

Report to	Executive Panel	
Date	14 May 2018	
Lead Officer	Chief Fire Officer	
Contact Officer	Chief Fire Officer (01745) 535253	
Subject	Governance and finance arrangements for FRAs in Wales	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To update Members on the latest position in respect of proposed changes to the finance and governance arrangements of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in Wales.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services has signalled his intention to change the existing finance and governance arrangements for FRAs in Wales. This report includes the response of the FRAs to recent correspondence.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3 That Members note the correspondence and receive the Chair's update.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 4 This matter has not been considered by the Audit Committee.

BACKGROUND/INFORMATION

- 5 Members will be aware of the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services' plans to change the finance and governance arrangements of FRAs in Wales.
- 6 At the Authority meeting in March 2018 Members were provided with a copy of a letter from the Cabinet Secretary setting out what he considered to be the key issues influencing his desire for reform. Members were also advised that a response to this letter would be sent on behalf of all three Welsh FRAs. A copy of this response is attached at Appendix 1 together with a copy of the Cabinet Secretary's original letter for ease of reference.

- 7 Additionally, the three FRA chairs in Wales met with the Cabinet Secretary on 30 April to discuss the matter further. The Chair will provide a verbal update at today's meeting.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	None at this time.
Budget	Change to the Authority's financial and governance arrangements has the potential to affect the Authority's budget position in the future. Any legal advice that may be sought is not budgeted for at this time.
Legal	There are potential legal issues around amendments to, or repeal of, The North Wales Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1995. Legal advice may need to be sought at a future date.
Staffing	None at this time.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	None at this time.
Risks	There is the potential for any change to the Authority's governance and financial arrangements to affect its ability to deliver appropriate services to the North Wales community, particularly if the budget position is negatively affected.