

Councillor C Carter
Chairman
Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority
Hampshire County Council
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UB

12 February 2018

Dear Chris,

As agreed at the Police-Fire Governance Board on Thursday 8 February, this letter sets out the key points covered in the meeting and my thinking on the way forward.

Over the last six months I have taken the opportunity to review options presented to me by the Policing and Crime Act 2017 for governance of fire services within my area. I am grateful for your support in reviewing these options in a collaborative and co-operative manner, with the shared focus on achieving the best outcome for the people of Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton.

I am proud that we are often evidenced as best in class when it comes to the improved effectiveness and efficiency we have achieved through collaboration. However we now need to challenge ourselves to pursue those opportunities that have been identified for further collaboration, but require greater effort to achieve.

It is clear that we all:

- have a common purpose in keeping our communities safer
- are in agreement that partnership matters, and is key to our ongoing and future success.

I am grateful to colleagues who expressed their confidence in the Fire Authorities' work and their advocacy of Option 2 and their invitation for me to join both Authorities.

Whilst some benefits of a change in governance (option three) are also identified, I believe that if our teams continue to work together many of these could be brought forward and delivered within the existing partnership and cooperative arrangement.

I heard, powerfully stated in the meeting, the potential risks from disrupting some plans that are already in progress.

I acknowledge the value from landing work in progress.

As stated in the meeting, my proposals are that:

- we continue for the time being with the status quo (option one)
- I will maintain a watching brief whilst continuing to engage and support the fire authorities in the work they are doing.

Over the coming months there are a number of things I will continue to look for:

- successful coming together of the fire authorities which I understand we will hear good progress reports in March
- the new inspection regime with HMICFRS and the confirmation of ongoing excellent performance of our fire services
- the bringing together of further significant savings through the existing collaboration, which delivered so well in the past.

I would like to thank you again for your contributions to the gathering of the evidence that has led to this decision, and for your continued support for working together in a more collaborative way to keep our communities safer.

Best wishes,

Mitch



cc: Cllr Dave Stewart
Olivia Pinkney
Neil Odin
John Metcalfe
James Payne