, the introduction of the forms throughout the Service will take place following a new training course planned to take place in October 2023. This nationally recognised training has been identified by the HSW Team to provide a more comprehensive and consistent approach to investigations, provided by an external training provider to Service Group Managers, Operational Development and Review Team (ODART) and HSW Team members. The HSW Team will develop a training package for staff based on this training and new style forms which will be delivered prior to publication of the new forms. Training in this area has already been booked with Joint Fire Control for the end of October, who have a fundamental role in recording injuries and near-miss events during the early stages.

### Closing Word

The 2022/23 reporting year has brought the HSW Team many new challenges which will continue into the 2023/24 reporting year, despite this we have continued to ensure that we provide available support and guidance to all staff members whilst they maintain service delivery across our communities.

The HSW Team on several occasions over the last year have adapted ways of working and prioritise workloads due to the challenges presented by the, at times, reactive nature of the team. Additional, manageable responsibilities to the ever-changing environment of the Service have been met to support and maintain the Services Health and Safety function.

The HSW Team will continue to identify opportunities to evolve, ensuring we reach our end users and continue the work we have completed over recent years, identifying changes in Health, Safety and Wellbeing culture to move in a decisive and clear direction.



In what has been a challenging year the HSW team would also like to take this opportunity to express our thanks for the support and patience we have received from our colleagues throughout the Service.

### **The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team**



For further information please contact the HSW Team.

[handsafety@southwales-fire.gov.uk](mailto:handsafety@southwales-fire.gov.uk)

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**Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub**  
De Cymru  

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South Wales  
**Fire and Rescue Service**

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 7.iii  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

**CARBON REDUCTION PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

PRESENTING OFFICER LISA MULLAN, T/HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT &amp; PROPERTY

**SUMMARY**

This report sets out the progress made in the second year of the Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) 2020 – 2023 and Biodiversity Forward Plan (BFP).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Fire Authority note year 3 progress.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In March 2021 Senedd Cymru approved a net zero target for 2050. The term net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it.
- 1.2 This report provides Members with an annual update of progress on South Wales Fire and Rescue Services' (SWFRS) Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) 2022-23. The plans outline our commitment to carbon reduction and supporting the Welsh Government (WG) ambition to achieve a carbon neutral public sector.
- 1.3 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced a duty to plan and report on how we will meet biodiversity challenges from 2019 and every three years thereafter. The biodiversity and nature recovery action plans (BNRAP) were reported to Members, September 2022 and are not required again until 2025.
- 1.4 This report delivers the third annual update with details contained in appendix 1.

## 2. ISSUE

- 2.1 In the last 12 months we have significantly increased engagement with our workforce through various forums, surveys, advice and information, dedicated intranet site. This has been supported with investment in staff training and attendance on Circular Economy Innovation and Communities (CEIC) programme.
- 2.2 We have led the way on the sustainable procurement (SP) project for Welsh Fire and Rescue Services and provided continuing support to our colleagues through the All-Wales SP group. We worked collaboratively with WRAP Cymru to develop an integral procurement tool that provides benefits for both procurement practitioners and contract managers.
- 2.3 We have increased and improved our green spaces by developing a community garden at Ogmere Vale Station. This was delivered with funding from Keep Wales Tidy and the support of Bridgend County Borough Council and culminated in the official opening, 15<sup>th</sup> July. The station is the first in the UK to be awarded a Green Flag community Award for its wellbeing and community garden.
- 2.4 We have focussed on establishing repeatable baseline data and making this easier to perform. This is the third year we have successfully completed the Welsh Government (WG) emissions return which could eventually enable meaningful benchmarks. The return format has been in development since its inception in 2021 and this makes annual comparisons with prior years difficult. The most recent return for 2022/23 financial year is as follows;

Units of kgCO <sub>2</sub> e				
<i>Total emissions</i>	Direct	Indirect	Indirect	Total
	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	
South Wales Fire & Rescue Financial year 2022/23	2,431,417	576,148	7,043,222	10,050,788

Scope 1, 2 and 3 is a way of categorising the different kinds of carbon emissions an organisation creates during its own operations, and in its wider value chain.

