



To: All Members of the Scrutiny Committee
(and any other Members who may wish to attend)



R. Groves
Monitoring Officer

Tel: 0151 296 4000
Extn: 4113 S Healey

Your ref:

Our ref GS/RG

Date: 23/03/2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 3RD MARCH, 2022** in the Liverpool Suite - Fire Service Headquarters.

The proceedings of the meeting can be viewed via the following link:

https://youtu.be/u_r7-lzAZdg

Yours faithfully,

PP – S Healey

Monitoring Officer

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2022

AGENDA

Members

Anthony Boyle, Independent Person
Cllr Sharon Connor
Cllr Edna Finneran
Cllr Janet Grace (Co-Chair)
Cllr Kathy Hodson
Cllr Patrick Hurley,
Cllr Andrew Makinson
Cllr Lisa Preston
Cllr Paul Tweed (Co-Chair)
Cllr Gillian Wood

1. Preliminary Matters

Members are requested to consider the identification of:

- a) declarations of interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) any additional items of business which the Chair has determined should be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) items of business which may require the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 14th January 2019 and the 9th September 2021.

3. Youth Engagement Presentation

To consider a presentation on Youth Engagement at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

4. Standing Item: Scrutiny Forward Work Plan (Pages 15 - 18)

To consider the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan and identify any additional agenda items that the Members may wish to review.

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14TH JANUARY 2021

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Barrington, Finneran, Preston, Tweed, Grace, Knight, Makinson

Also Present: Ria Groves, Mike Rea, Anthony Boyle (Independent Member)
Nick Searle, Dave Mottram

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Coleman and Phil Garrigan (CFO)

2. Preliminary Matters

Members considered the identification of any declarations of interest, matters of urgency or items that would require the exclusion of the press and public due to the disclosure of exempt information.

Resolved that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) no additional items of business were determined by the Chair to be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, held on 10th September 2020, were approved as a correct record.

4. Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership

Members considered Report CFO/003/21 of the Chief Fire Officers, concerning an overview of and update on, the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP).

Members were introduced to Detective Superintendent (DS) Andy Ryan from Merseyside Police, who was in attendance to provide Members with a presentation around the Violence Reduction Partnership.

The Merseyside VRP was established in July 2019, with the aim of reducing serious violence via a public health approach and Members were shown a short film, providing an overview of the VRP.

Members were advised that the partnership did not want to look at serious violence in isolation, or as being solely an enforcement problem, rather they aimed to look at violence as being a preventable consequence of a range of factors and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).

Members were advised that a number of agencies and partners were involved in the core team, which included officers from MFRA. The co-located team included representatives from public health, the fire service, the probation service and youth offending, amongst others.

Members were informed that having the fire service involved in the core team, was unique to Merseyside, and something that the partnership was very proud of.

The presentation went on to highlight the introduction of a new programme – “Healing Together”, which was a 6 session programme, aimed at young people who have experienced domestic abuse. Members were informed that MFRS were currently leading the way on this initiative; and had been trialling it within Knowsley and St. Helens. They were informed that although the initiative was in its infancy, there were high hopes for the programme, with feedback being excellent; and the VRP were looking forward to seeing the outcome of the evaluation.

A question was raised around funding and the break down in terms of agencies, or initiatives.

Members were informed that the share of funding the Merseyside VRP received from Government, was £3.37m. They were informed that the PCC, provided funding to the Head of the VRP, to spend on specific interventions, with the Steering Group holding the Head of the VRP to account for expenditure.

Members were advised that the Home Office had stipulated that VRU's must spend at least 25% of their funding on interventions, with the remainder spent on staffing and academic support. It was highlighted to Members that in Merseyside as much as possible was to be spent on interventions, which for this financial year, had been around 70% of the funding. However, Members were advised of the requirement to build on the team, specifically around building on the analytical capability, which had an impact on the interventions budget.

Members were advised that no specific amount had been allocated to any work streams or organisations. However, for next year, the VRP were seeking to work more in themes, and so were identifying where the need and demand was greatest within Merseyside.

It was highlighted that there was some outstanding work going on across Merseyside but that this could be better coordinated.

Members were advised that the independent academic evaluation was a key part of measuring success, with the evaluation of the previous year, proving very insightful. However, it was highlighted that the VRP were more interested in identifying areas of improvement. Therefore, Members were advised that the VRP were encouraging more critical feedback and openness in relation to that evaluation. They were also advised that they are very keen on building in evaluation processes within the team, with the ability to evaluate interventions internally.

