

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 29 th January 2019
Report Subject	White Paper: Reform of Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welsh Government has published a White Paper titled *Reform of Fire and Rescue Services in Wales* with a consultation deadline of 5th February 2019. The White Paper is attached as Appendix 1

Whilst recognising that the three fire and rescue authorities in Wales perform highly in their operations the White Paper proposes changes to the governance and membership of fire and rescue authorities, and to their relationship with their constituent local authorities in budget-setting.

The Council has not expressed any concerns over the governance of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and has been satisfied that the Authority has fully engaged the Council, as a constituent local authority, in consultations on its key strategies and its budget strategy. The responses to the consultation questions within the White Paper are attached in Appendix 2.

This report was also be considered by Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 17th January 2019. The comments of the Committee will be reported to Council verbally. A PowerPoint presentation will be made at the meeting to facilitate debate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the draft responses to the questions in Appendix 2 are considered and endorsed as the formal Flintshire response to the <i>Reform of Fire and Rescue Services in Wales</i> White Paper.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	THE WHITE PAPER; REFORM OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN WALES
1.01	The Welsh Government has published a White Paper titled <i>Reform of Fire and Rescue Services in Wales</i> with a consultation deadline of 5 th February 2019. Whilst recognising that the three fire and rescue authorities in Wales perform highly in their operations, the White Paper proposes changes to the governance and membership of fire and rescue authorities, and to their relationship with their constituent local authorities in budget-setting.
1.02	The Council is represented on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority by six councillors. The membership of the Authority (28) is politically balanced. The Authority is well-governed - as validated in a series of regulatory reports by the Wales Audit Office over a period of years.
1.03	The Council has not expressed any concerns over the governance of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and has been satisfied that the Authority has fully engaged the Council, as a constituent local authority, in consultations on its key strategies and its budget strategy. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority, and the Chief Fire Officer and senior team members have been frequent attenders at Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings with the most recent example being attendance at Council on the Improvement Objectives and budget strategy of the Authority.
1.04	The White Paper is attached as Appendix 1. The draft responses to the consultation questions are attached as Appendix 2. The comments from the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny committee which considered this report on 17 th January will be reported at the meeting.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Not applicable at this stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Welsh Government White Paper: <i>Reform of Fire & Rescue Authorities in Wales</i> (WG36211) Appendix 2: Draft responses to the consultation questions.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None other than those set out as Appendices. Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA): a combined authority, formed of as a combination of the local authorities in its area, but a separate entity in its own right. Flintshire, as the largest constituent authority of the North Wales Fire & Rescue authority, appoints six councillor nominees.