- Scope 1 – direct emissions that are owned or can be controlled, e.g., burning fuel in the organisations fleet.
- Scope 2 – indirect emissions i.e., the purchase of energy for heating / cooling buildings.
- Scope 3 – Indirect emissions from the value chain, e.g., buying, using, and disposing of products from suppliers.

Scope 1 and 2 are mostly within organisations control i.e., source renewable electricity, renewable gas, electrify heat demand or transition to electric vehicles. For many organisations, Scope 3 emissions account for more than 70 percent of the carbon footprint, it is the big one with emissions not coming from assets owned or controlled by the organisation. The scope categorisations are important in answering the question of where we focus our efforts and how we prioritise. With a more stable reading it is possible to report annually on fluctuations which will indicate the effectiveness of our efforts.

We must however continue to focus on collecting accurate and meaningful data and invest in automating processes to achieve this and communicate our position to all of our stakeholders in a timely fashion.

- 2.5 Staff turnover in a small team has a big effect and has again affected progress in the last 12 months with the departure of key personnel, i.e., Facilities Manager and Sustainability Officer. This has and will continue to affect continuity of our work.
- 2.6 Detailed actions to support the above are set out in appendix 1 below.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	Yes
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

All elements of the CRP link to our strategic themes, objectives and the 4 well-being goals of a globally responsible, healthier, resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No
Financial	No
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	No
National Policy	No

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

## 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Positive action during the last twelve months is presented in appendix 1. Focused efforts need to continue to formulate the framework of policies, processes and metrics to measure progress and guide future action.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Fire Authority note year 3 progress.

Contact Officer:	Background Papers
Lisa Mullan Temp Head of Finance, Procurement & Property	Carbon Reduction Plan 2022-23 Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Plan 2022

Appendices	
Appendix 1	CRP 2022 – 2023: Action Plan

## APPENDIX 1

## Strategic Theme: ST07 Protecting Our Environment

	Objective	Business Plan	Status	Action	Update
1	Reduce our use of single use materials	Procurement	In progress	Remove the use of blue paper towels on all owned sites	This work commenced several years ago although not adopted across the property portfolio and reviewed for effectiveness. An internal survey will be undertaken to identify where these are in use with a view to replacing with air dryers or suitable alternative.
			Completed 2021	All personnel to be issued with reusable aluminium water bottles to reduce single use plastic	Last year's update stated how impractical these are for crews on incident as they become hot to the touch etc. An alternative solution is being explored for this segment of staff with a new action below.
			Not started	Management plan needs to be drafted up to ensure that bottles are not littered at the incident.	Alternative options to the aluminium bottles will be explored by Ops working group. A hybrid approach is being adopted where they still use the water butts however, they have a backup supply of water bottles that are 100% recycled, recyclable and locally sourced

2	Expand use of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV) and create a greener fleet	Fleet	In progress	Explore the use of electric vehicles for the service light vehicle fleet	We currently have 39 Electric Vehicles, 2 Plug in Hybrids, 20 self-charging hybrids and these collectively make up 17% of the fleet.
			In progress	Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging points where possible on our sites	1) EV charging points have now been installed on 38 of our sites. 2) Exploring the concept of allowing staff to use charge points for personal cars with fees coming out of salary 3) Next step should be to explore the need and feasibility of super-fast charging.
			Started 2023	Develop policy / guidance for employee usage of the EV charging facility that prioritises business needs and accommodate employees on a fair basis	The Head of Fleet is drafting documentation to present to SSG and then to SMT for approval
3	Reduce and decarbonise our energy usage	Property	In progress	Complete the programme of LED light installation across all our sites	33 out of 50 sites have been actioned although not in every area of each building. A review is required to identify gaps and record where it is not feasible. Remaining sites will be addressed through major refurbishment / rebuild capital projects
			In progress	Assess the feasibility of a building management systems (BMS) on all	BMS have been invested in most sites and its capability needs to be