Another key aspiration for the VRP was to be more engaged with communities, particularly young people, but this had been difficult during 2020. Members were informed that the VRP had purchased an online system called “Dialogue”, for engaging with young people through a Q&A function.

With regards to success criteria, Members were informed that the Home Office criteria covered three areas which the VRP measured itself against:

- a reduction on serious violence offences;
- a reduction in homicide; and
- a reduction in hospital admissions.

Over the last 12 months there had been a reduction in these three areas, but it was unclear if that was due to the work of the VRP, the excellent work across the partnership, Covid-19, or a combination of factors.

Members were assured that there were a number of ways in which the VRP can measure success; and that they will continue to develop that, to ensure that they are held to account and understand what is working and what is not.

With regards to the secondment of MFRS staff to the VRP, Members queried whether there were plans for this to be made permanent.

Members were advised that the post was fully funded by the Merseyside VRP. They were advised that there have been conversations around whether that post would continue to be a full time post in 2022, or a part-time post, given the aspiration to ensure that as much funding as possible was spent on interventions. However, Members were assured that having the FRS involved in the core team, puts Merseyside VRP ahead of other areas; and ensured that arson was taken seriously.

Members commented that they were surprised to see that Merseytravel were not one of the key partners listed.

Members were advised that the list shown within the presentation, was of those partners involved in the core team. They were assured that a range of other partners are also involved, including Merseytravel.

A further question was raised around whether any funding was being provided to local communities through City Safe.

Members were informed that the interventions budget was split between the five Community Safety Partnerships, which each receive a substantial amount to undertake initiatives as required.

A question was raised around whether the VRP were involved in any drug prevention work, given the amount of young people getting involved in county lines activities.

Members were advised that there was a lot of drug prevention work already being undertaken across the partnership, therefore, whilst the VRP were acutely aware of the impact of drugs and links to violence, they were not directly involved in drug prevention activity. However, they do a lot of work around county lines. Members were advised that the VRP were trying to plug gaps and avoid duplication, and there were some areas, such as drug prevention, which were already well catered for.

Resolved that the content of the report and presentation be noted.

5. Publication of the UCLAN Minimising Firefighters Exposure to Toxic Fire Effluents – Interim Best Practice Report

Members considered Report CFO/002/21 of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, concerning the publication of an independent UCLAN report entitled '*Minimising firefighters' exposure to toxic fire effluents – interim best practice*' and the recommendations made therein.

Members were advised that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), commissioned a report published in November 2020, titled "Minimising Firefighters Exposure to Toxic Effluents".

The research behind the report was comprehensive and contained a review of current and previous UK FRS's decontamination processes and policies; and also a survey of over 10,000 firefighters.

Members were then provided with a presentation by GM Craig Whitfield – Health & Safety Manager, which provided the Committee with some background information, assurance around where MFRS was at present with regards to the report recommendations; and information regarding how MFRS proposed to move forward and the involvement of the HSE.

It was highlighted to Members that the report made a number of recommendations, split into two areas. One being recommendations for FS personnel, with regards to individual responsibility; and the other being for FRS's, in terms of looking at the broader picture, with regards to mechanisms, policies and procedures, to implement and support the recommendations.

Members were advised that the first recommendation for staff, was in relation to responsibility for protective equipment, such as breathing apparatus (BA). They were advised that the recommendation was very clear, in that during fire activities, respirators or BA, should be worn; and this is extended to post-fire, where crews are turning over, or dampening down materials that have been on fire. It stated that respirators should be the last piece of equipment to be disrobed, once they are out of

the risk area. Members were assured that MFRS are compliant with this practice already.

Again, Members were assured that MFRS are ahead of this recommendation, with a clear and robust cleaning kit policy, already in place.

Members were informed that MFRS had been at the forefront in leading on some of the work around this since 2013/14, and so were in a good position when the report was published in November 2020.

Members were advised that MFRS have an established HS&W Committee, which a Joint Statement, signed by all relevant parties including Trade Union representatives, Occupational Health, and Health & Safety. Members were informed that the HS&W Committee meets on a quarterly basis; and is the driver of this work, with support from the H&S Department.

Members were advised that the Beureu Veritas research and report, was commissioned by MFRS in 2014/15; and resulted in the production of three papers. Members were advised that the reports produced by Beureu Veritas, went through the relevant Committees at the time; and were also shared nationally, again underpinning the lead role MFRS have taken in this area.

The presentation then highlighted “Tool Box Talks” developed by the H&S Team, to be delivered to all operational crews and station based Station Managers. Members were informed that this complimented the training recommendation within the UCLAN report.

