

Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Authority



R. Groves
Monitoring Officer

Tel: 0151 296 4000
Extn: 4236 Vicky Campbell

Our ref VC/RG

Date: 19 October 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **AUTHORITY** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2022** in the Liverpool Suite - Fire Service Headquarters at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

Please note that this meeting is webcast and can be found at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/RMfArktO9p0>

Yours faithfully,

PP – V Campbell

Monitoring Officer

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY

27 OCTOBER 2022

AGENDA

Members

Emily Spurrell PCC, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Hugh Malone
Gillian Wood
Lynnie Hinnigan
Sharon Connor, Liverpool City Council
Edna Finneran
Linda Maloney
Lynne Thompson
Janet Grace, Sefton
Brian Kenny, Wirral (Vice-Chair)
Les Byrom CBE (Chair)
Lesley Rennie
James Roberts (Vice-Chair)
Paul Tweed
Andrew Makinson
Harry Gorman, Wirral
Dave Hanratty, Liverpool CC - Labour
Rothery, Liverpool CC
Tracy Dickinson, St Helens

1. Preliminary Matters

The Authority is 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 Previous Meeting - Authority meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Annual General Authority Meeting, held on Thursday 9th June 2022, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Urgency Committee (Pages 15 - 16)

The Minutes of the Urgency Committee meeting, held on Tuesday 31st

May 2022, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair

4. **The Case for adopting the socio-economic duty and proposed next steps** (Pages 17 - 40)

To consider Report CFO/046/22 of the Chief Fire Officer, informing members of the proposal presented to the Liverpool City Region, recommending the adoption of the Socio-economic Duty by the City Region

5. **Award of Contract for the Design and Supply of ELS vehicles** (Pages 41 - 46)

To consider Report CFO/047/22 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the award of contract for the design and supply of ELS vehicles.

If any Members have queries, comments or require additional information relating to any item on the agenda please contact Committee Services and we will endeavour to provide the information you require for the meeting. Of course this does not affect the right of any Member to raise questions in the meeting itself but it may assist Members in their consideration of an item if additional information is available.

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

9 JUNE 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Leslie Byrom
Cllr Sharon Connor
Cllr Tracey Dickinson
Cllr Edna Finneran
Cllr Harry Gorman
Cllr Jan Grace
Cllr Dave Hanratty
Cllr Lynn Hinnigan
Cllr Brian Kenny
Cllr Andrew Makinson
Cllr Hugh Malone
Cllr Linda Maloney
Cllr Lesley Rennie
Cllr James Roberts
Cllr Gillian Wood

Also Present: Anthony Boyle, Phil Garrigan, Nick Searle,
Dave Mottram, Ian Cummins, Ria Groves

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllr Anna Rothery, Cllr Lynne Thompson, Cllr Paul Tweed,

1. Preliminary Matters

The Authority 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) declaration of interest from Councillor Wood in respect of item 7 specifically in regard to the Growth Platform
- 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.

(a) Appointment of Chair

Councillor Les Byrom was nominated to be Chair of the Authority by Councillor James Roberts, seconded by Councillor Jan Grace. The Chair thanked the Members for providing him with the privilege to Chair the Authority for another year.

The Chair thanked the Members who had retired from the Authority for their contributions and for acting as Ambassadors for the Fire Authority in Merseyside. The Chair welcomed Councillors Tracy Dickinson, Anna Rothery and Dave Hanratty and Harry Gorman to the Authority as new Members for 2022/23.

RESOLVED that Councillor Les Byrom be appointed at the Chair of the Authority for 2022-23.

(b) **Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Councillors James Roberts and Brian Kenny were nominated by Councillor Byrom as Vice-Chairs of the Authority as seconded by Councillors Linda Maloney and Jan Grace.

RESOLVED that Councillors Roberts and Kenny be appointed as Vice-Chairs of the Authority for 2022-23.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members were advised that the Minutes from the Urgency Committee would be considered at the next Meeting of the Authority, as the meeting took place after the agenda was published.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 24th February 2022, were approved as an accurate record.

3. Membership of the Authority 22/23

(Please enter Reference 1)

The Members considered a report relating to the membership of the Authority for 2022/23.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted;
- b) the membership of the Authority further to the appointments by the five district councils be noted;
- c) the appointment of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Merseyside to the Authority be continued; and

- d) the Monitoring Officer be instructed to review the role of Independent Person and Co-Opted Member in order to present a report that considers best practice from other authorities in the next 12 months.

4. Structure of the Authority

Ria Groves, Monitoring Officer presented the report, which considered the structure of the Authority. It was noted that all Members had been provided with the matrix for Committees prior to the meeting.

It was explained that there had been no changes to the actual committees other than adding a Member to the Audit Committee for a total of six and a new quorum of four Members.

Members were made aware of a typographical error on page 28 of the report and it was explained that the correct proportionality should read Labour 72.21%, Liberal Democrat 11.11% and Conservative, Green and Liverpool Community Independent Group 5.56%.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Members determine the Committees it wished to establish;
- b) the number of voting Members to be appointed to each Committee be determined;
- c) the number of seats on each Committee to be allocated to each political group in accordance with the political balance regulations be determined;
- d) the alternate Members from the relevant political group to attend a Committee in the absence of the substantive Member be determined;
- e) the Members who are to be appointed to Committees and roles attracting a Special Responsibility Allowance be determined, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group in respect of those seats allocated to that group;
- f) the Members who are to be appointed to Lead Member roles be confirmed;
- g) Members inform Democratic Services prior to the start of any meeting if an alternative is attending on their behalf; and
- h) the proposed structure to reflect the recommended changes to the number of seats on Audit Committee be approved.

5. Meeting Dates for 22/23 and 23/24

Members were advised that the Scrutiny meeting in May had been brought forward to April to avoid any clashes with local elections. It was requested that the date for the next Strategy Day be moved from the 14th July to an alternative date that week to avoid a clash with a bi-election at Wirral Council.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the schedule of meeting dates and events for 2022/23 (attached as Appendix A) be considered and an alternative date for the Strategy Day in July be approved; and
- b) the draft provisional dates for 2023/24 (attached as Appendix B) be considered and noted

6. Questions on Discharge of Functions

Members considered the report, which requested that nominations for district Members responsible for questions on discharge of functions be agreed.

