



AGENDA ITEM: 14

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

16 September 2013

NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Report by Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1 To update Members as to the work being undertaken under the direction of the National Issues Committee (NIC).

Background

- 2 The NIC's aim is to implement improved arrangements for the strategic and co-ordinated delivery of collaborative work across the three fire and rescue authorities in Wales. Regular reports are submitted to keep Members updated on the progress of the NIC's work together with any proposals which require the specific approval of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

Information

- 3 The NIC held its fifth meeting at Llandrindod Wells Fire and Rescue station on 30 July 2013, where the following issues were discussed.
- 4 A review of the Welsh Fire and Rescue Services' approach to collaboration, partnership and efficiency had been undertaken by the Wales Audit Office. The NIC had commissioned the review in order to have an evaluation of its performance to date and in order to improve its performance going forward.

- 4.2 Ron Price from the WAO attended the meeting to report on the outcome of the review. It was deemed that the NIC's first year in existence had been positive with support shown both at political and officer level which had enabled the governance arrangements to be quickly put in place and to start delivering improvements. It was now recommended that the NIC should focus on six key projects that are most likely to produce cash savings and improve business efficiency.
- 5 Effective Resilience Plans for Large Scale Emergencies – the Chief Fire Officer from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service presented this report which set out baseline information collated regarding operations in the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales. Having compared the information, several areas had been identified where cashable savings could be made and work has started to focus in on these areas.
- 6 National Collaborative Procurement – the Deputy Chief Fire Officer from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service presented the outcome of the review undertaken into procurement. The outcome of this review was an agreement to collaboratively procure fire sector specific items across the three FRSSs, to direct that procurement at a strategic level and to develop a virtual joint procurement team between MAWWFRS and SWFRS.
- 7 ICT Flagship Project Areas – the Deputy Chief Officer from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service brought forward a proposal for five major ICT projects to be taken forward on a collaborative basis including the replacement of the existing Command and Control systems across Wales.
- 8 Finally, it was confirmed that efficiencies identified to date amount to £2.6 million across the three Services over a period of 5 years. This figure is in addition to savings generated by each of the three FRAs through their individual budget setting processes.

Recommendation

- 9 Members are asked to note the information provided.