				sites in, to maximise energy efficiency and help manage energy charges	explored and understood to optimise building function
			In progress	Work with the Carbon Trust to undertake energy audits on our site to identify most suitable alternative power supplies e.g., Solar panels	We are currently working with Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) to access low-cost financing to support this work. Following disappointing outcomes from structural surveys on the feasibility of both SWFRS Headquarters and Barry Station sites, a second opinion was sought and work on Barry can be progressed
			Started 2023	Complete the programme of smart meters for all our sites	Meter upgrade programme is required to support. This area has suffered in past year due to the departure of key personnel i.e., Facilities Manager.
			In progress	Expand the trial for drying rooms technology to reduce energy on station	Comparison of new and old drying rooms gives clear indication that the new tech is worthwhile and so will be installed across the estate when refurbishment work is undertaken, i.e., OCDS project
			In progress	Revise our asset strategy for estates to include greater energy efficiency and CO2 reductions	1) Heating strategy needs to be developed to include considerations such as boiler condition and heating demand.

					<p>2) PV strategy needs to be developed to include considerations such as roof condition and electricity demand.</p> <p>3) The Sustainable Procurement toolkit should facilitate the consideration of low carbon options</p>
			Not started	Explore the need to apply for additional power to sites to facilitate more and faster EV charging	
4	Reduce our carbon footprint by monitoring environmental data	Technology	In progress	Improve recording, monitoring, and reporting of all carbon impacts across the service	<p>1) Data collection process has been streamlined by setting up some automatic data collection methods such as the use of half-hourly electricity use data.</p> <p>2) Areas of improvement still exist and there is a need for a meter upgrade programme for gas and electric meters which has begun.</p> <p>3) Carbon footprint scope has widened once again to now include fugitive gases (refrigerants in AC).</p> <p>4) Data can now be collected for waste/recycling by the new waste contractor, Biffa.</p> <p>5) Commuting survey has been conducted to gather up to date info on commuting behaviour.</p>

					6) The business planning via BMIS has been used for cross organisation actions
					7) A suite of metrics is being developed on BMIS to identify trends and focus action
					8) This is the third year of successfully completing the developing, annual WG return (due each Sept)
			In progress	Evaluate further use of technology to support efficient processes which will reduce the Services' carbon footprint	As discussed submetering will not be progressed however analysis of electricity metered for building at HQ and Pontyclun will be able to provide insight to the level of electricity usage by servers.
		Travel / Collaborative Opportunities	In progress	Reduce the frequency of car journeys for work purposes	Business mileage recording system is still being improved. There has been a setback this year with the CoreHR system dropping the engine sizes from the data stored. This will be rectified and detailed made available for scrutiny
			Completed 2023	Promote and support car sharing opportunities	Commuting survey has been conducted
			Not started	Develop a workplace travel plan, to include home working, remote working, and usual place of work	Connect with Sustrans as they are able to undertake a workplace travel plan

		Procurement	Completed 2023	Embed whole life cycle approach to all equipment and supplies purchased	<p>1) A Sustainable Procurement Toolkit has been commissioned and developed between the procurement team and WRAP Cymru and is in use for tenders</p> <p>2) Supplier engagement has been undertaken asking questions about their ability and motivation to reduce carbon emissions, this fed into the SP project above</p> <p>3) Sustainable considerations of potential suppliers now equate to a minimum 5% of the overall evaluation score of all tenders above £25k</p> <p>4) All Wales Sustainable Procurement Group has been set up to share ideas, learning and provide support</p>
			Started 2023	Draft Sustainable Procurement policy / guidance to support budget holders in making ethical and effective purchasing choices and practices	The Senior Procurement Officer is consulting on the draft document and the organisation is debating whether this is a policy or guidance
		Procurement / Waste	In progress	Move towards a paper free environment	<p>1) A report has been written on the use of paper across the service.</p> <p>2) New printers have been set up however metrics are still being set</p>