RESOLVED that the five Members (one from each constituent District Council) be nominated as the Member responsible for answering questions within their Council on the discharge of the functions of the Authority.

7. Appointment of Membership to Outside Bodies

It was noted, that at the previous Annual General Meeting, it was agreed to continue with LGA Membership unless otherwise stated and as that had not happened, the Authority was still affiliated with the LGA.

The Chair noted that there was new legislation this year that would be a challenge for the Authority as well as the recent government white paper and therefore it was crucial that Members maintain a knowledge base and lobbying on key issues.

RESOLVED that:

- a) current affiliations to outside bodies be noted;
- b) the continued affiliation with each of the organisations specified in the report be approved; and
- c) the appointments of Members to each of the outside organisations as the Authority's representatives be approved.

8. Approved Conference and Outside Meetings

Members considered the report relating to attendance at conferences and outside meetings.

RESOLVED that attendance at conferences and outside meetings by representatives of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority as determined by the Chair be approved.

9. Meetings with National Politicians at Party Political Conferences

Members noted that this report was a standing item at the Annual General Meeting and related to the Authority's power to lobby the government at party political conferences.

RESOLVED that:

- a) appropriate representatives of the political group of the Authority to attend meetings with Ministers, Opposition Spokespersons and other relevant national politicians, to be held at the locations of their own party-political conferences, to discuss issues relating to the business of the Authority be approved;
- b) appropriate travel and subsistence expenses for such meetings be approved, but no payment of conference fees be made; and
- c) issues raised, responses and progress made be reported back to the Authority.

10. Members Allowance Payments 2021/22

The Chair introduced the report which provided a backward view of the previous years allowance payments for 2021/22.

RESOLVED that the information contained within the report and at Appendix 1 be noted.

11. Scheme of Members Allowance 22/23

Members considered the report, which presented the scheme of Member's allowance for 2022/23.

RESOLVED that:

- a) continuation with the current Member's allowance scheme be approved;
- b) any inflationary increase to the Authority's Scheme of Member' Allowance is normally aligned to the previous year's Firefighters pay award be noted;
- c) a pay increase to the Scheme of Members allowances in line with the Firefighters Pay Award for 2022/23 which would apply to 2023/24 allowances be approved; and
- d) the combined roles of Co-opted Members and Independent Member be approved which includes:

- i) the appointment to both the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee, as a non-voting member (subject to approval of structure);
- ii) any complaints against Members, alleged to have breached the Member's Code of Conduct and relevant officers under the Relevant Officers Disciplinary Procedure on the Independent Panel as the "Independent Person" be continued; and
- iii) to be paid for conducting such roles following submission and verification of invoices, at a daily attendance rate of £50 (as and when required) as is the current case.

12. MFRA Constitution

Ria Groves, Monitoring Officer, explained that there were no significant changes within the constitution for 2022/23 and that the latest version sought to amend some typographical errors and note the change to structure for the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the draft amended Constitution for 2022/23 be approved;
- b) the Monitoring Officer to the Authority be instructed to keep the Constitution under review; and
- c) in the event of any relevant changes in legislation, a further report be brought to the Authority.

13. Construction of a New Multi-Pump Superstation, Training and Development Academy /National Resilience Centre of Excellence at Long Lane Aintree

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented the report which sought final approval for the construction of a new multi-pump superstation and training and development academy and centre of excellence at Long Lane Aintree.

It was explained that there had been a cost to date of £0.5million and the purchase of the land would cost £3-4million with income from the Home Office and a capital grant contributing towards the build. The total new commitment for the project would be £36,098million.

Members were advised that the proposal to merge the stations and build a superstation had been approved by the authority as part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2021-24. The proposal had been approved at a Planning Committee of Liverpool City Council on the 3rd May 2022 followed by a very supportive consultation process in October 2021. The CFO explained that this project would see a reinvestment into front line services that was a valuable cornerstone of the Authority.

The benefits of the proposal were discussed including an improvement to the number of engines available and quicker response times across both locations with an improvement of 49 seconds in Aintree alone. The development would improve inclusivity and accessibility for staff and the community, and the superstation would be significantly greener in terms of the carbon efficiency.

The improvement to training facilities were emphasised with a focus on training against realistic scenarios as a result of the recommendations from the Grenfell incident.

In summation, the development would significantly enhance fire fighter safety whilst making crews more effective, resilient and quicker to respond to incidents.

Councillor Maloney queried if the proposal could create an income for the Authority if other FRS came to Merseyside to train. It was explained that rather than generate income, there was the potential to offset some of the costs, which could then be reinvested back into MFRS.

Councillor Hanratty queried what contingency was in place to safeguard the Authority against unforeseen financial issues. It was also requested that the Authority receive regular reports on the progress of the project from a Lead Officer using a traffic light system to identify any imminent risks. Councillor Hanratty asked if there was an indication of how much income from overseas partners could be achieved and if the capital receipts of the buildings being sold could be ring-fenced for this project. With regards to budget, it was asked whether the ICT budget was sufficient considering the facility that was being proposed. Finally, Councillor Hanratty queried if other emergency services were collaborating with the Authority on this project to encourage cross working and a unified approach to response.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that further costs to the Authority had been mitigated with inflation control and after discussion with the contractors, greater price security and protection against rising costs had been secured. Contingency arrangements whether for financial reasons or otherwise have been reviewed and phasing in elements of the build will be assessed as necessary however the Chief Fire Officer believed the proposals would create the best training facility in the UK.

Members were assured that regular reports on the progress of the development would be submitted to the Committee. Officers would be made available to Members to provide updates on construction and any milestones.

With regards to external income, it was explained that the report being submitted did not factor in any external income to ensure that the project was sustainable for the Authority and within its control. Members were advised that any additional funding would be reinvested into the project.

Concerning capital receipts, the Chief Fire Officer explained that income from the sale of those buildings would contribute to building costs.

In terms of ICT, it was agreed that the figures were challenging but some services would be reused and therefore cost less than may be expected.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that the North West Ambulance Service currently co-habited seven of the Authority's stations and Merseyside Police worked alongside MFRA at the JCC. Deputy Fire Officer, Nick Searle added that conversations were ongoing, as part of the Collaboration Board and this would continue.