A question was raised by Members with regards to comments received from staff via the representative bodies, around changes to shift systems and the requirement for staff to transport some equipment in their own vehicles. It had been suggested that staff could be asked to transport potentially contaminated equipment in their own vehicles, in which children and other family members could also be travelling.

Members were assured that this was not the case and did not adhere to the Clean PPE Policy, which applies whether in a domestic vehicle, fire appliance, or any other operational aspect. Members were advised that any kit suspected to be contaminated was not deemed to be fit for operational duty, until it has been fully decontaminated and therefore, should not be transported. They were also informed that specific antibacterial wipes were provided for the cleaning and decontamination of helmets at scene, prior to being placed back into a kit bag; and items that could absorb contaminants were sent off-site for specialist cleaning.

Members queried the age of some PPE equipment and requested if the figures could be broken down to see how MFRA compared to other FRAs. Officers agreed to provide that information if it was available and it was noted that MFRA's Asset Management Plans, included a refresh of equipment such as PPE.

Members were informed that the current fire kit being distributed was brand new and top of the range and that the remaining stock was still fit for purpose with long asset dates remaining on them.

Resolved that:

- (a) the recommendations of the report specifically those for 'Fire Personnel' and those for 'Fire and Rescue Services' be noted;
- (b) the work carried out by MFRS in relation to contaminants and firefighter safety, including future developments be noted; and
- (c) that the content of the presentation from the H&S Manager be noted.

6. Standing Item: Review of Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Members reviewed the current Forward Work Plan for the Scrutiny Committee; and considered the inclusion of any additional items for Scrutiny, and the priority of any additional items.

No further items for scrutiny, were identified by Members at this stage.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 14 January 2021

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9TH SEPTEMBER 2021

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Connor, Finneran, Grace, Hodson, Makinson, Preston and Thomas

Also Present: Ria Groves, Mike Rea, DCFO Nick Searle, ACFO Dave Mottram, AM Kev Longshaw

Apologies of absence were received from: Councillors Wood and Tweed and Mr Anthony Boyle (Independent Member), Phil Garrigan (CFO) and Ian Cummins (Director of Finance and Procurement)

1. National Resilience Rapid Review

A presentation was given to Members by Area Manager (AM) Kev Longshaw which provided an overview of deliverables and notable outcomes from 2020/21 financial year, as well as information regarding key work streams for 2021/22 that are associated with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority's (MFRA) role as lead authority for national resilience.

Members were advised that MFRA will continue to provide a high level of support to the UK in relation to National Resilience, coordinating resources to help tackle major incidents such as floods, building collapse, explosion and major fires.

Members asked do the Home Office (HO) get charged for this and were advised that MFRA receives Section 31 Grants from the Home Office and receives additional grants as lead Authority.

Members asked if Merseyside are lead authority because they are the best and were advised by AM Longshaw that he believes so, although plans were put forward for Merseyside to be awarded lead authority.

Members were advised that MFRA were appointed as Lead Authority for National Resilience in 2016 and that they are responsible for the oversight of four key elements:

- National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) – has a dedicated team of Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) seconded officers tasked to oversee and assure the day to day capabilities remain fit for purpose;

- Long Term Capability Management – responsible for maintenance and servicing of all vehicles and equipment via Babcock as prime contractor;
- Training – skills acquisition and FRS refresher training; and
- National Resilience Fire Control – mobilising elements for incidents.

All individual FRSs are required to maintain their local assets.

Members asked if the calls to the control room come here, Members were informed that they do.

Members asked if Officers are permanently on call and were advised that this role is taken in a shift pattern (1 week on 1 week off) but that the workforce has never been below 90% of staff being available, ensuring that experts are always present.

Members were advised that if there are any flood incidents, that these are funded by Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Grants are received for National Resilience incidents (i.e. wildfires).

Members asked if the Fire Service staff at Liverpool Airport were trained by National Resilience staff and were advised that the Airport Fire Service are experts in aviation so training takes place together to learn from each other.

Members were informed what was reported in the end of year statement of assurance and told how Covid impacted training delivery and assurance. New assurance framework will be established. HO have agreed to contribute towards the Long Lane site development from the income and savings MFRA have generated on their behalf.

Members were advised of National Resilience's functional plan 2020-21, which completed 4 out of 5 key deliverables, due to the impact of Covid last year. Assurance visits of assets were completed all over the country and self-assessments were completed on Zoom due to the lockdown. Throughout the pandemic, the staff level was never below 90% operative, but visits and training was restricted.

Members asked if National Resilience measure Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and were advised that they do which are met.

Members were then updated with the eight items for the 2021-22 functional plan.

