



**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: 4236 Vicky Campbell

Our ref VC/RG

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 2023** in the Liverpool Suite - Fire Service Headquarters.

This meeting will be available to watch via YouTube on the following link:

<https://youtu.be/vZCx3pxM27g>

Yours faithfully,

PP – V. Campbell

Monitoring Officer

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**MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**12 JANUARY 2023**

**AGENDA**

**Members**

Linda Maloney, Chair  
Sharon Connor  
Edna Finneran  
Dave Hanratty  
Andrew Makinson  
Lesley Rennie  
Anna Rothery  
Paul Tweed  
Gillian Wood,  
Anthony Boyle

**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 Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 8)**

The Minutes of the Previous Meeting, held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the committee chair.

**3. Identification and Procurement of Operational Kit and Equipment  
(Pages 9 - 12)**

To consider report CFO/56/22 and a presentation on the process Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service follow to procure Personal Protective Equipment and operational kit to ensure its suitability for staff and value for money.

4. **Standing Item: Scrutiny Forward Work Plan** (Pages 13 - 16)

To consider the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan for 2022/23

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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**

**8 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllr Paul Tweed (Co-chair)  
Cllr Edna Finneran  
Cllr Andrew Makinson  
Cllr Linda Maloney  
Cllr Anna Rothery  
Cllr Gillian Wood  
Anthony Boyle

**Also Present:** DCFO Nick Searle, Ria Groves, Mike Rea,

**Apologies of absence were received from:** Cllr Sharon Connor, Cllr Dave Hanratty, Cllr Leslie Rennie, ACFO Dave Mottram, Ian Cummins

#### **1. 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 required the exclusion of the press and public, due to the disclosure of exempt information:

#### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **3. Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report 2021/22**

Members considered the health, safety and welfare annual report and presentation by Group Manager Craig Whitfield which focused on the incidents throughout 2021/22 including injuries and road traffic collisions.

Members queried if there is a distinction in the reporting around collisions under blue lights and those incidents which may be avoidable. Members were advised that each incident is reviewed and there is a structured process in place for this. 95% of collisions while under blue lights are at a low speed however, all of the circumstances are taken into account when reviewing incidents and the data analysed in order to identify any patterns or trends which can then be addressed.

Members also queried the recording of the impact of adverse weather conditions on incidents, Group Manager Craig Whitfield clarified that while the weather conditions are reported in investigations they are not for incidents although this will be reviewed in the future.

DFCO Nick Searle advised that all employees are sent an alert email when weather is particularly bad and when weather warnings are in place which allows operational staff to make reasonable adjustments.

Members enquired how officers deal with parking issues when responding to incidents. Members were advised the Service is very proactive through its prevention department in providing the community with the relevant information however when responding to an incident crews will take reasonable actions in order to get to the incident.

Further to Members enquiring how mental health is recorded they were advised this would be undertaken by Occupational Health. however the Health and Safety department work closely with Occupational Health to ensure the relevant measures have been put in place to support staff as necessary.

Members queried if the figures in the report were comparable to other authorities. Members were informed that accidents are benchmarked nationally every October however, collisions are not collated nationally due to the substantial differences in circumstances between Fire and Rescue Services.

**RESOLVED** that the report and accompanying presentation be noted.

#### **4. People Plan Actions Update**

Members considered the People Plan actions update report and presentation provided by Director of People, Legal, Democratic Services and Organisational Development Nick Mernock.

Members were reminded that the People Plan approved by Members is a 3-year plan from 2021-2024.

#### **Leadership-**

Members were informed of how the newly incorporated leadership message was being embedded within the Service with training being delivered across the organisation to all staff over the last 7 months delivered by an external training provider. The training also referred to as the colours training helps people

identify how they work and breaks this down into four colours. This will be worked into the appraisal system to help those individuals in the way they work and achieve their goals.

Members were also informed of the Accelerated Development Scheme which is an ambition for the Authority to create an internal development scheme to identify high performing staff and get the best people in the roles and begin to identify future leaders in all roles.

Members were advised that officers are exploring the potential to create a “Just Culture” within the service. This is a tool to open discussions beyond appraisals and encourage staff to speak out early and help resolve any issues prior to a grievance being raised .

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Members were informed that as part of equality, diversity, and inclusion there remains a focus on creating a strong and inclusive organisation and a sense of belonging.

There is a role in the People and Organisational Development team to help with Positive Action. While the candidate is yet to be recruited for this, there are currently two members of the staff network who are helping with outreach work. A post has been set up in the Equality and Diversity team in “Knowing Communities” and work has already commenced in this area. Staff networks now have their own budgets to be able to engage more in the community.