Councillor Hanratty welcomed the funding from government but expressed that more was needed, and more financial support should be offered to reflect MFRA's brilliant record of accomplishment and reputation. It was explained that MFRA has not received capital funding from the government for a long time and the £2million that was being provided by the Government recognised the work undertaken by MFRA nationally on behalf of the Home Office. Conversations were ongoing with the Home Office around support and funding for the service.

The Chair reported that he had spoken with the Police and Crime Commissioner about collaboration, and it was agreed that this would be considered.

It was agreed that a project liaison be established for the project to provide updates to the Members.

Members voted on the recommendations and agreed the recommendations below unanimously.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the combining of Croxteth and Aintree fire stations into a single site at Long Lane, Aintree as per the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-24 be approved; and
- b) the purchase of the land at Long Lane, Aintree for £3.938m be approved;
- c) the construction of a new multi-pump superstation, training and development academy/national resilience centre of excellence at Long Lane Aintree as per the IRMP 2021-24 be approved;
- d) the capital budget allocation of £39.198million as outlined in the finance section of the report, and the associated £14.253m borrowing be approved. That the Authority has incurred costs to date of £1.2million and received £1.7million from Home Office and a further £0.2m available from unspent Home Office grant be noted. Therefore, that £36.098 million of Authority expenditure be committed;
- e) a Design and Build contract to Wates Construction as detailed in the finance section be awarded;
- f) the Marketing for sale of Croxteth Fire station, Aintree Fire station and Vesty 5a and 5b and Richie Avenue be instructed with a report brought back to Members for final approval; and

- g) delegated powers to the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Director of Finance and Procurement and the Monitoring Officer to progress collaborative opportunities (including sponsorship) which are currently under consideration with Mersey Rail/ National Highways and specialist smoke control systems (Certus) should in the case of sponsorship the value exceed the current delegated powers of £25,000 be noted and approved.

14. Award of Contract to procure a new fleet of van for use by National Resilience

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, presented a request to award a contract to procure a new fleet of national resilience vans as part of the Authority's role as lead for national resilience.

It was explained that this formed part of supporting a refresh of national resilience assets over the next few years.

Councillor Gorman asked if the Authority had considered purchasing electric vehicles as part of this procurement. It was explained that this procurement formed part of the national transport asset management plan which included consideration of environmentally friendly technology as led by the Home Office.

RESOLVED that the award of a contract to Northern Commercials Limited acting on behalf of Iveco Limited, for the supply of a fleet of 18 vans for the purposes of National Resilience's Detection, Identification and Monitoring capability be approved.

15. Purchase of a 45m Bronto Combined Platform Ladder (CPL)

Members were requested to consider the purchase of a 45-meter Bronto Combined Platform Ladder (CPL) as proposed in the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan.

It was explained that the CPL was available in the next four –five months at a discounted cost as it was a demonstration model. The ladder would allow access to high-rise buildings, could act as a water tower and would broaden the service's capabilities.

Councillor Hanratty queried how the equipment would be stored and future proofed. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the CPL would fit on the current 34-meter CPL chassis so it could be stored easily and would be able to operate in narrow streets. A test-run at Liverpool City Centre had been undertaken and when building new stations, this kind of equipment would be taken into consideration.

RESOLVED that the purchase of the immediately available demonstration 45-metre Bronto CPL be approved.

16. **Multi - Function Device Contract Renewal 2022**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented the report, which sought to award a contract for multi-function devices for the next five years. Members' attention was drawn to the savings made in this area over the last 12 months

RESOLVED that the award of the Authority's Multi-Function Device 5 year Contract be approved.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 27 October 2022

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

31 MAY 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Leslie Byrom
Cllr Brian Kenny
Cllr Andrew Makinson
Cllr Lesley Rennie
Cllr James Roberts

Also Present: Phil Garrigan, Ian Cummins, Ria Groves

Apologies of absence were received from:

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.

Resolved that:

- a) Councillors Makinson and Roberts declarations that they are Councillors at Liverpool City Council.
- b) no additional items of business to be considered as matters of urgency were determined by the Chair; 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.

2. Procurement of Utilities

Councillor Makinson queried if the Authority paid Liverpool City Council any administration fees for providing Internal Audit services. Ian Cummins, Director of Finance and Procurement, advised that the Authority had outsourced internal audit services to Liverpool City Council and has a service level agreement with them for 112 days at a cost of £35,500 a year.

With regards to the forecast 2021/22 revenue underspend, Members were advised that any underspend would be used to increase the inflation reserve to cover higher than anticipated energy and pay costs in 2022/23.

Councillor Makinson asked what other service arrangements the Authority had with Liverpool City Council and was advised that the contract for supply of Gas was in place until March 2023.

In addition, the Authority buys in specialist treasury management support from the Council via a service level agreement at a cost of £23,000 a year.

It was explained that the proposal was to seek a fixed price contract in order to protect the Authority budget and the Chief Fire Officer explained that if the Authority were to seek other providers, the Authority would need to remain on a variable rate during that period.

RESOLVED that:

- a) note the contents of the report;
- b) agree to continue procuring utilities via the Liverpool City Council (LCC) energy contract whilst awaiting the outcome of an independent review of arrangement and therefore, approve entering into the Crown Commercial Services framework for the period from 1st July 2022 (or, if possible, sooner) until the 31st March 2023;
- c) instruct officers to prepare a report on the alternative options available to the Authority for the future procurement of utilities from March 2023 onwards; and
 - i) this report is to take into account the outcome of the LCC independent review into the Council's management of its electricity contract of which MFRA are an interested and affected party, and
 - ii) is to take into account the internal Audit report commissioned in response to this matter.

Close

Date of next meeting Date Not Specified

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	27 OCTOBER 2022	REPORT NO:	CFO/046/22
PRESENTING OFFICER	PHIL GARRIGAN, CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	PHIL GARRIGAN, CHIEF FIRE OFFICER	REPORT AUTHOR:	MO JOGI
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM NETWORK CHAIRS		
TITLE OF REPORT:	THE CASE FOR ADOPTING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS WITH LIVERPOOL CITY REGION		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: THE CASE FOR ADOPTING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS REPORT TO LCR AUGUST 2022
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the proposal presented to the Liverpool City Region, Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor in August 2022 recommending the adoption of the Socio-economic Duty by the City Region
2. To capture the proposed next steps and implications for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) on the adoption of the duty - subject to Authority approval

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the attached report and recommendations presented to Liverpool City Region, Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor by the Chief Fire Office Phil Garrigan on the 18th of August 2022 regarding the adoption of the Socio-economic Duty.
 - b) approve the adoption of the duty by MFRA and support the proposed next steps as detailed within the report.