					up in order to capture data on paper used for printing.
					3) There is a need to explore the procurement of recycled paper
		Water	In progress	Implement grey water harvesting system at HQ fleet for vehicle wash facility	A quote has been obtained on new design concept. Designs are with M&E consultants to flex for options based on observations made during site visit. Outcomes of this will determine whether this project is feasible regarding cost, energy use for pumps and amount of water saved
		Behaviour Change / Collaborative	Not started	Seek Green Dragon accreditation to improve our sustainable governance processes and to ensure our efforts are well informed and focussed	This will be something the new Sustainable Officer will progress as a priority in the next 12 months
<b>5</b>	Reduce our waste and improve our waste management practices	Waste	In progress	Review and improve our current waste/recycling collection provisions	1) Biffa has been appointed as the winning contractor and onboarding of stations is underway on a phased approach. Phasing will complete in April 2024 when the new legislation comes into force. 2) Early indicators identify the teething problems that will be resolved in the coming year via contract management, station liaison and training

					3) Waste Management Policy (WMP) to be drafted by new Sustainability Officer
<b>6</b>	Engage with our stakeholders on our carbon journey and challenge	Behaviour Change	In progress	Service wide engagement and communication to raise awareness and encourage ideas for carbon reduction	<p>1) Sustainability Engagement Strategy has been drafted and includes the different communication channels and intended targets</p> <p>2) Engagement has continued with station personnel through site visits and discussions on energy use, waste, travel, biodiversity etc.</p> <p>3) Plans drafted for the (voluntary) Sustainability Champion Group (SCG) with the aim of meeting with passionate individuals on a quarterly basis</p> <p>4) Sustainability intranet page is up and running and providing information and awareness on our sustainable projects, processes and people</p> <p>5) Sustainability BMIS page is currently being developed</p> <p>6) Further to the Sustainability internet page, the content is being curated with a view to being posted on the external website.</p>

			In progress	Establish environmental champions for all departments and stations.	1) Individuals have put themselves forward on a handful of stations but this is not widespread at this point and no regular meeting have been set up yet 2) Plans have been drafted for voluntary SCG as above
			Not started	Include environmental impact awareness on induction and development programmes	Discussions have been held with Learning & Development team (People Services) to schedule this in on relevant programmes, but no progress made to date
			Not started	Introduce an annual award to recognise and reward greatest positive impact and most innovative solution	No change since last year
			Completed 2023	We invested in educating our people who attended a circular economy course run by Cardiff Met and who they attended with fellow public sector colleagues from across the board	4 Officers attended the course which focussed learning on completing a project. The project was decided as 'Creating Greener Tenders: using chatbot to shape sustainable specifications'. Undertaken with SWFRS, Bridgend CBC and NHS Wales
7	Look for collaborative opportunities in identifying /	Collaborative Opportunities	In progress	Develop partnerships with Wales Energy Service, Cynnal Cymru and Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformation Centre (CAST) to raise awareness and	Partnerships are numerous and meeting are regular. All projects with external partners and the PSB subgroups.

	progressing green projects			develop further schemes to support the plan	
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**Reference:** 3769A2023

**Date issued:** September 2023

## Audit of South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's 2023-24 Improvement Plan

The Wales Fire and Rescue Service Circular number: W-FRSC (2021)07 requires Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales to continue to report against the Local Government Measure 2009 until a new National Framework and revised arrangements have been introduced.

### Certificate

I certify that, following its publication on 21 October 2022, I have audited South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) Improvement Plan in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Authority has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

### Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Authority is required to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan describing its plans to discharge its duties to:

- make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- make arrangements to secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- make arrangements to exercise its functions so that any performance standard specified by Welsh Ministers is met.

The Measure requires the Authority to publish its Improvement Plan as soon as is reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year to which it relates, or after such other date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Authority is responsible for preparing the Improvement Plan and for the information set out within it. The Measure requires that the Authority has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in preparing and publishing its plan.

As the Authority's auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit of the Improvement Plan, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether

I believe that the Authority has discharged its duties to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

### **Scope of the Improvement Plan audit**

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit, I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information, or whether the Improvement Plan published by the Authority can be achieved. My audit of the Authority's Improvement Plan, therefore, comprised a review of the plan to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the Plan complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Authority had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing its plan.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.