As Members were being provided with the recruitment figures for the last recruitment process in August 2022. Members were advised that the Service compares well nationally regarding equality and diversity, however there is still a strong desire to improve. Members were also advised that the Service is 1 of 5 organisations with 10% of its operational staff female. However, work continues to increase in the numbers of BAME employees.

### **Wellbeing Culture**

Members were also informed that the wellbeing of staff is always paramount and that Occupational Health offer, who assistance to staff which includes providing internal and external councillors for mental health issues. If staff book sick with any mental health related sickness, they are provided with an appointment within 3 days. There is a capability process in place which uses support plans to support staff back into work. The Service has found persistent short-term absences are dealt with quickly and this has now created a supportive process for staff.

Members were also advised that Officers are currently reviewing and building a flexible/hybrid working process. Staff were invited to two meetings, which have now taken place and the feedback is being considered and remains ongoing while the process is being developed. The meetings have allowed staff to bring

up any concerns around flexible working and been a productive conversation with staff.

Members acknowledged the success of female and BAME candidates in previous recruitment processes however it was queried on the number of BAME females in the organisation. Members were informed that all networks are engaging with the community however the Service is receiving minimal applicants from BAME females across all roles not just operational, so it is a broad challenge for the Authority. It is the aim of the Authority to improve.

Members enquired whether more access through community clubs such a sport or school clubs to try to help applicants that are coming in regard to the physical demands of the role. It was agreed that this is being reviewed to expand the reach within the community.

Members asked for further detail on how the accelerated development scheme will work and how diversity can continue to grow within the organisation. While it was confirmed to Members the scheme is not yet in place and the criteria is being reviewed, the engagement with staff and through staff networks the Service will always continue to review its processes and better ways of working.

**RESOLVED** that the report and accompanying presentation be noted.

**5. Standing Item: Scrutiny Forward Work Plan**

Members were asked to consider the Scrutiny Committee forward work plan for 22/23.

**RESOLVED** that the forward workplan be noted and that any suggested changes to be communicated to the Democratic Services team to be raised at the next meeting.



<b>BRIEFING NOTE:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>12th JANUARY 2023</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/56/22</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>ACFO DAVE MOTTRAM</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>GM SEAN McGUINNESS</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>SM MIKE BROADLEY</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>WM DAVE TOPPING – OPS EQUIPMENT</b> <b>HYWYN PRITCHARD – HEAD OF PROCUREMENT</b> <b>AM GED SHERIDAN</b> <b>STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>IDENTIFICATION AND PROCUREMENT OF OPERATIONAL KIT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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## **Purpose of Report**

1. To inform the Scrutiny Committee of the process Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service follow to procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and operational kit to ensure its suitability for staff and value for money.

## **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members:
  - (a) note the report and accompanying presentation and
  - (b) scrutinise the processes in place to identify and procure PPE and operational kit to bring into the Service

## **Introduction and Background**

3. The Operational Equipment Team ('OET') are responsible for the research, development and procurement of all PPE that MFRS firefighters currently use which includes items such as:
  - Technical rescue jackets
  - Compartment firefighting jackets
  - Firefighting Trousers
  - Helmets
  - Gloves
  - Water rescue PPE
4. The OET sits on a regional working group made up of the neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services. Each Fire and Rescue Service will take turns in leading on procurement programs whether it be clothing, equipment or services, where the contract exceeds £50,000.
5. Working with MFRS's procurement team and members of the working group, the

OET will follow a rolling timetable of events in order to award a contract. For example, the current tender for PPE runs from May 2022 to April 2023.

6. Once the scores have been completed, companies will be invited to send a range of their products to the group to be tested. The most recent tests of firefighting PPE was conducted in November 2022 and utilised a cross-section of the workforce of all shapes, sizes, and gender to ensure that the product is inclusive.
7. Following this, all the evidence is evaluated and the providers are notified whether they have been successful or not.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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8. MFRS OET aim is that PPE is inclusive and fit for purpose. . In order to achieve this the OET are working with the MFRS gender network, NW working group and suppliers.

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### **Staff Implications**

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9. By ensure that our staff are provided with the correct PPE that is fit for purpose and fits the wearer ensures that they are able to respond to any incident within Merseyside, and maintain our fire cover across the service by reducing times that appliance are unavailable post incident due to contaminated PPE.

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### **Legal Implications**

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10. The tender process is governed by the Public Contract Regulations and the Authority's Contract Standing Orders.
11. The Authority has a duty of care to its employees to provide sufficient PPE for the risk related activity and such a process ensures Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority ('the Authority') complies with this duty. .