Introduction and Background

4. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has a long history of highlighting the link between socio economic factors and fires in the community. The data associated with fatalities in accidental dwelling fires between 2006/07 and 2020/21 provides compelling evidence that in general and as deprivation increases, the number of fire deaths is gradually increasing across Merseyside.
5. Socio-economic disadvantage affects all aspects of life, including health, life expectancy and educational attainment in Great Britain. The 'socio-economic duty' (SED), Part 1 of the Equality Act (2010), aimed to deliver better outcomes for those who experience this disadvantage. The duty states that certain public bodies, when making strategic decisions on, for example, priorities or objectives, must consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Such inequalities could include inequalities in employment, education, health, housing or crime rates. Although this section of the Act was passed with the rest of the Equality Act in 2010, it has never been enforced, even though it represents a real opportunity for tackling inequality.
6. The SED came into force in Scotland as the 'Fairer Scotland Duty' (FSD) in April 2018 and in Wales on 31 March 2021. The UK Government has no plans to introduce the SED in England, although several English local authorities (such as Newcastle City Council and the North of Tyne Combined Authority and most recently Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority) have adopted the duty voluntarily.
7. In Scotland, the duty's visible effect so far has been the integration of socio-economic issues into such as area deprivation, fuel poverty, pay ratios, precarious housing and community empowerment into public planning and decision-making.

8. We know the extent of wealth and income inequality is of widespread concern across the Merseyside region. Since the Grenfell Tower disaster in June 2017 and, more recently, the cost-of-living crisis there has been increased focus on tackling disadvantage caused by socio-economic inequality, whether by reducing poverty or promoting inclusive growth. Therefore, the socio-economic duty becomes even more necessary.
9. In February 2022, following discussions with the Equality and Human Rights Commission Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan (MFRS) approached Liverpool City Region (LCR) suggesting the adoption of the Duty by the LCR.
10. These initial discussions with Chief Executive Katherine Fairclough led to further discussions with policy leads and equality officers in the region's six local authorities and the Combined Authority.
11. A joint paper supporting the adoption of the duty was subsequently taken to the LCR Chief Executives Group.
12. On the 18th of August 2022, CFO Phil Garrigan presented to the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor and the following recommendations were adopted:
 - a. Endorse the 'in principle' adoption of the socio-economic duty (SED) and request the LCR Chief Executives Group, following consultation with their respective leaders/mayors, to work together and in collaboration with MFRS and the Chief Fire Officer and other relevant partners, to explore arrangements to operationalise and co-ordinate adoption of the socio-economic duty, working in the first instance through the LCR Local Government Equality Officers Group, with regular progress reports submitted to meetings of the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor.
 - b. Work closely with the Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC) using their insights and expertise.
 - c. Continue to advance and encourage employers across the region to sign and implement the Fair Employment Charter developed by the Liverpool City Region.

- d. For Chief Executives to be asked to explore the feasibility of adopting the social mobility maturity assessment within their organisations and/or explore other approaches that could be utilised.
 - e. Explore how to influence the Population Health Board of the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (HCP) and use the SED to support the work in reducing health inequalities in the region through action on the social determinants of health.
13. Following the meeting on the 18th of August 2022, and as a result of further discussions with colleagues from the Liverpool City Region it was agreed that the following course of action would be undertaken to take forward the above recommendations.
14. Two region wide task and finish groups would be set up as follows:
- **Task group 1: Our role as employers:** this will consider what we can do to support recruitment, wellbeing and progression of people with protected characteristics and socioeconomic disadvantage. This group will be sponsored by Katherine Fairclough, Chief Executive, Liverpool City Region and would involve HR and OD Colleagues from across the Merseyside Region.
 - **Task Group 2: Civic Leadership:** this will consider how we can work together with stakeholders to tackle socioeconomic disadvantage across the city region, considering our own service delivery investment and funding as well as how we communicate with, and influence, other organisations and businesses to put practices in place to tackle inequality for those facing socioeconomic disadvantage. CFO Phil Garrigan, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service will lead this work.

Equality and Diversity Implications

15. There is considerable overlap between inequality because of having a protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage. The two directly intersect in the racialised, gendered, and disability inflected nature of poverty.

Staff Implications

16. The proposed work on the socio-economic duty has implications for staff as the proposal includes plans to (a) measure the social mobility background of staff (b) to undertake the Social Mobility Maturity Commission Assessment Framework to help measure our approach.

Legal Implications

17. The approach demonstrates MFRA is going beyond the requirements of the Equality Act and acknowledging equality is multifaceted.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

18. There will be no financial implications this year.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

19. There are no risk management, health and safety or environmental implications arising from this report.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

20. The report demonstrates strong civic leadership across the region. Through making the case for embracing socio-economic disadvantage, the duty will allow organisations to take an increasingly intersectional approach.
21. Deprivation interacts with equality-protected characteristics, and certain communities and geographies may also experience worse outcomes than in other areas. The intersectionality between deprivation and other characteristics can be thought of as a web, where different areas connect, compounding and exacerbating each other.
22. Finally working across the region and focusing on how a duty on socio-economic disadvantage can help work on all aspects of life, including health, life expectancy and educational attainment.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11 If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CA	Combined Authority
CFO	Chief Fire Officer
EHRC	Equality Human Rights Commission
FSD	Fairer Scotland Duty
HCP	Health and Care Partnership
HR	Human Resources
LCR	Liverpool City Region
MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the “action”
OD	Organisational Development
SED	Socio-economic Duty

The case for adopting the socio-economic duty and proposed next steps
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Date: August 18th 2022

Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor

Author: Phil Garrigan, Chief Executive, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS)
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Background

Socio-economic disadvantage impacts all aspects of life, including health, life expectancy and educational attainment in Great Britain. The ‘socio-economic duty’ (SED), Part 1 of the Equality Act (2010), aimed to deliver better outcomes for those who experience this disadvantage. The duty states that certain public bodies, when making strategic decisions on, for example, priorities or objectives, must consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Such inequalities could include inequalities in employment, education, health, housing or crime rates. Although this section of the Act was passed with the rest of the Equality Act in 2010, it has never been enforced, even though it represents a real opportunity for tackling inequality.

