

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

24 SEPTEMBER 2019

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Les Byrom (Chair), Councillor James Roberts and PCC Jane Kennedy

Also Present: N/A

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllrs Brian Kenny and Lynne Thompson

1. Preliminary matters

Members considered the identification of declarations of interest, any urgent additional items, and any business that may require the exclusion of the press and public.

Members Resolved that:

- a) There were no declarations of interest made by individual Members, in relation to any items of business on the Agenda.
- b) There were no additional items of business which the Chair determined should be considered as matters of urgency.
- c) There were no items of business requiring the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof, due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Joint Fire & Police Collaboration Committee, held on 21st February 2019, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Verbal Update – Collaboration

Members were provided with a verbal update regarding collaboration between Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and Merseyside Police, following the Bluelight Programme Board held on 22nd July 2019.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members that he Co-Chairs the Bluelight Programme Board with Deputy Chief Constable – Serena Kennedy. He informed Members that the Board had met twice since the last meeting of this Committee, at which the various project leads have presented updates regarding their various work streams.

Members were informed that there has been some good progress made in several areas, with lots of work now being classed as “business as usual”, with a real joined up approach now being taken.

Members were advised that the work streams are split into 9 key areas; and were provided with a brief update in relation to each of those areas.

With regards to Legal Services, Members were informed that there are now 2 trainee solicitors, who are working across both organisations on a 6 month rotational basis, which is working very well.

In relation to Operational Planning Teams, Members were advised that work is underway to review joint contingency plans. They were informed that joint collaboration plans were not considered to be the best way forward, however there are joint plans in place via the Merseyside Resilience Forum. Members were advised that the teams are co-located and are working really well together, with a great deal of activity now business as usual.

With regards to Equality and Diversity, Members were informed that MFRA and Merseyside Police have held a joint inter-faith week; and have conducted joint work around recruitment and encouraging BAME individuals to apply for roles within the emergency services.

Regarding ICT, Members were advised that collaboration is fully embedded, with officers from each organisation, attending each other’s meetings. They were also advised that they are collaborating around skype and disaster recovery.

In relation to Estates, Members were informed that this is very much business as usual, with opportunities for collaboration being considered on an ongoing basis.

A further key area highlighted to Members, was around Training Delivery. Members were advised that progress has been quite slow in this area, but it has now gained momentum, with joint training opportunities now being considered in areas such as confined space, joint command; and driver training, as well as consideration being given to the provision of joint training facilities.

With regards to joint working within Strategy and Performance, Members were advised that there has been work undertaken around data protection and sharing sensitive data across organisations. They were also informed that the Corporate Communications Teams have facilitated joint media training, have made improvements around the sharing of information; and are providing reciprocal support.

Another key area highlighted, was around Health and Safety. Members were informed that work had progressed around joint training and awareness days. Also, consideration is currently being given to the potential for Merseyside Police to provide IOSH courses for MFRA.

Further areas of progress highlighted to Members, were around the drawing up and sign off of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) around Concern for Welfare, between MFRA and North West Ambulance Service.

Members were also informed of a MoU being developed between MFRA and Merseyside Police, around arson and fire investigation; and Merseyside Police accrediting our officers.

Members were assured that there is a great deal of genuine collaboration underway, with lots of activity now being business as usual; and frequent meetings taking place to keep under consideration, further opportunities for collaboration.

Members requested some further information around the accreditation for arson training.

Members were advised that MFRA do not have a duty to investigate arson, but Merseyside Police do. However, Merseyside Police do not have the required skills to investigate arson, so they call on MFRS to undertake these investigations.

Further questions were raised by Members regarding the provision of paramedic packs and trauma care training.

Members were advised that MFRA operational staff all receive First Person on Scene training, the aim of which is to enable them to provide emergency life care, which they often utilise at fire incidents and RTC's. Further information was provided to Members around the co-responding trial, which despite being successful, is tied up at the moment with national discussions. However, Members were advised that the provision for co-responding or Emergency Medical Response, is contained within the contracts of employment for all MFRA new recruits.

A question was also raised by Members around the potential impact of Brexit in relation to civil resilience around the Irish border. It was commented that Merseyside is one of the key border points and officers were asked if they are confident that plans in place are sufficient.

Members were reassured that a Brexit Committee has been established, which will be meeting frequently throughout the process to monitor such issues. They were also informed that additional funding has been provided to support this. From a Merseyside Police perspective, Members were advised that the Force Daily Summary, captures all relevant information.

Members Resolved that:

The content of the verbal update regarding collaboration progress, be noted.

Close

Date of next meeting: 21st January 2020