



Councillor Simon Geraghty
Leader of Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP

9th June 2016

Our Ref: JpC/mwb

As we discussed when we met, the Police & Crime Act enables Police and Crime Commissioners to become the governing body for the Fire and Rescue Services within their area if it increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the police and fire services.

With this in mind I have commissioned an independent business case to consider if any benefits could be achieved in our area from this governance change. As you will see, the business case concludes that there are significant benefits to be gained from bringing the governance of the two emergency services together, in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, improved public safety and community resilience.

The identity of both fire services and West Mercia Police will not be altered. Local fire crews and police officers will still serve their communities as they do now. This change in governance would not lead to reductions in frontline police or fire officers. Indeed, the idea is to improve frontline services by enhancing the way police and fire work together.

I recognise that the initial business case is just the first step on the journey of any potential fire governance changes and I am keen to hear the views of your Council in order to help shape the next steps.

I enclose a consultation pack including a covering letter, draft business case and commitments, FAQs, and consultation form.

The process to be followed is set out in legislation. It requires me to consult with the people of West Mercia, the workforce of the two Fire and Rescue Services and the Police, and the four upper tier local authorities. I am also seeking the views of the public, the District Councils in my area and of our MPs. Following that I shall review the business case, taking into account the responses from the consultation, and submit it to the Home Secretary for consideration.

You will see from the consultation pack that I am proposing to invite you to nominate local fire representatives to work with me, to support and enhance my work as Commissioner, and I envisage that they would be a strong link to your council and your community. I am interested in your views of how such local authority representatives could be appointed and what their responsibilities would be.

I am also interested in your views as to how governance changes could be implemented. The consultation launches on the 12th June and will run for three months. At the end of the consultation period I will consider all views before finalising the business case for submission to Government.

Your Councils response to this proposal can be submitted by email or in writing to the details contained in the consultation pack.

I believe the initial business case has identified a significant opportunity to improve services for the people of West Mercia, but I am keen now to hear your views and the views of the communities we serve.

Yours sincerely

John Campion
Police & Crime Commissioner
West Mercia

Cc Chief Executive