The SED came into force in Scotland as the ‘Fairer Scotland Duty’ (FSD) in April 2018 and in Wales on 31 March 2021. The UK Government has no plans to introduce the SED in England, although several English local authorities (such as Newcastle City Council and the North of Tyne Combined Authority and most recently Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority) have adopted the duty voluntarily.

The socio-economic duty requires public bodies to adopt transparent and effective measures to address the inequalities that result from differences in occupation, education and place of residence. Crucially, the socio-economic duty helps public bodies to recognise the link between different forms of poverty and the integrated approach needed to tackle them.

The duty provides another mechanism to support the most vulnerable in our society and which will be extremely important when we recover from the current cost of living crisis. In Scotland, the duty’s visible effect so far has been the integration of socio-economic issues into such as area deprivation, fuel poverty, pay ratios, precarious housing and community empowerment into public planning and decision-making.

We know the extent of wealth and income inequality is of widespread concern across the Merseyside region. Since the Grenfell Tower disaster in June 2017 and, more

recently, the cost-of-living crisis there has been increased focus on tackling disadvantage caused by socio-economic inequality, whether by reducing poverty or promoting inclusive growth. Therefore, the socio-economic duty becomes even more necessary.

Furthermore timely [new research](#) from Greater Manchester Poverty Action highlights the adoption of the SED/working in spirit of the SED in LAs across England. The development highlights the following:

- One in seven councils have voluntarily adopted the socio-economic duty.
- A large number of councils are 'acting in the spirit of the duty', with over half considering socio-economic status in equality impact assessments and in strategic decision making and policy development.
- Both Labour and Conservative controlled councils have adopted the duty.
- The percentage of local authorities who have adopted the socio-economic duty varies greatly across England. The regions with the highest proportion of local authorities adopting the duty are London, the North East and the North West.
- Local authorities with high levels of child poverty are more likely to have voluntarily adopted the duty.

Also, the UN Committee on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights and, according to the Equalities Trust, 82 MPs all support the enactment of the socio-economic duty. By working together and adopting the duty we can make a real difference.

The purpose of this paper is as follows:

- To set out the case for the voluntary adoption of the 'socio-economic duty' (SED) across the Liverpool City Region by the Combined Authority, the six local authorities and partner agencies including Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) to work together to embed SED, measure the impact and share and celebrate good practice.
- Work together to agree a common definition of how to define socio-economic disadvantage, inequalities of outcome, strategic decision making and the crucial role of applying due regard.
- Provide a further focus and opportunity to do things differently and to put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision-making across the region.

- In partnership, to influence SED integration across all functions of the combined authority, including transport, environment, investment and business growth, housing and homelessness, employment and skills, culture, fairness and inclusion.
- Through cooperation, influence the Population Health Board of the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (HCP) and use the SED to support the work in reducing health inequalities in the region through action on the social determinants of health.
- Finally, to work together to build a movement and demonstrate civic leadership and the benefits of using our role as ‘anchor institutions’ to support both employment and service delivery matters through the adoption and implementation of the SED.

Discussions

Initial discussions between Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan (MFRS) and Chief Executive Officer Katherine Fairclough, Liverpool City Region (LCR) led to further discussions with policy leads and equality officers in the region’s six local authorities and CA, leading to a positive discussion at the LCR Chief Executives Group and the Chief Fire Officer of the potential to move towards adoption of the SED in the Liverpool City Region.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) has also been in discussions with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and specifically their work on inequality and investment to gain an insight into the experience of Scotland and Wales and their attempts to apply the SED.

Why is socio-economic disadvantage important to the Liverpool City Region and partners?

- Deprivation scores across all the LCR local authorities are significantly higher than the England national average and linked to protected characteristics and wider causes of vulnerability (See Appendix 1).
- The data associated with fatalities in accidental dwelling fires between 2006/07 and 2020/21 provides compelling evidence that in general and as deprivation increases, the number of fire deaths is gradually increasing across Merseyside.
- There has been significant economic and social improvement over the past 15 years across the region, yet 330,000 people in the region are income deprived and more than one in four children live in poverty.

- Education and skills are vital for people to make the most of economic opportunities, but children from low-income backgrounds achieve worse results at every stage of their education compared to those from better off homes. This deprives the region and employers of talent. It also reduces people's earning potential, reduces the tax take and increases the risk that poverty will be passed from one generation to the next.
- From an employer perspective, some staff may be likely to suffer disproportionately from the impact of in-work poverty and the national cost of living crisis.
- Effective action on health inequalities and inequalities in the social determinants also requires a strong link to quality employment and concerted action between the NHS, local authorities, businesses, public services, the voluntary sector, the faith (VCF) sector and communities. The adoption of the duty could provide a springboard for the work of the Population Health Board of the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (HCP).

Where are we now in relation to addressing socio-economic factors?

The six local authorities, CA and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service are at varying stages of addressing aspects of the duty. Appendix 2 highlights how authorities have developed several methods to address socio-economic factors. Organisations are undertaking a range of activities designed to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and thus acting in the spirit of the duty. While the organisations are positive about the duty, the findings suggest that there are opportunities for collaboration to ensure effective implementation.

How can we work together as a region to amplify the regional work on socio-economic disadvantage through adoption of the socio-economic duty?

- Strengthen and magnify the collaborative work in the Liverpool City Region, an example of which has been the former Child Poverty and Life Chances Commission and its successor, and wider work on building a fair and inclusive city region such as the LCR Fair Employment Charter, which the former commission championed
- Continue to maximise the potential as anchor institutions, in the context of Community Wealth Building, which are the biggest local spenders and employers. How we

procure goods and services and their approach to employment practice can be shaped to support local economic vitality.

