

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	17 DECEMBER 2015	REPORT NO:	CFO/090/15
PRESENTING OFFICER:	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER JAMES BERRY TEL: 4711	REPORT AUTHOR:	AREA MANAGER JAMES BERRY
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	GROUP MANAGER GARY OAKFORD, DEB APPLETON, KEVIN JOHNSON		
TITLE OF REPORT:	HOME SAFETY STRATEGY 2015-2018		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	HOME SAFETY STRATEGY 2015-2018	
	APPENDIX B:	EIA	

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members approve the proposed refresh of the Home Safety Strategy for 2015 – 2018 with particular regard to the targeted approach and referral pathway.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
 - a) Consider the information contained within this report concerning the proposed revised approach to home safety.
 - b) Approve the Home Safety Strategy 2015-2018 for implementation, as recommended by the Performance & Scrutiny Committee.

Introduction and Background

3. Since 1999, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has proactively promoted Community Fire Safety by conducting Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC's). These visits offered the free provision and installation of smoke detectors and included valuable fire safety education for all people living across Merseyside.
4. The HFSC remains the flagship engagement tool for Community Risk Management. The Functional Plan for Community Fire Prevention 2015-16 includes a review of prevention related activities for home safety and the provision of a revised Home Safety Strategy.
5. This Home Safety Strategy for 2015-18 and beyond takes into consideration the reduction in the number of fire appliances and operational staff available,

the reduction in the number of advocates as a result of the support services review and the mitigation of those reductions included in the new work routines for operational personnel introduced in 2014 and any future new ways of working that may emerge (operational shift patterns).

6. It also sets out our commitment and a number of enabling principles to continuously seek to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured due to accidental dwelling fires on Merseyside.
7. In the last 10 years there have been 79 fire fatalities across Merseyside, 10 of which have occurred in the last reporting period (1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015). There have also been 8 fatal fires to date in this reporting year. It is acknowledged that in 2014/15 and 2015/16 there has been a sharp rise in those aged over 65 years and living alone.
8. Officers also recognise that Merseyside has a number of challenges in regards to deprivation and other socio-economic factors as result of which there is an increased risk of an accidental dwelling fire within affected areas.
9. The revised strategy will include national and regional focus and develop the current HFSC into a Safe and Well visit. This is consistent with language which is currently being adopted within the fire and rescue sector along with health partners.
10. Officers will also develop a Vulnerable Persons Team from the existing advocate cohort that will give focus to key determinants (ageing, dementia, social isolation) and aspects of behavioural change such as smoking, alcohol and hoarding which in many cases have been contributory factors to a number of recent fatal fires.
11. Officers will continue to utilise NHS over 65 data for operational crews to target those most vulnerable in the community on a daily basis (in addition to those who have never received a HFSC).
12. Our advocate teams will continue to generate and support direct referrals from crews and partners for those who are deemed high risk.
13. Officers continue to develop a number of strategic alliances to support the strategy, an example of which is the work which has commenced in Liverpool that will see every domiciliary carer undertake Home Fire Safety Training and raised awareness.
14. This approach will enable the Service to ensure that operational crews, prevention teams, volunteers and partners are targeting the most at risk people in our communities and offering a quality HFSC that identifies hazards within the home and respond by implementing the appropriate interventions available.

15. The Service will also have focus in the area of Selective Licensing and the introduction of legislative changes for the Private Rented Sector., An example is the work Officers undertake with Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council in the targeting of ward areas and sub-standard housing.
16. A revised Performance Management Framework will give regard to the qualitative and quantitative impact of the HFSCs that are undertaken.
17. The premise of the renewed focus will be to ensure that every contact the Service makes counts.
18. The Authority's Performance & Scrutiny Committee, considered and scrutinised the proposed revised strategy at its meeting on 5th November 2015; and recommended that the strategy be referred to the full Authority for approval.

Equality and Diversity Implications

19. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is being completed and will be available at this meeting.

Staff Implications

20. MFRA will establish a Vulnerable Persons Team from the existing advocate team and encourage new ways of working and a renewed focus on third party referral. A further outcomes report will be submitted once the team is up and running, including how Officers engage and consult staff in the change process.

Legal Implications

21. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA) identifies the core functions of Fire and Rescue Authorities. Whilst the provision of free smoke detectors is not a statutory duty section 6 FRSA identifies fire safety as a statutory duty. This includes the requirement for the Authority to provide free fire safety advice and promote fire safety in its area.
22. The Service has acknowledged the wider implications of the introduction of the Care Act 2014 and the impact for Adult Social Care and those most vulnerable living in the community.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

23. There are no additional costs to the Home Safety Strategy as it will be delivered within the existing budget for Community Risk Management.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

24. All Operational Crews and Community Fire Prevention personnel responsible for delivering Home Safety initiatives will receive crew based training, reminding them of their personal responsibilities in respect of personal values,

including HFSC visits, Data Protection, Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and Risk Management.

25. Service Instruction 0604 will be reviewed and amended to reflect the Home Safety Strategy.
26. VPI status reports are formatted in a geographical area which makes HFSC service delivery more efficient and effective in targeting risk.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

27. The Home Safety Strategy will contribute to the mission by ensuring that risks and hazards are identified during routine prevention activities and reported appropriately, ensuring safer communities and a safer environment for firefighters.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE PERTINENT TO THIS REPORT

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check
ADF	Accidental Dwelling Fire
VPI	Vulnerable Persons Index
FSN	Fire Support Network
FSD	Fire Service Direct
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association
SSRI	Site Specific Risk Information