**Adrian Crompton**

**Auditor General for Wales**

CC: Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice

Carwyn Rees, Audit Manager

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 7.v  
25 SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

**EXEMPTIONS FROM CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY THE MONITORING OFFICER  
PRESENTING OFFICER – MONITORING OFFICER**SUMMARY**

Exemptions to contract standing orders may be granted by the monitoring officer in exceptional circumstances and where the value exceeds £25,000 a report must be presented to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

This report sets out exemptions granted during the current financial year to date.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Members note the exemption granted by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Authority's contract standing orders.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue Authority constitution contains the contract standing orders which set out the procedure for procuring goods and services.
- 1.2 There are circumstances when a competitive procurement process is not possible or practical. If the circumstances are deemed necessary, the monitoring officer may approve an exemption to procurement. If the value of the exemption exceeds £25,000 and could lead to disruption to services a report must be prepared for the Fire and Rescue Authority to support the action taken.

**2. ISSUES**

- 2.1 Since 2008 investigations into disciplinary matters, grievances and complaints have been undertaken by the Service's resolution officers.
- 2.2 In March 2023 a request for a procurement exemption was approved by the monitoring officer in respect of investigation services due to the long-term absences of the internal resources within the People Services Directorate. Approval was given by reason of the timebound and sensitive nature of several investigations that were required. Based on previous

experience with the Service, Narrow Quay HR were engaged to provide the investigation services.

- 2.3 The Service has recently advertised for two temporary Resolution Officer posts to provide the in-house investigation services. Following interviews, it is anticipated to have these resources available by the beginning of October. Therefore, in August 2023 an extension to the exemption was granted to enable the conclusion of existing cases and provide the interim support until the commencement of the new temporary officers.
- 2.4 Following the appointment of internal resources a procurement exercise for services will also be undertaken to provide a call off contract for HR/investigation services as a future resilience measure.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

#### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	Yes
Financial	Yes
Procurement	Yes
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	No
Data Protection / Privacy	No
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Governance & Audit	No
Service Policy	No
National Policy	No

- 3.2.1 An exemption is being made from the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

3.2.2 The Contract Standing Orders are incorporated into the Authority's constitution which set out the requirement for reporting specific exemptions.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	Yes
Budget Revenue/Capital	Yes

3.3.1 The costs incurred for the provision of the service to the end of August are £61,000. These will be offset by vacancy savings derived until the temporary posts are filled in early October.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That Members note the exemption granted by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Authority's contract standing orders.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	ACO Corporate Services – Geraint Thomas
<b>Background Papers</b>	None

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**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR  
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY 2023/24**

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
17 July 2023	Use of Delegated Powers	To seek endorsement for the use of officer delegations for the award of contracts following tender exercises.	D	ACO CS Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	Completed
17 July 2023	Manchester Arena Public Inquiry Vol 2 – Emergency Response Report	To provide Members with an update	I	CFO Contact Officer: Huw Jakeway	Completed
17 July 2023	Report on Proposed Priority Actions 2024/25	To advise Members of the proposed Priority Actions 2024/25 and to seek authority to enter into public consultation on these.	D	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	Completed
17 July 2023	Strategic Risk	To advise Members of the Strategic Risks of the organisation and how these are being treated, managed or reduced.	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	Completed
17 July 2023	End of year Health Check on Performance and Strategic Objectives 2022/23	To advise Members of end of year performance against agreed targets and to advise Members of the end of year health check position in securing the achievement of the Strategic Objectives.	I	ACO CS & ACFO SD Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	Completed

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
17 July 2023	Welsh Language Standards	To update Members on compliance against the Welsh Language Standards.	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
17 July 2023	Audit Wales – Fire False Alarms	To update Members on the findings and recommendations of Audit Wales in respect of their analysis of Fire False Alarms.	D	T/DCFO Contact Officer: Chris Hadfield	Completed
25 Sept 2023	Update on MTFS and Reserves Strategy	To update Members on the Financial Strategy and Reserves Strategy of the Authority prior to considering the report on the 2024/25 Budget Setting Strategy.	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Chris Barton	On agenda
25 Sept 2023	Budget Strategy 2024/25	To obtain clarification upon the political steer for the Budget Strategy for 2024/25 budget setting process.	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Chris Barton	On agenda
25 Sept 2023	Treasury Management Outturn 2022/23	To advise Members of the year end treasury management position.	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Chris Barton & Geraint Thomas	On agenda
25 Sept 2023	Health & Safety Annual Report 2022/23	To advise Members of Health & Safety performance of the organisation.	I	T/ACFO TS Contact Officer: Garry Davies	On agenda