- Continue to integrate the [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) to consider social value that promotes the inclusion of social value in all activities. The Combined Authority has adopted a Social Value Framework and is in the process of recruiting to a Social Value Lead role, which can help support other partners as they embed social value.
- Consider investing and adopting the Social Mobility Commission maturity framework assessment (see Appendix 4) & four questions (see appendix 5). As a group, agree individually to adopt the employers focused Social Mobility Commission recommended [maturity assessment framework](#) that comprises of 12 key questions focusing on data, communications, talent, pay and collaboration that allows organisation to gain a baseline on where they are in respect of social mobility and the next steps they can take for a detailed overview (See Appendix 4). In addition to help benchmarking across the region as employers, agree to work together to agree a set of questions based on the [four questions](#) recommended by the social mobility commission that employers could ask staff and applicants for employment to help ascertain their social economic background. These are largely based on parental occupation at age 14, type of school attended, free school meals eligibility and, for graduate hires, parental university attendance (See Appendix 5)
- Tackle and put in place support mechanisms to address in-work poverty. We know that our workforce, like other UK households, are facing an enormous cost of living challenge this year. Inflation rates are at a [thirty-year high](#), while soaring energy, food, housing and transport costs impact us all - individuals and business alike. But those on the lowest incomes will be hit the hardest. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the crisis is set to 'devastate the budgets of families on the lowest incomes': low income households will spend around 18% of their income (after housing costs) on energy bills after April – compared to 6% for middle income households.
- Set an example and work with partners to tackle low pay and in-work poverty and increase the use of the living wage across the region.

- Work with partners to improve employment rates, number of people recruited from our most deprived areas, quality of employment, and tackle insecure employment on a postcode basis.

Case Study 1: Community engagement

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service’s ‘Safe and Well Checks’ includes fuel poverty referrals. In addition, focus on areas of disadvantage and existing work on prevention and protection and in particular housing inequalities. Furthermore, address child poverty and educational attainment through the Prince’s Trust.

Case Study 2: Recruitment

The most recent recruitment of Fire Fighters by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service attracted 195 applicants who did not hold a driving licence. Using national levels of deprivation, 84% of the applicants without a driving licence reside in the 50% most deprived areas of Merseyside. Focusing on the 10% most deprived decile of Merseyside, 48% of total applicants without a driving licence live within these deprived areas.

- Work together and focus on how a duty on socio-economic disadvantage can help work on all aspects of life, including health, life expectancy and educational attainment.
- By adopting a duty, reaffirm how employment is linked to the fundamental causes of health inequality and the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power. Increasing the quality and quantity of work can help reduce health inequalities.
- The latest data shows the Liverpool City Region has higher levels of economic inactivity than nationally (23% vs 21% in England overall), and much of this is driven by a high proportion of residents with long-term health problems. Indeed, almost a third of economic inactivity in LCR is because of long-term sickness (31%), the fifth highest proportion of any LEP area.
- Influencing public health (Appendix C) gives an overview of the latest data on multiple health related indicators, comparing LCR and the England average. Across most, LCR performs worse than nationally.
- Finally, by embracing socio-economic disadvantage the duty will allow organisations to take an increasingly intersectional approach. Deprivation interacts with equality protected characteristics, and certain communities and geographies may also experience worse outcomes than in other areas. The intersectionality between

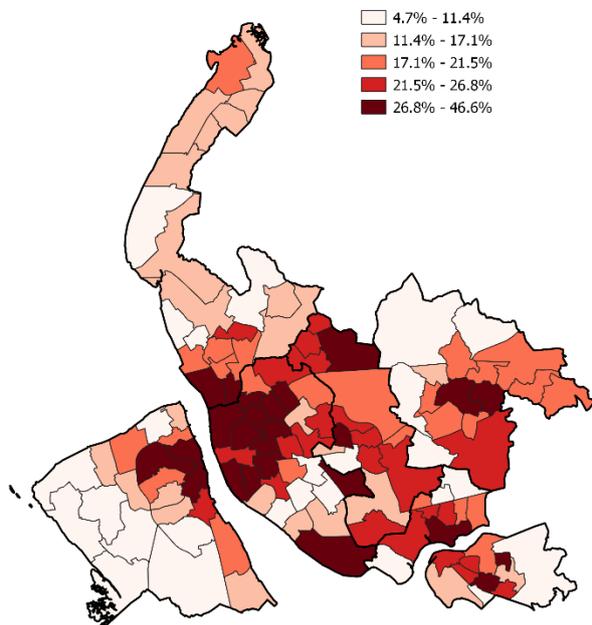
deprivation and other characteristics can be thought of as a web, where different areas connect, compounding and exacerbating each other.

Recommendations

That the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor discuss and approve the contents and direction that are set out in this paper and, in particular:

1. Endorse the 'in principle' adoption of the socio-economic duty (SED) and request the LCR Chief Executives Group, following consultation with their respective leaders/mayors, to work together and in collaboration with MFRS and the Chief Fire Officer and other relevant partners, to explore arrangements to operationalise and co-ordinate adoption of the socio-economic duty, working in the first instance through the LCR Local Government Equality Officers Group, with regular progress reports submitted to meetings of the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor.
2. Work closely with the Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC) using their insights and expertise.
3. Continue to advance and encourage employers across the region to sign and implement the Fair Employment Charter developed by the Liverpool City Region.
4. For Chief Executives to be asked to explore the feasibility of adopting the social mobility maturity assessment within their organisations and/or explore other approaches that could be utilised.
5. Explore how to influence the Population Health Board of the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (HCP) and use the SED to support the work in reducing health inequalities in the region through action on the social determinants of health;

Appendix 1



Proportion of Children (Aged Under 16) in Relative Low Income Households by Ward, 2019/20, before housing costs.

