

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
13 December 2018
Item No. 9

REPORT AUTHOR: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PAUL M FULLER

SUBJECT: FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT – OPTIONS PAPER

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Background Papers: **BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY GOVERNANCE REPORT – RSM INTERNAL AUDIT OCTOBER 2018**

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New		

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To advise members of the completion of the Governance report and identify a way forward in considering its outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Members consider the report and instruct the Chief Fire Officer and the Secretary/Monitoring Officer to jointly produce a discussion paper for Members to consider informally.
2. Those officers arrange an opportunity for discussion amongst Authority Members before any proposals, if appropriate, are made to the Full Authority at its meeting in February 2019.

Background

During early 2018 Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority considered its own structure and systems and decided to commission RSM Team (internal Auditors) to carry out a review of the Governance arrangements for the Authority.

This review was carried out during the Summer of 2018 and finally reported in October of that year.

Each year Bedfordshire FRA carries out a review of effectiveness and both external audit and internal audit have given confirmation of the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements which are in place.

However the Governance review does signal a number of areas for consideration which have potential to improve the efficiency of the Authority and reduce the bureaucratic burden on the Fire and Rescue Service in supporting it as well as aligning it more to a changing social and political landscape.

The report acknowledges but does not detail that a number of FRA's are considering these matters and two appear to have already changed structures.

The full report from RSM is attached, but in summary deals with the following areas:

- Functionality of meetings
- Location of meetings
- Skills requirement of Members
- Structure of Policy and Challenge Groups
- Number of meetings
- Benchmarking of Authority size and Members
- Member Allowances

Implication

The report has some potentially wide ranging implications depending on how discussions and views of members of the Authority develop. This leads to the recommendation of this report.

Recommendation

1. Members consider the report and instruct the Chief Fire Officer and the Secretary/Monitoring Officer to jointly produce a discussion paper for Members to consider informally.
2. Those officers arrange an opportunity for discussion amongst Authority Members before any proposals, if appropriate, are made to the Full Authority at its meeting in February 2019.

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**JOHN ATKINSON
SECRETARY/ MONITORING OFFICER**