<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
25 Sept 2023	Carbon Reduction/Biodiversity Plans Update	To advise Members on the progress towards the actions set out in the Carbon Reduction and Biodiversity Plans	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	On agenda
25 Sept 2023	Certificate of Compliance for the Audit of SWFRA's Improvement Plan 2023/24	To receive Audit Wales' certificate of audit of the Authority's 2023/24 Improvement Plan.	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	On agenda
18 Dec 2023	Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25	To seek approval for the proposed draft revenue and capital budgets.	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
18 Dec 2023	Treasury Management Mid Term Report 2023/24	To advise Members of the mid-year position in relation to our treasury management.	I	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
18 Dec 2023	Half Yearly Health Check of Performance and Review of Strategic Themes	To advise Members of performance against agreed performance indicator targets and achievement of strategic themes at the mid-way point of the year.	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
18 Dec 2023	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Draft Annual Report	To consider the IRPW's draft Annual Report and enable comments to be submitted to the Panel within required timescales.	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
12 Feb 2024	Revenue & Capital Budget determination for 2024/25	To consider consultation responses and to set the recommended budget determination for consideration by the Fire Authority.	D	Treasurer  Contact Officer: Chris Barton	
12 Feb 2024	Strategic Performance Indicators Target Setting 2024/25	To set the targets for the following financial year.	D	ACFO SD  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
12 Feb 2024	Report on responses to the consultation on the Strategic Themes and Objectives for 2024/25	Members to approve the proposed strategic themes and objectives for 2024/25	D	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
12 Feb 2024	Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary	To advise Members of the key issues emanating from the annual report and to provide an opinion on adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation and its potential to improve, its approach to risk management, control and governance processes based on the Audit Wales work undertaken during the year, including data quality & PIs, HR work, a Framework update, whistleblowing and forward planning.	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
18 March 2024	Pay Policy Statement 2022/23	To consider the Authority's Pay Policy Statement in compliance with the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance.	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
18 March 2024	Gender Pay Gap Statement	To update Members on the analysis of the gender pay gap across the Service.	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
18 March 2024	Strategic Equality Plan	To provide Members with the current Strategic Equality Plan.	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Andrew Jones	
18 March 2024	Treasury Management Strategy Report	To secure Members' approval to the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy for the following financial year	D	Treasurer Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan	
18 March 2024	Report on Strategic Plan and Priority Actions 2024/25	To seek approval to publish the Strategic Plan and Priority Actions.	D	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
18 March 2024	SWFRA Summary Report of Activity 2023/24	To provide a summary of the activity and outcomes during 2022/23.	I	ACO CS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
18 March 2024	Annual Report of the Work of the PSB's and Well-being Plan Approval	To update Members on the work of each of the PSB's and how this impacts upon the work of SWFRS, and to seek Well-being Plan approval.	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
18 March 2024	PSB Well-being Plans	To consider and accept the Well-being Plans of each of the PSBs	D	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
18 March 2024	Member Attendance	To review Member attendance 2023/24.	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	
18 March 2024	Fire Authority & Committee Meeting Dates for 2024/25	To present Members with proposed dates of Authority & Committee meetings for the next municipal year.	I	ACO CS  Contact Officer: Geraint Thomas	

## AGENDA ITEM NO 8

**To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent  
(Part 1 or 2)**

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1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.	
3.	Chairperson's Announcements	
4.	To receive the minutes of:	
	• Fire & Rescue Authority Meeting held on 17 July 2023	5
	• FAPM Committee held on 13 March 2023	17
	• Scrutiny Committee held on 17 April 2023	25
	• HR & Equalities Committee held on 10 July 2023	31
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