The most recent data for 2020/21 shows the overall rate for LCR as 19.3% compared to a UK figure of 15.1%

Source: DWP Children in low income families: local area statistics 2019/20 and 2020/21

Appendix 2

Authority	Policy Statement	Data collection	Action planning
Halton	Yes - Corporate Plan, Equality Strategy + EIA template	Considered within EIA process + Cust Int Unit ward profiles	Considered within EIA process
Knowsley	EIA template. In equality and diversity policy statement	Within EIA template	Only if something comes from EIA
Liverpool	EIA template. In equality and diversity policy statement	Within EIA template	No data yet available
St Helens	No	Undertaken a baseline of various socio-economic factors as part of our ongoing Inclusive Growth Strategy commission but not the specific data recommended by SMC	Not yet - data in Inclusive Growth Strategy sets baseline
Sefton	EIA template. In equality and diversity policy statement	Data is collected by our Business Intelligence team	Data is published by Business Intelligence team as part of ward profiles etc and made available to projects on request
Wirral	Supported by Wirral Plan and Community Wealth Building strategy, together with Customer Experience Strategy in development and review of equality objectives	Considered within EIA process	Considered within EIA process
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	EiA Template, ED&I Action Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)	Data is collected routinely across the various functions of the organisation in terms of work focusing on prevention, protection and response and recognised as part of the EIA process	Influence work managing risk, delivering services, assessing vulnerability, and committing resources
LCRCA	Equality Strategy commits to considering Socio-Economic Background alongside 9 protected characteristics	We have agreed to adopt the Social Mobility Commission recommended 4 questions chiefly based on parental	In the first instance LCRCA data collected in 22/23 will be benchmarked against Social Mobility

		background at age 14	Commission national data. In addition to recruitment and workforce data this approach will be rolled out for wider monitoring of residents as customers/service users etc.
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Appendix 3

Indicator	LCR	England	LCR Rating
Under 75 mortality from all causes (per 100k residents)	435.0	336.5	Worse than national average
Under 75 mortality from preventable causes (per 100k resident)	195.2	104.5	Worse than national average
% of physically active adults	63.2%	65.9%	Worse than national average
% of adults classed as overweight or obese	66.1%	62.8%	Worse than national average
Smoking prevalence in adults (aged 15+)	17.5%	15.9%	Worse than national average
Hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions (per 100k residents)	597	456	Worse than national average
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	4.2	3.9	Similar to national average
% of Year 6 pupils classed as overweight or obese	39.3%	35.2%	Worse than national average
Prevalence of long-term mental health problems (aged 16+)	13.0%	9.9%	Worse than national average

Appendix 4

The Social Mobility Maturity Assessment

12 Questions

The Social Mobility Commission Maturity Assessment Framework

To assess how well your organisation is doing on social mobility, we need to ask you a few questions about your organisation (or the business unit you are most familiar with)

Question 1

Does your organisation **collect data** about the socio-economic background of its employees? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 2

Does your organisation **analyse data** it collects about the socio-economic background of its employees? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 3

How **prominent** is socio-economic diversity and inclusion in your workplace? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 4

How does your organisation **communicate** regarding socio-economic diversity and inclusion in the workplace? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 5

How does your organisation **engage with prospective applicants**? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 6

How does your organisation **create opportunities for prospective applicants**? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 7

How does your organisation **attract talent**? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 8

Where does your organisation create and offer jobs? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 9

How is **training and progression** offered in your organisation? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 10

How are **pay and promotion opportunities** offered in your organisation? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Question 11

How **transparent** is your organisation? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation

Question 12

Does your organisation **collaborate and advocate** in support of socio-economic diversity and inclusion? Please choose an option based on the statement that best describes your organisation.

Appendix 5

The Social Mobility

4 Questions to identify & measure Social Mobility background (SEB) in the workplace

Background Information

According to the Social Mobility Commission (a non-departmental public body) measuring the socio-economic background of employees and potential recruits is the critical first step to improving social mobility, in support of the SED. It helps to identify what needs to be done in order to improve the socio-economic diversity and inclusion of an organisation.

The Social Mobility Commission has consulted with dozens of academic experts, think tanks, charities and employers to determine the most important information to collect. They have concluded that asking the workforce, apprentices and applicants just three key questions will provide a firm basis on which to develop an informed strategy for improving social mobility, with a fourth optional question for graduate hires.

Questions:

Question 1: Parental occupation (key question)	Should be reported as three groups (professional, intermediate, or lower-socioeconomic/working class background). Best measure for SEB.
Question 2: Type of school attended	This measure shows extreme economic and cultural advantage.
Question 3: Free school meal eligibility	Applies only to staff who went to school post-1980. This is a measure of extreme economic disadvantage.
Question 4: Parental university attendance (<i>optional for graduate hires</i>)	Optional for organisations with a graduate scheme to ask its graduate hires. Not a measure of SEB; gives an understanding of the experience and needs of graduate hires.

Question 1: What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged about 14?

- Modern professional & traditional professional occupations such as: teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer, accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil / mechanical engineer. [code=professional background]

- Senior, middle or junior managers or administrators such as: finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager. [code=professional background]
- Clerical and intermediate occupations such as: secretary, personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse. [code=intermediate background]
- Technical and craft occupations such as: motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver. [code=lower socio-economic background]
- Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations such as: postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, sales assistant, HGV driver, cleaner, porter, packer, labourer, waiter/waitress, bar staff. [code=lower socioeconomic background]
- Long-term unemployed (claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year) [code=lower socio-economic background]
- Small business owners who employed less than 25 people such as: corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or cafe owner, taxi owner, garage owner [code=intermediate]
- Other such as: retired, this question does not apply to me, I don't know [code=exclude]
- I prefer not to say [code=exclude]

Question 2: Which type of school did you attend for the most time between the ages of 11 and 16?

- A state-run or state-funded school
- Independent or fee-paying school
- Independent or fee-paying school, where I received a means tested bursary covering 90% or more of the total cost of attending throughout my time there
- Attended school outside the UK
- I don't know
- I prefer not to say

Question 3: If you finished school after 1980, were you eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable (finished school before 1980 or went to school overseas)
- I don't know
- I prefer not to say

Question 4 (optional for graduate hires): Did either of your parents attend university and gain a degree (e.g. BA/BSc or equivalent) by the time you were 18?

- No, neither of my parents attended university
- Yes, one or both of my parents attended university
- Do not know / not sure
- I prefer not to say

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	27 OCTOBER 2022	REPORT NO:	CFO/047/22
PRESENTING OFFICER	DCFO NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	PAUL MURPHY AREA MANAGER IAN CUMMINS, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT	REPORT AUTHOR:	HYWYN PRITCHARD
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	PAUL HITCHIN		
TITLE OF REPORT:	AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE DESIGN AND SUPPLY OF ELS VEHICLES		

APPENDICES:	
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Purpose of Report

1. As the Home Office (HO) national resilience lead the Service has worked with HO and other FRA colleagues to source vans to provide Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS) at incidents. Officers wish to award a contract for the purchase of 6 vehicles at a cost of £728,901.84, with Wilker UK Limited. As the contract exceeds £250,000, Standing Orders require that Members must approve the contract.
2. All costs associated with the contract are funded by the HO.
3. In advance of signing the contract officers may wish to increase the order for an additional ELS van, £121,483.64, and, may also want to request additional non-material changes to the current specification (up to 5% of the contract value). Therefore, Members are requested to approve these contract amendments, if they are required.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the award of a contract to Wilker UK Limited, for the design and supply of a fleet of 6 vans for the purposes of Enhanced Logistics Support was approved by the Chair, Vice Chair and Party Group Leaders under Standing Order 17.2 of the constitution following consultation with the Chief Fire Officer , and
 - b) note, if necessary, that the contract can be amended to include an additional vehicle and/or increased specification, and

c) note all costs associated with the contract will be funded by the Home Office.

