

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SHROPSHIRE & WREKIN FIRE AUTHORITY TO THE CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

I am pleased to set out below my report on the main events and matters considered by the Fire Authority since the last report in December 2025.

FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING

The Authority met at HQ in Shrewsbury on 17 December 2025 and considered a number of matters of which the following will be of interest:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer

I am pleased to report that the Authority ratified the decision by the Brigade Managers Employment Panel to appoint Mr Marc Millward as our new Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

2026/27 Budget

Discussions around the budget and potential precept for 2026/27 included consideration of adopting various levels of precept in the light of additional pressures arising from our Community Risk Management Plan, our workstreams relating to the 2024 HMI Inspection report, and the provisional grant settlement from HM Government.

Members noted that, in common with the experience of Shropshire Council, grant was being removed from rural areas in favour of urban areas which, if confirmed, would result in a need to cost reductions in the future.

The only positive note was that, in the case of Fire, Government had decided to introduce a 'floor' to ensure that no Service fell below minimum levels, however the extent of that 'floor' was as yet unknown.

Since then we have had confirmation of the arrangements and although we are still suffering a reduction in funding we believe that we will, over the three year period, manage the situation. The Authority is to meet next week on the 17th to set our budget and precept and at the moment that is recommended to be £5 per year, an increase of 4.13%. Fire is subject to slightly different rules in respect of referendum limits.

HMICFRS Report

We received our normal progress reports on the measures being taken to address both the 'Cause of Concern' and the 'Areas for Improvement' and noted that the Service is on schedule to comply with the recommendations within the timetable agreed with HMICFRS.

As referred to above our next meeting is on Tuesday 17 February and I will report on this meeting, and other matters, in due course.

Cllr David Minnery

Chair, Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority

13 February 2026