

**31 October 2014**

**Financial Regulations**

**Report by the Chief Officer**

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## **1 Summary**

The Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) delegate specific responsibilities to Officers of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS). For clarity these are contained within formal documents which are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain current and accurate. These have been recently reviewed and were submitted to the Standards and Governance Committee for their consideration on 25 September 2014. Among these was the Financial Regulations document. The Finance and General Purposes Committee is invited to consider the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations.

## **2 Recommendation**

That the Finance and General Purposes Committee note the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations as set out in Appendix A and submit any views for consideration to the Chairman of the Standards and Governance Committee or to the HFRA when they consider the matter at their next meeting on 19 December 2014.

## **3 Introduction and background**

- 3.1 The HFRA delegate specific responsibilities to Officers of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS). For clarity these are contained within a number of formal documents. These are primarily the Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.
- 3.2 The above documents were last revised in 2008. The documents have therefore been recently reviewed. There are a number of proposed alterations that have been made to the first two documents. These have been passed through to the Standards and Governance Committee who have overall responsibility for matters relating to HFRA Governance. The sequencing of meetings means that the Finance and General Purposes Committee sits after that Committee. Therefore, in order to get the alterations through to the HFRA for authorisation in a reasonable time frame, this sequence of referrals for the various documents to the two committees was the most expedient.
- 3.3 The Finance and General Purposes Committee is invited to consider the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations. To make identifying the changes easy,

the alterations have been made in 'track changes' and left visible to members. The document is attached as Appendix A. The document in its original state refers to the post of 'Treasurer'. The recent changes to structures, roles and functions within H3 have changed the titles of some posts. The post that used to be referred to as the 'Treasurer' is now referred to as the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) within the joint working area. The Standards and Governance Committee resolved to direct that the documents for which they are responsible are altered to reflect this change for future clarity and consistency.

#### **4 Clearance Procedure**

- 4.1 The ability to delegate specific authorities and responsibilities to Officers is a power vested in the HFRA. In delegating these authorities, the HFRA seeks to ensure that the Service is run and lead in an efficient and effective manner, whilst retaining overall authority for the delivery of services through its own governance and scrutiny infrastructure.
- 4.2 The Standards and Governance Committee oversee all aspects of governance and provide the detailed oversight on behalf of the HFRA in related matters. The point of scrutiny for any revision to the delegation documentation is therefore with this committee. Once satisfied of the efficacy of any alterations, the Standards and Governance Committee may recommend these to a meeting of the full HFRA for their formal adoption. This is then recorded and the documents become the prime source of authority for Officers to deliver services on behalf of the HFRA. In relation to the Financial Regulations, the Finance and General Purposes Committee has a specific interest in this document and an overall responsibility for effective financial management of the Authority. Therefore, if the Committee has specific points to be raised, this may be done directly between the Chairmen of the respective committees, or at the point of presentation to the HFRA.

#### **5. Supporting our corporate aims and objectives**

Providing clarity on the levels of authority and responsibility accorded to managers within HFRS allows individuals to operate effectively to deliver the services required by the HFRA. This is specifically the case when managing financial matters. This enables the service to effectively structure and organise itself to deliver the Service Plan and its statutory duties.

#### **7 Risk analysis**

Failure to maintain an effective set of financial regulations could result in Officers acting outside of their powers or failing to act where required to deliver specific duties expected by the HFRA.

#### **8 People Impact Assessment**

The proposals in this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation.

## **9 Environmental and Sustainability impact assessment**

There are no adverse impacts associated with the proposed amendments made to the documents attached as appendices A to C.

## **10 Resource implications**

There are no resource impacts associated with the proposed amendments made to the document attached as appendix A.

## **11 Consultation**

The attached document was reviewed in conjunction with the previous Director of Corporate Services, Chief Finance Officer (aka Treasurer) and the Clerk to the HFRA.

## **12 Conclusion**

The Financial Regulations have been reviewed. The proposed amendments have been passed to the Standards and Governance Committee for their consideration along with the other relevant documents which lay out the delegations from the HFRA to Officers within HFRS. These seek to provide a current and accurate set of delegations that enable Officers to deliver the requirements of the HFRA. The Financial Regulations are included in that set of documents and are passed to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their specific consideration before being presented to the HFRA by the Standards and Governance Committee.

## **12 Background papers**

12.1 The following documents disclose the facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of the report:

None

Note: The list excludes: (1) published works; and (2) documents that disclose exempt or confidential information defined in the Act.