Introduction and Background

5. The Service acts on behalf of the Home Office (HO) as the national resilience lead authority and as part of that role the Service procures national resilience assets. The Service has worked with HO and other FRA colleagues to source vans to provide Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS) at incidents. This is a new vehicle requirement to support the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) National Resilience Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS) Capability with a fleet of 6 ELS vehicles.
6. These vehicles will be similar in design to existing Fire and Rescue Service Incident Command Units already used across England and Wales. They will be based at 6 strategic locations and may be hosted/housed either inside a fire appliance bay or outside (near to an existing fire appliance bay). When in operation the vehicle will be driven on the public highway and sited on hard standing ground within a Strategic Holding Area. However there may be some instances where it may be driven and sited on uneven compacted ground (forestry/moorland areas).
7. The vehicles will serve NFCC National Resilience for its intended purpose of transporting specialist equipment to deliver ELS. Additionally the vehicles may be deployed to deliver ELS training throughout the UK.
8. As the existing ELS Vehicles are assets that are not currently serviced under the provisions of the Long Term Capability Management (LTCM) their procurement lies outside this contracting arrangement. However it is envisaged that once in service the vehicles will be added to the LTCM maintenance schedule.
9. Following the recent successive lockdowns in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, vehicle deliveries have been adversely affected. Primarily, the delays have been caused by shortages of integrated circuits (silicon chips) used in vehicle manufacture. The war in Ukraine has also made matters worse in terms of supply chains e.g. wiring looms, rubber.
10. To mitigate the risk of long lead times it was imperative to have orders placed with a suitable supplier at the earliest opportunity.
11. Initial discussions took place in March 2022 between the group as represented by HO, FRA colleagues and MFRS. It was decided that a suitable route to market would be by framework agreement as this would reduce both timescales and risk in terms of contracting.
12. The group as represented by HO, FRA colleagues and MFRS agreed that one supplier was required to deliver a fully modified vehicle, as opposed to procuring vehicles from one supplier and having them modified by another. By having only one party responsible for the vehicle selection and its modification, the risk of any

disputes arising between vehicle supplier and vehicle converter have been greatly reduced.

13. The market approach taken was to use Crown Commercial Services' (CCS) Vehicle Conversions framework agreement (RM3158), having also considered their Vehicles framework (RM6060) as well as the Devon and Somerset framework for vehicles. The group was comfortable that suppliers named on the Vehicle Conversions framework had suitable experience in blue light applications.
14. The specification for the converted vehicle was worked up and completed during the first quarter (FY 2022/23). It was written to allow prospective suppliers to select the brand of vehicle for conversion within certain parameters. At the same time tender documents were completed and the electronic version prepared – project reference Design and Supply of Enhanced Logistics Support Vehicles (MFRS 2223-03)
15. Tenders were invited on the 4th of June and suppliers' clarification questions were answered on the 3rd of August. 5 bidders responded by the deadline the 16th of August.
16. Tenders were circulated to the Evaluation Panel of the 17th of August together with a scoring sheet. Individual scores were returned by the 2nd of September. The consensus scoring meeting was held on the 7th when it was decided to conduct a clarification meeting on the 13th.
17. Following the clarification meeting the Evaluation Panel agreed that highest scoring bidder's scores were correct and did not need adjustment. Also the Evaluation Panel was content to confer preferred bidder status to Wilker UK Limited as the highest scoring bidder.
18. Evaluation and feedback notices were sent to all unsuccessful bidding organisations on the 14th with a standstill period close of the 26th of September at the earliest. The highest scoring bidder was advised of its preferred bidder status and also that no contract would be awarded without MFRA's approval.
19. The preferred bidder acknowledged the intention to award notice on the 15th which was received very positively. Subject to contract vehicle deliveries are expected during the week commencing 30th October 2023.
20. Due to necessary changes in the timescale of the next Authority meeting and time constraints to enter into the contract in respect of the costs and the time for the vehicles to be built and delivered due to external market factors the award of the contract was urgent and following consultation with the Chief Fire Officer was therefore brought to the Chair of the Authority under provision of standing order 17.2 of the Authority. The award of the contract was agreed by the Chair of the Authority along with the Vice Chair and Party Group Leaders however, this report is to present the full details to Members of the Authority and the decision to award the contract.

Equality and Diversity Implications

21. There are no equality and diversity implications associated with the purchase of vehicles. .

Staff Implications

22. The Specification required that taller employees could work comfortably in the vehicle.
23. Training has also been included for operational and maintenance staff within the tender.

Legal Implications

24. The route to market is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
25. A call-off contract based on the vehicle conversions framework agreement (RM3814) will be signed with the supplier subject to Authority approval.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

26. The price for the 6 vehicles as quoted will be £728,901.84 (excluding VAT, road fund license and first registration fee).
27. Note that if 7 vans are required the contract price would increase to £850,385.48. Furthermore a Members are asked to agree to a provision of up to 5% of the contract value to cover potential minor additions to the specification (if necessary).
28. Funds for this procurement have already been allocated by Home Office National Resilience purposes.
29. Having a fleet of new vehicles on order in 2022 will ensure that from approximately November 2023 specialist vehicles will be available to deliver ELS.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

30. The tender includes vehicle inspection and testing by a third party provider that will generate a test report.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

31. By replacing the fleet with up to date vehicles a more reliable and responsive service can be delivered that will better protect communities from incidents as part of national resilience

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the “object”.
MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the “action”
CCS	Crown Commercial Services
ELS	Enhanced Logistics Support
LTCM	Long Term Capability Management

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