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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12. The tender process ensures we establish the best value for money for the Authority as well as the life cycle of the kit/PPE and the protection that it affords our staff. When entering a new contract, they are normally for a fixed term with an option for users to extend by up to two years. By conducting our due diligence checks during the tender process we can be assured that the items will be long-lasting and repairable if issues occur.

## Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

13. All PPE, when it becomes contaminated, is bagged and left in a safe place for collection where it is sent to our local laundry provider. The provider washes the garment and then inspects it for damage and which point it is repaired and condemned.
14. It is the responsibility of the employer to provide the appropriate level of PPE for the task and the responsibility of the employee to wear and use the PPE correctly. Although each member of staff is personally fitted with PPE, . The OET now have an on line tool that allows staff to provide feedback on uniform and PPE if there is an issue, fault or concern. This system will allow an audit trail of what has been done to resolve the issue whilst providing feedback to the originator..

**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.*

15. By providing our staff with the correct PPE that is fit for purpose, fits the wearer and is ethical allows us to serve our community to the best of our ability whilst providing the best value for money.
16. By providing our staff with the best PPE we are ensuring that we are prepared to respond to any incident within Merseyside swiftly and effectively whilst ensuring we are providing the safest possible working environment for our staff.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>MFRA</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority</b> is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the “object”.
<b>MFRS</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service</b> is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the “action”
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>OET</b>	Operational Equipment Team

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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?
<b>Fire Control</b>	Scrutiny Committee – “Operational Response”  17 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	<i>The role of Fire Control and the implementation of Vision 5 and associated applications</i>  <b>Practical Demonstration in Fire Control</b>	Awaiting Phase 2 of the Vision 5 project to be complete before the implementation of the HALO system and other associated applications  2022-23	<b>Operational Response</b>	<b>Aim</b> <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>  <b>IRMP – Operational Response</b>	January 2023	
<b>National Resilience</b>	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.  <b>Rapid Review (full day)</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>	<b>Operational Preparedness &amp; National Resilience</b>	<b>Aim</b> <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 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	None required

<b>Revised Home Safety Strategy</b>	Requested by Members at Scrutiny Committee 16 <sup>th</sup> 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><b>Presentation on Committee Agenda</b></p>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>	<b>Prevention</b>	<p><b>IRMP - Prevention</b></p> <p><b>Aim</b> 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</p>		
<b>MFRA’s Membership of Outside Bodies and Partnership Working</b>	Requested by Members at Authority Meeting 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2020 and Station Visit Feb 2022	<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><b>Report &amp; Presentation on Committee Agenda</b></p>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Members of the Authority</b>	<p><b>Aim</b> 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.</p>		
<b>Fleet vehicles and alternative fuels</b>	Requested by Members at Budget Authority 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	<p><i>To review the progress and suitability of fleet of vehicles for a move to alternative fuels</i></p> <p><b>Report &amp; Presentation on Committee Agenda</b></p>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Operational Preparedness</b>	<b>IRMP – Preparedness</b>		
<b>Accessibility Audit</b>	Members informed at Authority 20 <sup>th</sup> 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><b>Rapid Review</b></p>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Strategy &amp; Performance and Estates Department</b>	<p><b>Aim</b> 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.</p>	March/April 2023	

<b>Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion</b>	Requested directly by Members	<i>To review the role of the ED&amp;I networks and senior management sponsorship within the organisation and impact on the community</i>  <b>Presentation on Committee Agenda</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>Strategy &amp; Performance</b>	<b>IRMP – E,D&amp;I</b>  <b>Aim</b> <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>	Learning Lunch March 2023	
<b>People Plan</b>	Requested directly by Members	<i>The impact of the People Plan, succession planning, development and retention of staff</i>  <b>Report &amp; Presentation on Committee Agenda</b>	<b>8th September</b>	<b>People and Organisational Development</b>	<b>Aim</b> <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>		
<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Requested directly by Members at the Kirkdale Station Visit	<i>The role of MFRS in the Community in relation to Youth Engagement.</i>	March 2022	Prevention	<b>Aim:</b> <i>We are there for you. We are a visible presence that provides reassurance, support and advice.</i>	March 2022	
<b>Kit</b>	Requested by Members at the Kirkdale Station visit	<i>How kit is procured, if it is fit for purpose, how it is stored, specific PPE for National Resilience</i>	2022/23	National Resilience, Procurement, Preparedness	<b>Aim:</b> <i>We will always be the best we can be by having highly skilled and trained people who plan for every risk and keep our teams safe and effective.</i>		

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