- Governance: There will be a review of the Home Office National Coordination Advisory Framework (NCAF) and associated FRS supported guidance.
- Engagement: Face to face meetings will take place with the Home Office, as they have not happened due to Covid, although virtual meetings have taken place via MS Teams.
- Learn: Work streams have been completed via e-learning.
- Record: Standard tests are done differently throughout the United Kingdom (UK) and these will be standardised.
- Inform: Explore the use of Resilience Direct – if/how it is appropriate to use.
- Collaborate: In hand.

- Support: When Prince Philip passed in April, National Resilience provided support by using special teams and assets to assist. National Resilience is not just limited to specialist capabilities.
- Enhance: Phase 2 of the new website is being developed.

Members thanked AM Longshaw for an excellent and detailed presentation.

Close

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FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY ITEM	REQUESTED BY	DESCRIPTION & TYPE OF ACTION	SCHEDULED DATE	RESPONSIBLE DIRECTORATE & PARTNER INVOLVEMENT	LINK TO VISION/ AIMS, & IRMP	DATE COMPLETED	FURTHER ACTION?
Fire Control	Scrutiny Committee – “Operational Response” 17 th January 2019	<i>The role of Fire Control and the implementation of Vision 5 and associated applications</i> Practical Demonstration in Fire Control	Awaiting Phase 2 of the Vision 5 project to be complete before the implementation of the HALO system and other associated applications 22-23	Operational Response	Aim <i>Prepare: We will always be the best that we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective</i> <i>Respond: We will be there when you need us most, pulling out all the stops to save lives. Whether we are taking 999 calls, or attending incidents, we keep our communities safe</i> IRMP – Operational Response		
National Resilience	Requested directly by Members	To review the performance and measurable deliverables the Authority is responsible for as Lead Authority for National Resilience through the statement of assurance 2020/21 and the proposals for the upcoming year. Rapid Review (full day)	9th September 2021	Operational Preparedness & National Resilience	Aim <i>Prepare: We will always be the best that we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective.</i>	9 th September 2021	None required

Revised Home Safety Strategy	Requested by Members at Scrutiny Committee 16 th January 2020	<p><i>“To undertake a review of the revised Home Safety Strategy, and the impact of targeted campaigns within the most deprived wards. This review will also provide a breakdown of information concerning the provision of smoke alarms, within those deprived areas.”</i></p> <p>Presentation on Committee Agenda</p>	10th May 2022	Prevention	<p>IRMP - Prevention</p> <p>Aim <i>Prevent: We are there for you. We are a visible presence that provides reassurance, support and advice. Alongside our partners, we protect the most vulnerable and reduce inequalities</i></p>		
MFRA’s Membership of Outside Bodies	Requested by Members at Authority Meeting 21 st May 2020	<p><i>“To undertake a review of the Authority’s Membership of the LGA and other outside bodies, to consider effectiveness and value for money”</i></p> <p>Report & Presentation on Committee Agenda</p>	22/23	Members of the Authority	<p>Aim <i>Prevent: We are there for you. We are a visible presence that provides reassurance, support and advice. Alongside our partners, we protect the most vulnerable and reduce inequalities.</i></p>		
Fleet vehicles and alternative fuels	Requested by Members at Budget Authority 25 th February 2021	<p><i>To review the progress and suitability of fleet of vehicles for a move to alternative fuels</i></p> <p>Report & Presentation on Committee Agenda</p>	22/23	Operational Preparedness	IRMP – Preparedness		
Accessibility Audit	Members informed at Authority 20 th May 2021	<p><i>To review the outcome of the report procured on the Authority estates as to accessibility to all (employees and the community) the proposed changes and impact</i></p> <p>Rapid Review</p>	10th May 2022	Strategy & Performance and Estates Department	<p>Aim <i>Prepare: We will always be the best that we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective.</i></p>		

<p>Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p>	<p>Requested directly by Members</p>	<p><i>To review the role of the ED&I networks and senior management sponsorship within the organisation and impact on the community</i></p> <p>Presentation on Committee Agenda</p>	<p>22/23</p>	<p>Strategy & Performance</p>	<p>IRMP – E,D&I</p> <p>Aim <i>Prepare: We will always be the best that we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective.</i></p>		
<p>People Plan</p>	<p>Requested directly by Members</p>	<p><i>The impact of the People Plan, succession planning, development and retention of staff</i></p> <p>Report & Presentation on Committee Agenda</p>	<p>10th May 2022</p>	<p>People and Organisational Development</p>	<p>Aim <i>Prepare</i> <i>We will always be the best that we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective.</i></p>		

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